

Bolivia Independence Day Special

Democratic progress moving forward

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Today, Aug. 6, Bolivia celebrates its 196th anniversary as an independent state. I would like to initiate this opportunity, at the dawn of the Reiwa Era, to express my warm greetings to Their

Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, extending to the entire imperial family, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, the government and the entire Japanese people, and, especially, to the Bolivian residents of Japan.

Bolivia began the contemporary democratic process in October 1982. From then on, for 37 years, it lived through the longest democratic period in its history. In October 2019, a coup d'etat broke a cycle of economic, political and social stability that was

characteristic of the country during the last 14 years.

During the de facto government, attacks were committed against human life, health, security, sovereignty and human rights, including massacres during demonstrations in Sacaba (Cochabamba) and Senkata (El Alto) that killed more than 30 people and left hundreds injured.

In the general elections of Oct. 18, 2020, Bolivians recovered our democracy. The result was that 55.1% decided to continue with our change process, which has made great progress and many achievements over the past few years, particularly in regard to inclusion, social justice and poverty reduction. Bolivians chose the path of peace and stability, of hope and dignity.

The government, headed by President Luis Arce and Vice President David Choquehuanca, based the beginning of their administration on fundamental and urgent challenges: containment of the pandemic, economic reactivation and access to education, to lay the foundations of sustained growth for later generations, always under the precept of living well and searching

for unity to achieve the reconstruction of Bolivia based on the principles of dignity, complementarity, stability and fairness. In this respect, thanks to the efforts our authorities are carrying out to obtain COVID-19 vaccines, biosafety elements and mass vaccination campaigns, Bolivia has positioned itself as one of the countries with the lowest mortality in the region. This has been highlighted by the World Health Organization.

Likewise, as a result of the reimplementation of the Social Economic Communitary Productive Model to this date, positive results of the measures adopted can be observed, since the economic indicators and projections, from both national and international organizations, show encouraging figures and strong signals of recovery. Among them, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, has projected economic growth of 5.1% for Bolivia this year.

We continue working under the objective of building a government of national unity to achieve the re-encounter of all Bolivians based on the unity of the people. That is why this year we celebrate the inde-



President Luis Arce (left) and Vice President David Choquehuanca
IVAN CANELAS LIZARRAGA

pendence of Bolivia with hope and dignity. However, we must understand that true peace will come with justice and reparations for the victims and for the families of those who were affected. We are committed to the truth and we will be unwavering in our commitment so that events like these do not happen again.

We are returning to the path of political, economic and social stability. This Aug. 6, I invite you all to walk together and work for the reconstruction of an increasingly participatory, democratic and inclusive state. *Vamos a salir adelante* (we will move forward).

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

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

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