

Turkey National Day Special

'Asia Anew' initiative underway, partnership with Japan strengthens

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AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF
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As the Republic of Turkey turns 97, I am very pleased to celebrate this important anniversary with friends in Japan as well as the readers of The Japan Times.

On this wonderful day, we celebrate our

history, heroes and the birth of the Republic. We honor Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, for leading the nation to victory in the War of Independence. We pay our gratitude to those who sacrificed their lives in the service of the nation

from the founding of the republic until today.

Turkey pursues a foreign policy guided by its founding doctrine "Peace at Home, Peace in the World" with an enterprising and humanitarian approach to achieve security, stability and prosperity in its neighborhood and beyond. Turkish diplomats advance these ideals in over 140 countries, including most of Asia, where Turkey has a diplomatic presence.

As the conflict map of the world is getting more complicated, Turkey attaches special importance to preventive diplomacy and finding peaceful solutions to conflicts.

While many countries are turning a blind eye to the situation of refugees, Turkey opened its borders to 3.7 million Syrians. So far, more than 400,000 Syrians have returned to areas stabilized by Turkey in northern Syria.

Turkey is strongly embedded in European institutions with very deep roots in Asia. The

Turkish people's historic and cultural connections to Asia are alive and enduring. With this background, we look at the future of Asia with optimism. We highly value partnerships and multilateral cooperation across the continent. Last year, Turkey announced its "Asia Anew" initiative to further increase relations with Asian countries in a more comprehensive manner.

Turkey and Japan, located at both ends of Asia, enjoy excellent relations underpinned by close people-to-people ties or *kizuna*. The history of friendly relations between Turkey and Japan dates back to the sinking of Ertugrul Frigate off the coast of Kushimoto, Wakayama Prefecture, while returning from a goodwill mission to Emperor Meiji. Last September, together with our Japanese friends, we commemorated the 130th anniversary of this historic friendship.

I take this opportunity to extend my special thanks to Her Imperial Highness Princess Akiko, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces and the people and local government of Kushimoto for their continuous support and heartfelt messages at every commemoration event. The people of Turkey will always remember the selfless help and hospitality extended by the people of Japan more than a century ago. We look forward to holding a larger event to honor this special friendship next year when the coronavirus situation allows for it.

Turkey and Japan share a strategic partnership with strong political, economic and cultural ties. Based on the close relations between President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, bilateral relations have grown from strength to strength in an extensive area of cooperation, including trade,

infrastructure, science and technology, disaster management and culture. Last May, both leaders attended a virtual opening of Basaksehir Cam and Sakura City Hospital, a joint project between Turkish and Japanese companies. This state-of-the-art hospital in Istanbul, which also treats coronavirus patients, is a great example of our partnership even during the pandemic.

Turkey's partnership with Japan extends beyond our bilateral relations. One such area is infrastructure development where Turkish and Japanese firms cooperate in third countries. Under the "Asia Anew" initiative, we see a lot more opportunities for cooperation, including in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region where Turkey has full diplomatic representation in all 10 member countries.

Japan had a very smooth change of govern-

ment in September. Our president was one of the first leaders to congratulate Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on his election. Turkey and Japan will continue working together to elevate our extensive partnership to new heights under the new government of Japan. Economic activities remain a major driving force in our relations. Our embassy in Tokyo continues to support Japanese firms wishing to do business with Turkey. As we face the pandemic, there are both risks and opportunities. I am sure Turkey and Japan, working hand in hand, will maximize the benefits of our closer relations while overcoming the challenge of the coronavirus together.

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



Virtual opening of Basaksehir Cam and Sakura City Hospital, a joint project between Turkish and Japanese companies

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

Congratulations
on the Occasion of
the Anniversary of the Proclamation of
the Republic of Turkey



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Congratulations
to the People
of the Republic
of
Turkey
on the Occasion
of Their Republic Day



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