

Poland National Day Special

Celebrating growth and exchanges

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AMBASSADOR OF POLAND



I send most profound congratulations on behalf of all Polish people to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako on his ascending to the Chrysanthemum

Throne. I also would like to express my best wishes for Japan's continued lasting peace, harmony and prosperity during the Reiwa Era.

It is my privilege and pleasure to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of establishing Polish-Japanese diplomatic relations. In 1918, World War I ended and Poland became an independent state after 123 years of geopolitical oblivion. The Japanese government decided to recognize the independence of the reborn Poland on March 6, 1919, and officially delivered that decision at the Paris Peace Conference on March 22.

Since then, the cooperation between our countries has been developing in many fields. Today Poland and Japan have become close friends and important partners. In 2002, we welcomed Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, who were visiting Poland as state guests.

Poland and Japan have agreed to formalize the dynamic development of bilateral relations as a strategic partnership, declared during the visit by President Bronislaw Komorowski to Japan in February 2015 and implemented during the visit of Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski in 2017.

Last year, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono visited Poland where he studied in the '80s. We are also honored to share that Crown Prince Akishino and Crown Princess Kiko chose Poland as a destination



President of Poland Andrzej Duda

for their first foreign visit, scheduled for June. Furthermore, we expect President of Poland Andrzej Duda to visit Japan on the occasion of the enthronement of Emperor Naruhito in October.

Over the last three decades, Poland has achieved an impressive economic success. Today, the Polish economy — as the largest in Central Europe — is predicted to join the G20 list of those strongest in the world by as soon as 2022. In 2018 alone, the Polish gross domestic product growth rate reached 5.1 percent and exports increased by 7 percent. We are currently observing the unemployment rate dropping to 5.6

percent; a record low in three decades. Rating agencies have given Poland an A- rating for last year, based upon a strong macro-economic performance, sound monetary policy and solid banking sector.

Japan already has more than 300 companies established in Poland, mainly in the fields of the automotive industry, electronics and infrastructure. At the same time, we see more and more Polish companies entering the Japanese market. One of the recent examples is Comarch — a global producer and provider of information technology services and solutions — that opened a branch in Tokyo in 2017.

A particularly encouraging trend in our bilateral relations is the development of scientific and technological cooperation that has resulted in numerous projects of great importance in the area of clean coal technologies, medicine, nuclear physics and advanced materials.

This year, numerous Poland-related cultural events are being held in Japan. The most remarkable is an exhibition titled "Celebration" at Nijo Castle in Kyoto that runs through June 23. It's a unique opportunity to see works of over 20 Polish and Japanese artists.

Another important event this year will be a festival of Polish culture, "Poland! Poland! Poland!," starting from Nov. 1 in Tokyo. The festival, aimed mainly at young

people, will be a great opportunity for those who would like to learn more about current trends in Polish culture, design and lifestyle.

Over the last few years, we've been observing a steady increase in Japanese tourists visiting Poland. Last year, they exceeded 100,000. In response to this trend, beginning in March, LOT Polish Airlines increased the number of direct flights between Warsaw and Tokyo to seven times a week. Availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to warmly invite all readers to visit Poland.



Then-Prince Akishino and Princess Kiko applaud at the closing ceremony of the National Sports Festival of Japan (known as the Kokutai) held in the city of Fukui in October. The couple, who assumed the titles of Crown Prince and Crown Princess on May 1, will visit Poland in June. KYODO

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

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