

Day of German Unity Special

Shared pledge to international law, multilateralism

CLEMENS VON GOETZE
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE OF GERMANY



On the Day of German Unity, we Germans celebrate the peaceful reunification of our country on Oct. 3, 1990. On that day 31 years ago, we overcame the decades-long, unnatural separation

of our country and made our wish for unity come true. We only managed to achieve this most fortunate moment in our history because the people of Central and Eastern Europe prevailed against dictatorship, thus ending Europe's rift, and because Germans in both parts of the country were united in striving for freedom, democracy and the rule of law. These values continue to guide us today.

Japan shares these values with us, which lays the groundwork for a very strong partnership and friendship between our countries and societies. As democratic nations

committed to international law and effective multilateralism, we have long since collaborated closely in international affairs on matters such as the reform of the United Nations, disarmament and nonproliferation, to name but a few.

As a democratic nation and an economic powerhouse with strong global and regional connections, Japan is also a natural partner for Germany and Europe in the Indo-Pacific region. In our recently published Indo-Pacific strategy, we stress our will to step up our engagement and to cooperate even more closely with partners in this dynamic part of the world. As for Japan, this means improving our — already very strong — economic, scientific and cultural ties, but also deepening our security policy cooperation. Earlier this year, we held the first “two-plus-two” consultations of our foreign and defense ministers and signed a bilateral agreement on the security of information. And in a few weeks, the German frigate Bayern will call on ports in Japan. The Bayern will also take part in monitoring operations for U.N. sanctions against North Korea to contribute to the

upholding of the rules-based international order in this region.

German-Japanese cooperation has very deep roots. In January 1861, 160 years ago, Prussia and Japan established diplomatic relations. Ever since, bilateral exchange in any domain — politics, commerce, science as well as culture — has grown and flourished.

Our relations are driven forward by a great number of people from both countries. Not all of them can be honored this year, but the German Embassy was able to portray some of the key pioneers on its wall.

Our tightly knit network of German-Japanese friendship societies, university exchange programs, research groups and expert circles has, unfortunately, been severely hampered by COVID-19 and pandemic-related restrictions. The doors to economic and cultural exchange between our countries must be reopened as soon as possible. I hope that German students and researchers will soon have the opportunity to come to Japan again.

As the newly arrived German ambas-

sador-designate, I am looking forward to contributing to strengthening our bilateral relations ever more in the domains that are vital to both our nations' future: climate, green energy, digitalization, artificial intelligence, autonomous driving, economic security and many others. Let me close by extending my best wishes to the readers of The Japan Times and by thanking you wholeheartedly for your interest in my country.

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Congratulations

to the People of Germany

on the Occasion of

the Anniversary of

the Day of German Unity

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 **Mitsubishi Corporation**