

Ukraine Independence Day Special

Huge growth potential in many areas

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Thirty years ago, Ukraine regained its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Subdued by the communist regime for 70 years, the Ukrainians have finally obtained freedom and the abil-

ity to develop their own culture, economy and society as an indispensable part of the democratic world.

Historically, mentally and socially Ukraine belongs to Europe. European and Euro-Atlantic integration is fundamentally imbedded in the Ukrainian Constitution and serves as the main foreign policy priority. But similarly, Ukraine recognizes a key role that Southeast Asia plays in the contemporary world. The 21st century will be definitely Asian. Japan, being the only Asian member of the Group of Seven and the leading democracy in the region, is a natural global part-

ner for Ukraine. Japan is a soft superpower, deeply trusted among the world's nations. Our countries have no political disputes, and we share the universal values of human rights, freedom and democracy. Ukraine and Japan strongly adhere to provisions of international law and order based on mutual respect, understanding and cooperation.

Japan is among the major contributors to the Ukraine's development through a network of projects and partnerships. Even in these difficult times due to COVID-19 and severe climate change, Ukraine and Japan are looking forward to working together in the next stage of their bilateral partnership. Last year, negotiations on the new double taxation treaty commenced and discussions on a free trade agreement are underway. Earlier this year, the first-ever visit of the minister of defense of Ukraine to Japan took place, and since then we have been engaged in comprehensive consultations on urgent security issues related to freedom of maritime navigation, protection of national sovereignty and cybersecurity.

Ukraine is a world-class hub for a wide range of agricultural products and has some

of the most fertile soil in the world. With a relatively modest investment, enough products might be produced to feed billions. Land reform was introduced earlier this year and the doors are open to consider Ukraine as a strategic partner for Japan in the production of many important food items, such as soybeans, beef, chicken, sunflower oil, honey, berries and much more, including organic food.

Ukraine is among a few nations that can design and produce airplanes, both cargo and passenger, including those for military and emergency management applications. The Antonov cargo planes Mriya and Ruslan are widely used to carry huge machines around the globe. Ukraine's expertise, skilled labor force and engineering culture in space exploration are well known, too.

Ukraine possesses huge information technology potential. Thousands of Ukrainian IT engineers have been working in Silicon Valley and Europe for years. Now many of them are coming back to do business in Ukraine. The market potential of our IT industry can be estimated in the billions.

Ukraine enjoys strategic relations with the



President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his wife, Olena Zelenska, pose for a photo in Tokyo at the enthronement ceremony of Emperor Naruhito on Oct. 22, 2019.

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U.S., Great Britain and Turkey, and free trade with Canada, Great Britain and the EU. We strongly believe that every reason exists to start negotiations on an FTA with Japan and explore new opportunities in investment and coproduction of high-end products.

We are very grateful for the strong support we have received on our territorial integrity from the democratic world. We have very deep dialogue and cooperation with NATO. Support from the G7 and the U.N. is particularly important.

Both our countries have experience with nuclear power plant disasters. We share our knowledge and will continue to do so.

Japan has a very special place in our hearts. Its cuisine, culture, traditions and art are so well known in Ukraine that it is difficult to believe we are separated by the vast space of Eurasia. I see my goal in shortening this distance.

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
Ukraine
on the Occasion
of
Their Independence Day



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