

Bolivia Independence Day Special

Anniversary celebrates prosperous human bonds

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Bolivia celebrates today the 194th anniversary of its independence. I would like to take this opportunity, at the dawn of the Reiwa Era, to express my warm greetings to Their

Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, members of the imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and the friendly and generous people of Japan.

2019 is an important year for Bolivia-Japan bilateral relations as we commemorate the 120th anniversary of the arrival of Japanese immigrants to Bolivia. The first group of Japanese immigrants set foot in Bolivia in 1899, more precisely in the north

of La Paz, to work on rubber plantations, a booming industry at the time. Later, most of them would settle in the east of the country, establishing two important Japanese colonies: Okinawa and San Juan de Yapacani, both located in the department of Santa Cruz.

Japanese immigrants and their descendants are recognized for their diligence, as they have contributed significantly to the growth of the Bolivian economy. In fact, these colonies have a very important agricultural production, ensuring the food security and the well-being of the Bolivian population.

Today, the nearly 14,000 Japanese immigrants and their descendants living in Bolivia and the almost 6,000 Bolivians living in Japan are a reminder that the strength of our relationship is first and foremost supported by our people's talent. Bolivia and Japan have immensely benefited from the bonds created by our fellow citizens, which have become an essential part of our identities.

The establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries took place on April 13, 1914. Since then, Bolivia and Japan have cherished excellent bonds of friendship, leading to a prosperous and solid partnership.

Celebrations of our 120th anniversary have taken place in both Bolivia and Japan. Princess Mako returned from a trip to La Paz and Santa Cruz de la Sierra. In both cities, the Bolivian people and the Nikkei community praised her presence and cheered our shared history. Princess Mako also paid a courtesy visit to Bolivian President Evo Morales, before visiting areas inhabited by Japanese immigrants.

Bolivia and Japan share common values and we have built a relationship based on respect, trust and cooperation. The presence of Japan in Bolivia stands out by its permanent cooperation that provides both to the sustainable development and the growth of our country. In 2018 we commemorated the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Bilateral Cooperation Agree-

ment of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Bolivia, as well as 40 years of the Japanese volunteer program's operations.

JICA has developed the principle of human security as the spirit behind their approach, forging a structural base and strengthening actions in areas such as the renewable energy sector, disaster prevention infrastructure, water resource management, agricultural production and health. Furthermore, in order to develop efficient cooperation, JICA has applied concessional credit, grant cooperation, technical cooperation and volunteering program schemes.

Throughout the years, JICA has contributed to our social and economic development and has earned the respect and appreciation of the Bolivian people. Today, many projects are being executed jointly with JICA.

In addition to such strong human bonds and important cooperation, trade links between both countries are growing in



Charge d'Affaires a.i. Angela Ayllon (center) takes part in The 2nd Festival of the Road to Latin America held in Tokyo's Odaiba district from May 3 to 5. EMBASSY OF BOLIVIA

consideration of Bolivia being a country with abundant resources, such as zinc and lead, and Japan being the main destination for these resources. The San Cristobal mine, located in the Nor Lipez province in the department of Potosi, is a Bolivian mining subsidiary of Sumitomo Corp. and is one of the most important Japanese investments in the region.

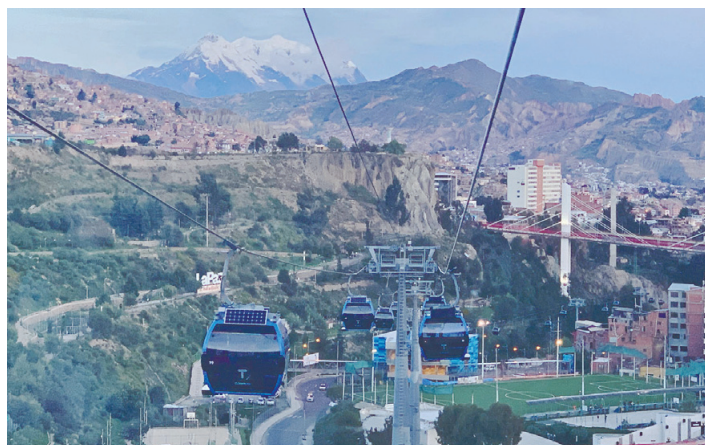
To conclude, I am very pleased to be able to celebrate the 194th anniversary of our

Independence Day, along with the 120th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Bolivia, with my fellow Bolivians and Nikkei-Bolivians, who live in Japan alongside our Japanese friends, and share the joy and depth of our friendship.

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



Princess Mako with President Evo Morales at Casa Grande del Pueblo in La Paz, during her visit to Bolivia on July 15. EMBASSY OF BOLIVIA



La Paz has the largest cable car network worldwide. EMBASSY OF BOLIVIA

Congratulations
to the People of
the Plurinational State of Bolivia
on the 194th Anniversary of
Their Independence

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