

Paraguay National Day Special

Fruitful bonds continue to flourish

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AMBASSADOR OF PARAGUAY



In this historical year for Japan, at the beginning of the new Reiwa Era, Paraguay celebrates its 208th Anniversary of Independence with the special commemoration of centennial bilateral relations with Japan.

Translated into English as “beautiful harmony,” the name of this new era is synonymous with the spirit of Paraguay’s relationship with Japan — a country that is both respected and admired by all of our citizens.

An important part of the relations between our countries is Paraguay’s affection for the imperial family, whose visits to the country have always been received with great appreciation. In this regard, the government and people of Paraguay would like to convey to the new emperor of Japan, His Majesty Naruhito, the very best wishes for a long-lasting and healthy life.

During the last 100 years, Paraguay and Japan have built fruitful bonds of friend-

ship and mutual respect that have spread throughout the entire Paraguayan society. This year marks the signing of the Paraguay-Japan commerce treaty on Nov. 17, 1919. This monumental agreement served as the beginning of diplomatic relations between our nations, as well as the gateway for trade relations and Japanese immigration to Paraguay.

Despite the considerable geographical distance and cultural differences, the Paraguayan people and our government have expressed constant affinity toward Japan. Our experiences in the last century have demonstrated that the words expressed in 1920 by a distinguished figure in Paraguayan history are still valid. At that time, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay Eusebio Ayala declared — in a missive addressed to the Japanese Minister Plenipotentiary to Chile, Shichita Tatsuke — that the Paraguayan sentiment is none other than “friendship and sympathy towards the heroic, hardworking, and dignified Japanese nation.”

During the years following the first treaty, diplomatic contacts sought to expand upon the mutual friendship and intensify commercial and cultural ties. In 1921, a Japanese diplomat assigned to Argentina was concurrently assigned to



Paraguay; this momentous occasion was reciprocated the following year with the appointment of an Honorary Consul of Paraguay to Tokyo. From then on, their successors continued striving to strengthen ties between our nations, laying the foundations for the arrival of the first immigrants to Paraguay in August 1936. More than 80 years have passed since the first group of Japanese immigrants

arrived in the Paraguayan capital of Asuncion. Composed of several families that established the first Japanese colony, La Colmena, the group’s main objective was to contribute to the advancement of agricultural activities in their new home. Today, these pioneers have been joined by thousands of other immigrants who came to Paraguay and, along with their descendants, live in various departments of the Paraguayan territory. From Paraguari, Itapua, Alto Parana, Amambay and other regions around the country, these industrious Japanese migrants and their descendants have extended their valuable contributions to many other fields in the development of Paraguay.

Following the migration of 1936, Japan announced the appointment of a civilian attaché to Asuncion. This appointment eventually led to the opening of the first office of the Japanese Consulate in Paraguay and to the groundwork for a deepening bilateral relationship.

Only the circumstances of World War II brought a temporary break in relations



Above: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Mario Abdo Benitez walk in front of the Government Palace in Asuncion in December 2018. Left: 100 Paraguayan harps called arpas are played by musicians at the Festival of the Way to Latin America in Tokyo on May 3.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PARAGUAY / EMBASSY OF PARAGUAY

in 1942, but even this could not diminish the cordiality between both nations, nor the sympathy established among their citizens — a sympathy that would bear fruit with time. After the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, the relationship resumed immediately, and in 1957, Japan took the initiative to send official representatives to Paraguay. In 1959, Paraguay appointed Nicolas de Bari Flecha Torres, who after presenting credentials to Emperor Hirohito, became the first envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of

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Paraguay to Japan.

In 1962, the consulates in Tokyo and Asuncion rose to the rank of embassies.

Thus, Flecha Torres became the first ambassador of Paraguay in Tokyo. His legacy has extended to the other nine ambassadors who succeeded him, including myself as the 10th, all of whom have been honored with such an important position.

With the establishment of permanent Paraguayan representation in Tokyo, continuous activities began to strengthen diplomatic relations, as well as the bonds of social, economic and cultural cooperation. The special rapport shared by the two countries has been demonstrated by the exchange of multiple official visits of the highest level. The imperial family has honored Paraguay with their presence on several occasions, which has been reciprocated by the visits of several heads of state of Paraguay to Japan. In this regard, it is important to mention that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was in Paraguay in December, marking the first time a Japanese prime minister visited the country. The meeting between Paraguayan President Mario Abdo Benitez and Abe marked the start of

Continued on page 7 →



The anniversary logo integrates the Paraguayan and Japanese national flags and nanduti, a traditional Paraguayan lace. EMBASSY OF PARAGUAY



Monday Falls is located in the district of Presidente Franco in the eastern part of Paraguay. NATIONAL TOURISM SECRETARIAT OF PARAGUAY



Our Warmest Congratulations

to the Republic of Paraguay on the 208th Anniversary of their Independence and the 100th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Paraguay.

The history of TSUNEISHI Group in Paraguay started from emigration projects in the 1950s. Since then, for making a good relationship with Paraguay, the Group has been assisting the Japanese emigrants and communities in Paraguay by conducting various activities.



