

Kuwait National Day Special

Bilateral relations continue to expand

HASAN MOHAMMAD ZAMAN
AMBASSADOR OF KUWAIT



On Feb. 25 and 26, the State of Kuwait celebrates the 59th anniversary of independence and the 29th anniversary of the liberation from the invasion by the former Iraqi regime. For every Kuwaiti, these occasions stand as reminders of national pride and belief in the principles set by our current leaders and the founders of our nation. They are also proof of our long-standing and strong relations with Japan, who was among the first to recognize our independence in 1961.

I am honored to relay the warm wishes of His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the government and people of Kuwait to their imperial highnesses, the crown prince and crown princess, his excellency Prime

Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and people of Japan.

A few months after independence, Kuwait adopted a constitution endorsing democratic principles and based on the sovereignty of the state, public freedom and equality before the law. The preamble of the constitution states the Kuwaitis' faith in the role of their country in furthering Arab nationalism and the promotion of world peace and human civilization.

These values are reflected in Kuwait's moderate and balanced foreign policy that advocates the renunciation of violence, peaceful resolution of conflicts and the importance of maintaining equitable cooperation and friendly relations with all countries based on the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of states, sovereign equality and mutual respect.

Throughout its non-permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council (2018 to 2019), Kuwait succeeded in presenting solutions to various complex global issues. One example was the draft resolution on missing persons in armed conflicts, which Kuwait solely presented during its presidency of the UNSC. The resolution that

aims to protect civilians in armed conflicts was adopted unanimously by the UNSC on June 11, 2019.

Kuwait also supports various international mechanisms to further economic, social and cultural cooperation, and works to alleviate humanitarian crises around the world. On Dec. 31, 1961, it established the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, to help developing and least-developed countries around the globe achieve sustainable development in line with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. It plays a vital role in supporting stability in the Middle East and North Africa. To date, the fund has provided 981 loans worth over \$21 billion to 107 countries, in addition to the significant contributions of Kuwait's charity organizations that became among the country's primary regional and international development arms.

The global society recognizes Kuwait's humanitarian contributions. On April 12, 2019, the World Bank Group honored H.H. the amir of Kuwait for his exemplary role in supporting social and economic development at the global level, including his contributions to the International Development Association, and his endorsement of the capital increase for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. This award follows the U.N. awarding H.H. the amir the title of "Humanitarian Leader" on Sept. 9, 2014, and designating Kuwait as an "International Humanitarian Center."

The international community, notably Japan, translated its recognition by supporting the people of Kuwait during the military invasion by Iraq in 1990, which contradicted the United Nations Charter, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international law. Japan's noble stance in that respect will always be engraved in the minds of the Kuwaiti people who feel utmost appreciation and gratitude to Japan for its historical contributions in support of our country over six decades.

The friendship between Kuwait and Japan is exemplary and stands on shared

values and principles, such as safeguarding human rights and refraining from the threat or use of force. Our relations have been growing on various official and private levels, ultimately culminating in today's comprehensive partnership that covers a broad range of fields, including oil, infrastructure, technical training, scientific research and people-to-people exchange. Our bilateral trade reached ¥938.4 billion (approximately \$8.5 billion) in 2019. Japan has been one of Kuwait's main trading partners, and Kuwait is Japan's fourth-largest source of crude oil.

Our history of trade and economic cooperation makes us bound to urge Japanese companies to further invest in Kuwait, which is witnessing a turning point in its development toward a "New Kuwait" that reflects the aspirations of H.H. the amir and sets long-term sustainable development priorities at home and abroad.

Our leaders have been affirming the importance of the Kuwait-Japan relations at various bilateral meetings, in parallel with the close exchange between business-



Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako greet His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, representative of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah the Amir of the State of Kuwait, on the occasion of the emperor's enthronement ceremony on Oct. 22, 2019. DIWAN AL-AMIRI

persons and officials from multiple sectors. One clear example of the exceptional ties between our countries was the attendance of His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, representing H.H. the amir at the Sokuirei Seiden no Gi enthronement ceremony of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito on Oct. 22, 2019.

While we reflect on this significant mile-

stone in the history of Japan, we sincerely wish their majesties and the honorable imperial household continuous good health and bliss. We hope that the Reiwa Era brings further prosperity, growth and peace for Japan and its people. I am confident that our friendship and partnership will continue to strive for the benefit of both nations.



The Kuwait Towers are a group of three spires on the shores of the Arabian Gulf and are considered a city landmark. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT

Bonds deepened by increasing exchanges

EISUKE MORI
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-KUWAIT
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-Kuwait Parliamentary Friendship League, let me extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Kuwait on the 59th anniversary of your National Day and the 29th anniversary of liberation.

I would like to express my great respect for your country in establishing a democratic national system and achieving remarkable economic growth since its founding. I would also like to express my admiration of Kuwait's great contribution



to stabilizing the Middle East. Kuwait is a major provider of crude oil and other fossil fuels to Japan, where energy sources are scarce. We consider Kuwait as one of our most important friends among many allies. In addition to the ties centered on energy sources, Kuwait and Japan have recently held increasing exchanges in education and environment. This is great news; these exchanges will further elevate bonds between our countries.

Speaking of bonds, I would like to express my gratitude for your country's immense support after the Great East Japan Earthquake that struck Japan in 2011. Words cannot express how much Kuwait's support contributed to restoring the devastated areas. Thank you so much.

