

Romania National Day Special

Partnership thriving despite challenging year

TATIANA IOSIPER
AMBASSADOR OF ROMANIA



On the occasion of the National Day of Romania, it is my honor to express my deepest respect and convey heartfelt wishes of health and happiness to Their Imperial Majesties, Emperor Naruhito

and Empress Masako, to Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and the government of Japan, as well as peace and prosperity to the Japanese people.

On Dec. 1, Romanians celebrate the unification, in 1918, of all our historic provinces into the modern Romanian national unitary state, a fulfillment of a national aspiration for freedom, unity and dignity.

We are approaching the end of a very dif-

ficult year for the entire world. The coronavirus pandemic brought major disruptions to our everyday lives and our economies suffered significantly. Despite this most unexpected environment, we kept up our political dialogue and advanced our bilateral relations in various fields. We are confident that we have a very good perspective for increased political and economic cooperation toward upgrading our ties to a strategic partnership level.

The sanitary emergency we had to deal with shed light on the necessary international cooperation to prepare for future crises. Examples of such cooperation include the resilience of our national medical systems, the possibility to help each other with essential equipment or medicine and diversifying our supply chains. There is a clear potential for expanding our bilateral cooperation in all these areas in years to come. We were grateful to receive a donation of the Japanese drug Avigan, which

yielded promising results in clinical trials for COVID-19 patients.

Trade and investment cooperation remains a key priority for us. The economic partnership agreement between the European Union and Japan has already proved to be a great tool to boost Romanian products' stronger presence in the Japanese market. We are encouraged to see that bilateral trade grew in the first half of this year, despite the difficult conditions faced by all companies involved. We also hope to see a continuation of significant Japanese investment in Romania and diversification of the areas of interest.

Though the pandemic brought almost all international exchanges to a halt, we strongly believe that people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges are the best way to improve our mutual understanding. In this respect, we were happy to see the recent cooperation between The Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre and the famous

Romanian director Silviu Purcarete, who returned to Japan to stage a new version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The success of the play is even more significant these days, as it brings hope that together we will overcome these challenging times and will return to our normal lives.

We are looking forward to welcoming our athletes to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games next year. Once again, we express our gratitude to our generous host towns of Fukutsu, Koga, Musashino, Matsudo and Oita, which did an outstanding job creating the best possible conditions for our Olympic team. We will be delighted to cheer our athletes together in the Olympic and Paralympic competitions.

Next year will also have a special significance for our bilateral ties, as we will commemorate 100 years of diplomatic relations. It is a good moment to take stock of our past accomplishments, which made possible the strong ties that we enjoy today and together build toward a new level of cooperation and strategic partnership, based on the basic values of democracy and the rule of law we share. We are planning with our Japanese partners a series of events that will properly mark this important bilateral milestone.



Balea Lake in the Fagaras Mountains
EMBASSY OF ROMANIA



The Palace of Culture in Iasi is one of the city's most impressive attractions.

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Stavropoleos Street in the Old Town district of Bucharest

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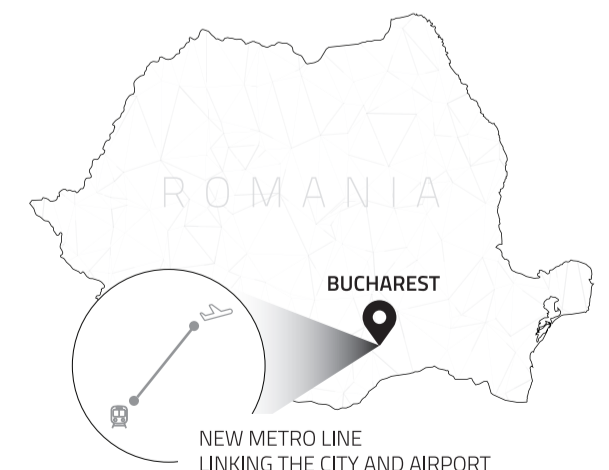
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