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Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Paraguay
on the Occasion of
the 208th Anniversary of
Their Independence

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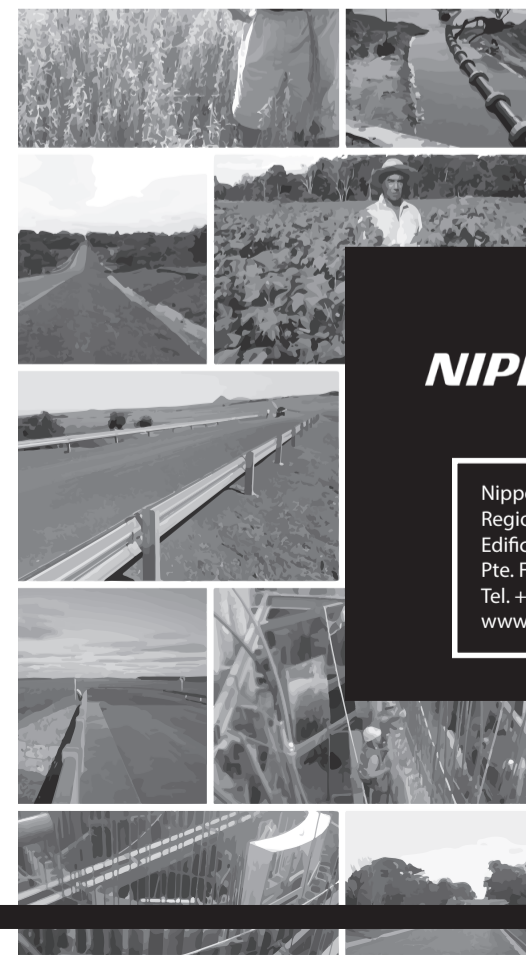
Congratulations to the
REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY
on the 208th anniversary
of their Independence
and the 100th anniversary
of Diplomatic Relations

CONGRATULATIONS

Nippon Koei LAC is grateful for its partnership with the people and the government of the Republic of Paraguay.

Our relationship throughout the years has created jobs, improved the local infrastructure, and helped keep the people living in harmony with their environment.

Long shall it continue, in order to build a better future for all.



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Paraguay National Day Special

Tokyo celebrates Paraguayan culture

→ Continued from page 6

the celebrations for the 100th anniversary of our diplomatic relations.

In the same way, diplomatic relations between the two nations contributed to the flow of Japanese cooperation in Paraguay through the signing of several agreements on a wide range of subjects over the last 100 years. From 1959 to the present, valuable feasibility studies and Japanese bilateral programs have served as true examples of the Japanese government's contributions to development in Paraguay. This profound display of friendship has covered a wide variety of areas, among which advances in Paraguayan agriculture, infrastructure, telecommunications, ship-building, health and training in human resources undoubtedly stand out.

The genuine friendship between our nations has also been strengthened by cultural exchanges. Through the participation of several civil associations, these extraordinary means of communication have overcome any potential distances and they have brought our two nations together amicably through music and crafts. Only a sincere mutual appreciation for our traditions can explain the growing presence of the best of both cultures, from the Paraguayan harp and nanduti, a traditional Paraguayan lace fabric, in Japan, to the tea ceremony and the art of ikebana in Paraguay, and finally to the progressive integration of Paraguayan and Japanese citizens who interweave the Guarani and Japanese languages as a symbol of deep friendship.

During the celebration of the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations, different cultural aspects are being presented to the Japanese people. This last March there was a presentation of nanduti, where many people participated in workshops offered by teacher Mie Elena Iwatani, founder of



Then-designated Foreign Minister of Paraguay Luis Alberto Castiglioni Soria and Foreign Minister of Japan Taro Kono in Tokyo in June 2018. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN

the first Nanduti Academy in Tokyo.

Following this, in the first days of May, there was a concert of "100 Paraguayan Harps for 100 Years of Friendship" at the Festival of the Way to Latin America in Tokyo's Odaiba district. This unique concert demonstrated the popularity of this Paraguayan instrument in Japan, since it is the only place in the world outside of Paraguay where we could unite 100 harpists, most of them Japanese women, in order to make this world-record presentation possible. Of special note, harp teachers in Japan, among them Lucia Shiomitsu, Enrique Carrera, Arisa Matsuki, Mika Agematsu and Akihiro Shiga, managed to unite other professionals and students for this very special moment.

Other highlights of cultural expression

for the celebration of this important anniversary will be the concert of the acclaimed Paraguayan classical guitarist Berta Rojas and the exhibition of the painter Rafael Gross Brown.

Undoubtedly, there exists still more potential to be explored and developed during the next 100 years. However, what remains clear is the firm and perpetual friendship between our two nations, first embodied in the treaty of 1919, that continues to build relations toward a better future for generations to come.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Clockwise from top left: Paraguayan harps at a Tokyo festival in May. The designer of the Paraguay-Japan logo Tai Sato and Ambassador Raul Florentin Antola. Tofu made of soy beans farmed by Japanese-Paraguayans was donated to victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. Riding horses is popular in Paraguay. EMBASSY OF PARAGUAY

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