

Azerbaijan National Day Special

Republic Day and century of diplomacy feted

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It is my great pleasure to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of Azerbaijan's

diplomatic service. I would like to extend my warmest greetings and sincere wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, the imperial family, the government and the friendly people of Japan, as well as the Azerbaijani community residing in Japan.

This year we are celebrating the 28th anniversary of the restoration of our independence and 101st anniversary of the establishment of the first Azerbaijan Democratic Republic.

On May 28, 1918, Azerbaijan declared its



independence establishing the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. It was the first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world, and was built in accordance with the model of a parliamentary republic and a multiparty system. Azerbaijan granted all people the rights to vote regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or religion, becoming the first Muslim nation to give women equal political rights with men.

July 9 marks the 100th anniversary of the decree of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic that created its foreign ministry and laid the foundations for its diplomatic service. During the short period of existence, Azerbaijan established embassies and authorized representative offices in

various countries and hosted foreign diplomats. The main aim of the foreign policy of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was the promotion of the newly established state. The new government, therefore, conducted an active foreign policy from its inception. Information was sent to a number of European countries about the establishment of the new state. A delegation consisting of bright Azerbaijani public officials and diplomats were sent to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, which succeeded in de facto recognition of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic by the participants of the conference.

Regrettably, the first Azerbaijan Democratic Republic existed for only two years. We restored our independence in 1991, using the rich statehood traditions of the short-lived Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan and established the independent Azerbaijani State on the basis of this historical heritage.

Since regaining independence in 1991, Azerbaijan has developed into a thriving country with rapid growth and has

become an important player in the global energy market owing to the leadership of H.E. Ilham Aliyev, president of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is situated on the ancient Silk Road, and the modern infrastructure that we created recently has already transformed Azerbaijan into an important transit country. Opportunities have been created by investment in transport infrastructure. As a relatively new independent country, Azerbaijan plays an important role in building bridges between Europe and Asia.

Bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Japan are successfully developing in various fields. In September 1992, diplomatic relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Japan were established. Today, the relationship between Azerbaijan and Japan has evolved into a strategic partnership that is guided by cooperation in political, socioeconomic, humanitarian and other fields, as well as substantial dialogue at the regional and international level. The two countries enjoy high-level political ties through last year's mutual visits targeting to



An evening view of Baku, the port city facing the Caspian Sea. EMBASSY OF AZERBAIJAN

deepen the broad range of mutually interested areas, including partnership in the field of energy and economic cooperation in non-oil industries. Azerbaijan is gradually becoming one of the popular tourism destinations for Japanese travelers. The priority of Azerbaijan apart from energy-related business areas is to promote implementation of the best practices of Japanese technologies, attract direct investments to non-oil industries in particular, agriculture, information and high technologies, tourism and service areas. The government of

Azerbaijan is hoping to see Japanese business circles become more proactive in Azerbaijan. We are committed to the strong and long-term relationship with Japan.

I take this opportunity to wish the friendly people of Japan peace, prosperity and sustainable development in the new Reiwa Era.

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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the Republic of Azerbaijan
on the Occasion of
Their National Day*

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