

SERBIA NATIONAL DAY/WORLD

'Old acquaintances' build on long friendship

Bilateral relations between Serbia and Japan experience dynamic development in wide-ranging sectors

By IVAN MRKIC

Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia

It is my profound privilege and great pleasure to express my deepest respect, greetings and warmest wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and other members of the Imperial family, as well as to the prime minister, government and kindly people of Japan on this auspicious occasion of the National Day of Serbia. It also provides the special opportunity to greet the distinguished readers of the Japan Times and to extend my best wishes to Serbian citizens residing in Japan.

Serbia and Japan are old acquaintances, and their relations have a remarkable history and tradition. First contacts between the two countries took place at the end of the 19th century, when the dignitaries of the Kingdom of Serbia and Japan occasionally met in European capitals and courts.

Nowadays, not many people know that in 1928, Serbian King Aleksandar Karadjordjevic appointed Eikho Ueyama, founder of the famous Japanese company Kincho, as the first honorary consul of his kingdom to Japan.

It is also not widely known that His Imperial Highness Prince Ta-

kamatsu visited Belgrade in 1931, having lunch at the home of Milan Stanojevic, honorary consul of Japan to Serbia at that time, with whom he visited Kalemegdan, a medieval fortress in Belgrade, symbolizing the great and turbulent history of the Serbian capital.

After World War II, our two countries resumed their diplomatic relations. Since then until the present time, 24 bilateral state agreements have been signed, representing the framework of our bilateral relations and their future development. The last of them, an agreement on technical cooperation, signed in October 2005 and ratified in May 2006, is of special significance for further bilateral exchanges and enhancement of ties in various fields.

Today, the Republic of Serbia and Japan dynamically build and develop their relations, based on their long-lasting and proven friendship.

Although geographically distant from each other, Serbian and Japanese people have many similarities and complementary interests. We think that we can learn a lot from Japan, a leading economic and increasingly emerging political power in the world.

Serbia would like Japan to play an even more important role in the international arena and to contribute even more to resolving international issues. That is yet another reason prompting Serbia



President of the Republic of Serbia Boris Tadic

to see Japan as its strategic partner in Asia and to be present in Serbia to the best of its capacity.

In the course of the last few years, we have witnessed the dynamic development of bilateral relations in various fields.

First of all, I would like to extend, on behalf of the government and the people of Serbia, our deepest gratitude to the government and people of Japan for their unprecedented aid and assistance to the economic recovery of our country, which is highly appreciated and will never be forgotten.

We are very proud and pleased that the Japan Agency for International Cooperation opened an office in Belgrade last autumn as its regional office for the Western Balkans. Renowned Japanese



Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia Vojislav Kostunica

companies are present in Serbia.

Last May, Japan Tobacco International invested in a tobacco factory in Senta, Vojvodina (a

northern province of Serbia). Well-known companies like Mitsui Bussan and Mitsubishi Corp. have been represented in Belgrade for a long time, famous car-maker Toyota found its market in Serbia while Itochu develops business with Serbian partners, etc. We expect many other Japanese corporations interested in doing business in Serbia to open their offices in Belgrade soon.

Serbia is a center of the Western Balkans' market, comprising 60 million people. No doubt it will become a member of the European Union. Nevertheless, our wish is that the effects of Japanese economic and cultural creativity be omnipresent in Serbia, helping it to grow steadily, and accordingly intertwining our common future and prosperity.

The Embassy of the Republic

of Serbia in Tokyo will do its utmost to build the strongest possible bridge between our two nations, with the sincere hope that one day, a "Nihon-bashi" will rise in Belgrade, as a real token of our everlasting friendship.

In conclusion, I would like to express once again my gratitude to The Japan Times for giving me the opportunity to address its esteemed readers on this joyous occasion.

I would also like to thank all those Japanese friends and associations actively engaged in deepening our mutual understanding and developing our bilateral relations, with my best wishes for the welfare and prosperity of the Japanese people, as well as for the further deepening of our friendly relations and overall cooperation in the years to come.

