

Russia National Day Special

Further strengthening relationship in variety of areas

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On the occasion of the Russian National Holiday — Russia Day — I would like, first of all, to welcome all the readers of The Japan Times and express my appreciation for your attention and interest in my country. This date, June 12, marks 50 years since the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Russian Federation. This day became a holiday in 1992, and in 2002 the day was given its current official title — Russia Day.

Three decades have passed since then. Today, the Russian Federation is a modern and vibrant country ready to take up the challenges of time and respond to them with all its energy. We have overcome most difficult economic and social problems. And we realized that while changing with the world, we should not break away from our own roots, our own history and multinational culture. In modern Russia, greater attention is paid to the most vital domestic development objectives — to achieve economic and technological breakthroughs, and to enhance competitiveness in major spheres that are important for sustainable growth. A new quality of life, social welfare, security and health constitute our main goals and the focus of our policies.

To achieve these goals, certain efforts are made to improve the quality of life in all regions of the Russian Federation and to unlock huge economic and human potential. We keep on implementing comprehensive government programs, substantially increase the investment attractiveness of Russian regions, bring into life ambitious infrastructure projects aimed at construction and renovation of roads and railway

communications, sea ports and broadening airplane routes coverage. These efforts are also supposed to increase numbers of tourists interested in our culture, nature and historic monuments.

We are open to dialogue in the international arena. Along with our partners we are ready to promote our integration projects and build up business, humanitarian, cultural and scientific ties.

And these days, we should tighten our cooperation in a variety of areas to confront modern threats and challenges like the coronavirus pandemic, sharing memories of the heroic deeds of our fathers and grandfathers who united to fight the Nazi threat 75 years ago. The great victory was a pivotal event of the 20th century with enduring significance for the fate of all humankind. It was achieved thanks to the joint efforts of the former Soviet Union and countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. The Soviet people's path to victory was heroic and sacrificial. They were able to overcome the inhuman trials and defend their homeland. They determined the outcome of World War II, liberated Europe and grasped a victory that the entire world was waiting for.

Now, we are all responsible for making sure that the terrible tragedies of this war will not happen again. That is why Russian President Vladimir Putin has suggested holding the summit of the leaders of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council: Russia, China, the United States, France and Britain to discuss global issues. It is particularly important and symbolic to hold the meeting this year when we are celebrating 75 years since the end of World War II and the foundation of the United Nations.

The main priorities of our foreign policy include strengthening mutual trust, promoting cooperation in economy and trade, education, culture, science and technology. These tenets underpin our work within the U.N., the Commonwealth of Independent



President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin meets with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok on Sept. 5.

States, as well as within the Group of 20, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

In relations with Japan, regular and energetic dialogue between the president and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is reinforced by intensive contacts of the two countries' security councils, the foreign and defense ministries, including the "two-plus-two" format, active exchanges between national parliaments, ruling parties and regions, as well as strong interaction in the Russian-Japanese Intergovernmental Commission on trade and economy issues.

Together with our Japanese partners we confront the coronavirus pandemic. The president and the prime minister during a recent telephone conversation confirmed their plans to expand cooperation among relevant agencies in health care, including the joint development of medications. In the Republic of Tatarstan in the central part of our country, a joint Russian-Japanese company has already started manufacturing and supplying test systems for COVID-19 detection with the same accuracy as the PCR

method that takes a shorter amount of time.

We continue joint work on implementation of the Plan of Cooperation in eight areas, which was proposed by the prime minister, and list of priority projects, introduced by the Russian side. Japanese entrepreneurs are investing in many sectors of the Russian economy, participating in both the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum and the Eastern Economic Forum.

Energy is the main area of our bilateral cooperation. Japanese companies are involved in the Sakhalin-2 project. Our Japanese partners from Mitsui & Co., a Japanese oil, gas and metals corporation, have signed an important agreement to join the construction of the Arctic LNG-2 project that envisages investment of almost \$3 billion.

Rosatom, the state nuclear agency, continues its efforts to facilitate the Fukushima relief effort. A number of initiatives are being explored to recycle spent nuclear fuel, possibly with the involvement of third-party countries. We are expanding our ties in high-tech spheres. An agreement has been reached whereby Canon Inc. of Japan will build facilities in Russia in order

to manufacture state-of-the-art medical diagnostics equipment in our country.

Another project on the agenda is the laying of a new high-speed data cable linking Japan and Europe. In particular, it includes connecting Nakhodka and Niigata by undersea cable. There is also momentum in transport and infrastructure cooperation. A series of pilot container shipments were carried out along the Trans-Siberian Railway, showing that this is an economically viable route for expanding deliveries of Japanese products to European markets.

However, we believe that the potential for bilateral cooperation in economic matters is still far from being completely realized. Therefore, together with our Japanese partners, we shall work on the development of more ambitious plans to expand economic ties in key areas: from trade and investment to technological cooperation, education and humanitarian exchanges.

In 2020, Russia and Japan are to hold cross years of inter-regional exchange. This initiative is expected to promote deeper contacts between regions of our countries.

Russia-Japan relations play a significant part not only in our bilateral interests, but also in terms of stability and sustainable development of the entire Asia-Pacific

region and world. We extend our cooperation in security agendas, including countering emerging threats and challenges such as terrorism, drugs and cybercrime.

In honor of the agreement between our leaders, we continue joint work to create proper conditions for reaching mutually acceptable solutions of the peace treaty problem between Russia and Japan. For Russia, Japan is an important partner with whom we are seeking to build mutually beneficial relations as good neighbors and by taking each other's interests into consideration. I am deeply convinced that our bilateral relations have a bright and promising future.

I would like to sincerely congratulate all my fellow compatriots and citizens of Russia currently staying in Japan on Russia Day. I am convinced that stable and progressive development of Russian-Japanese cooperation in an entire range of areas will strengthen trust between the people of the two countries and will be an important factor in tackling pressing regional and global issues.

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



The Kremlin in Moscow

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to the People
of
the Russian Federation
on the Occasion
of
Their National Day

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