Through exchanges such as those between members of parliament in Japan and Kuwait, I promise the Japan-Kuwait Parliamentary Friendship League will do its utmost to further strengthen the friendly and mutually beneficial relations between our two countries.

In closing, I wish for peace and prosperity in your country.

Heartiest Greetings and Congratulations to the State of Kuwait on the Occasion of the Anniversary of their National Day and the Anniversary of their Liberation Day



CEO PAK JAPAN GROUP OF COMPANIES CHAUDHRY ASIF MAHMOOD with MR. OMAR AL MUHAIRI

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Thank you Kuwaiti People and Kuwait Fund for helping the world.

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WISHING FOR THE FURTHERANCE
OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN
KUWAIT AND JAPAN



JAPAN-KUWAIT SOCIETY

Chairman: Yasushi Kimura



Ferid Belhaj, VP, Middle East and North Africa, World Bank Group, presents a Certificate of Appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah the Amir of the State of Kuwait. EMBASSY OF KUWAIT



Heartiest Greetings and Congratulations to
H.H. The Amir, H.H. The Crown Prince, H.E. The Prime Minister
and The People of The State of Kuwait

On the Occasion of the
59th National Day of Kuwait, and 29th Anniversary of Liberation



Kuwait Petroleum Corporation
(Far East) (K.S.C.) Japan Branch

Kuwait National Day Special

Furthering economic relations

YASUSHI KIMURA
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-KUWAIT SOCIETY



On this auspicious occasion of the 59th Anniversary of Independence of the State of Kuwait, I am pleased to offer on behalf of the members of the Japan-Kuwait Society our sincerest greetings and congratulations to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah; and His Excellency Hasan Mohammad Zaman, ambassador of Kuwait to Japan, as well as the friendly people of Kuwait.

Kuwait has been moving forward to achieve "Kuwait Vision 2035," which is its national development plan to transform from an oil-dependent economy into a "New Kuwait" that will become a financial and economic hub in the region by 2035.

Such efforts are delivering tangible outcomes. According to World Bank forecasts released in October 2019, Kuwait's real gross domestic product growth, which was at 1.2 percent in 2018, is projected to increase yearly to an estimated 1.5 percent in 2019, 2.5 percent in 2020, and 2.8 percent in 2021. In addition to forecasts, the World Bank publishes the Doing Business report, which comprehensively assesses 190 countries based on parameters such as authorization procedures, including starting a business, registering property and dealing with construction permits, as well as getting credit, enforcing contracts and other institutional topics. In the latest report released in October 2019, Kuwait's overall ranking made a significant

improvement year-on-year; the extent of improvement put Kuwait among the top 10 countries. If we look at the parameters individually, Kuwait has made considerable improvements in structural reforms of authorization procedures including starting a business, registering property and dealing with construction permits. This is a statement to the steady progress made in the structural reforms outlined in Kuwait Vision 2035 for attracting investment and financing from overseas, including Japan. The progress in structural reforms has been reported by Kuwait at the Japanese-Kuwaiti Businessmen's Committee that meets annually, and expectations are building for Japanese investment. It is our hope that Japan can contribute and live up to these expectations.

In November 2019, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah resigned as prime minister, a position he had held since 2011, and Sheikh Sabah was appointed the eighth Prime Minister of Kuwait. Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah is a nephew of the amir. Under the former Jaber Cabinet established in December 2011, His Highness Sheikh Sabah consistently supported the former prime minister as deputy prime minister. During that time, Sheikh Sabah concurrently served as minister of foreign affairs and strove to strengthen Kuwait-Japan relations. I would like to wholeheartedly wish Sheikh Sabah much success and continued health. As for the Japan-Kuwait Society, we look forward to working with the new prime minister as much as possible.

Following the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, Kuwait offered tremendous support to Japan that included a donation of five million barrels of crude oil to help with reconstruction efforts. We are pleased to say that one of the matches of the 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan held in Asia for the first time last year, was hosted at the Kamaishi Unosumai Recov-

ery Memorial Stadium. This stadium was built to serve as a symbol of recovery on the site of Unosumai Elementary School and Kamaishi Higashi Junior High School, which were washed away during the tsunami. Before the match, a large banner that read, "Thank you for your support during the March 11 Earthquake and Tsunami," was spread out on the field to express gratitude to all the people who extended support, including Kuwait. We are eternally grateful. This year, the Olympic Games will be held in Tokyo, and we expect members of the Kuwaiti national team and many of their fans to visit Japan. I wish all the best for the athletes, and we look forward to welcoming and showcasing our spirit of *omotenashi* (hospitality) to everyone visiting from Kuwait.

Since its establishment in 1965, the Japan-Kuwait Society has been working on various cultural exchange programs, including Arabic language courses, to enhance understanding among people in Japan about Islam and Arabic culture, as well as foster friendship between the two countries. We at the society will continue these activities that help build stronger mutual understanding and friendship.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to applaud Sheikh Jaber, the former prime minister, for his tremendous contributions to strengthening Japan-Kuwait relations, including paying an official visit to Japan in 2016, which was the first time in eight years that a Kuwaiti prime minister visited Japan since Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser in 2008. I would like to offer my sincerest appreciation to the ambassador of Kuwait to Japan, but also my hopes for Kuwait's prosperity and the friendly relationship between Japan and Kuwait.

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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and Congratulations
to the State of Kuwait
on the Occasion
of their National Day
and the Anniversary
of their Liberation Day



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