Democratic, stable Serbia

By ICHIRO AISAWA

President, Japan-Serbia Parliamentarian League of Friendship

On behalf of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentarian League of Friendship, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the National Day of the Republic of Serbia.

Since our association was established in 2000 for the purpose of building a bridge of

friendship between Japan and then-Yugoslavia, we have been trying to make our relations as close as possible. We would like to make further efforts to strengthen our ties in various fields through the exchange of both countries' parliamentarians.

Serbia recently has made great efforts toward economic development and the strengthening of democratic institutions, as well as improving relations with neighboring countries. We sincerely hope that a new democratic government will soon be

formed under the leadership of President Boris Tadic to address the internal and external challenges facing Serbia, as well as to make progress in its European integration. We are convinced that a democratic and stable Serbia is essential for the stability of Europe.

The Japan-Serbia Parliamentarian League of Friendship will continue to cooperate with Serbia for the further consolidation of the friendly bilateral relationship, and for the promotion of democratization and stabilization of Serbia.

Signs of reconciliation hold promise for brighter future

By TAKEHIRO TOGO

Chairman, Japan-Serbia Exchange Association

I would like to express my heartfelt greetings on the occasion of the first National Day of the Republic of Serbia celebrated in Japan.

The road to this day has been painful and turbulent. Historically, the Balkans had been the "power keg" of Europe and this was repeated in the last decade of the last century, after the end of the Cold War. The former Yugoslav-

ia, which played a significant role during the Cold War period as the leader of the Third World, was thrown into the agony of disintegration through fratricidal wars and conflicts, and by the independence of Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia in 1991, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, and Montenegro separating peacefully from Serbia in June 2006. Then, Serbia was declared as the successor state to Serbia and Montenegro.

There are some unsettled issues like Kosovo pending in the West Balkans region. Yet, as I visited Belgrade in Serbia, Bosnia

and Herzegovina and Kosovo recently, I got the impression that life in general has regained normalcy and stability, and there are signs of reconciliation in many areas.

Surely people are tired of the fighting and they must be wanting to look more to the future. With a perspective of joining the integration process of Europe, harmony would surely quicken the pace of this process.

I am a firm believer that through talks between the parties, they can achieve reconciliation. The whole region will benefit from it. The region is rich in common heritage and industrial capacity. Against such a general background, I am happy to note that bilateral relations between Japan and Serbia are developing in all fields.

For example, the Japan Agency for International Cooperation has recently opened an office in Belgrade. As chairman of the Japan-Serbia Exchange Association, I sincerely hope that the friendship and cooperation between Japan and Serbia will be further strengthened.



Congratulations

on the Occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia

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GRACANICA MONASTERY from Kosovo and Metohija, Serbia

WORLD

SERBIAN NATIONAL DAY

Serbia-Japan friendship growing ever stronger

By Ivan Mihic
Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia

It is my profound privilege and great pleasure to express my deepest respect, heartfelt greetings and warmest wishes to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress and other members of the Imperial family, as well as to His Excellency Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

As the government and friendly people of Japan on this auspicious occasion of the National Day of Serbia. It also gives me a special opportunity to greet the distinguished readers of "The Daily Yomiuri" and to extend my best wishes to Serbian citizens residing in Japan.

Serbia and Japan are old acquaintances, and their relations have a remarkable history and tradition. From contacts between the two countries took place at the end of the 18th century, when the diplomats of the Kingdom of Serbia and Japan occasionally met in European capitals and courts.

Today, not many people know that in 1929 Serbian King Aleksandar Karađorđević appointed Rikicho Ueyama, founder of the famous company known as Kincho, as the first honorary consul of his kingdom in Japan. It is also not widely known that His Imperial Highness Prince Takamasa visited Belgrade in 1931, when he had lunch at the home of Milica Stangovic.



IVAN MIHIC

honorary consul of Japan to Serbia at that time, with whom he had a walk across Kalemegdan, a medieval fortress in Belgrade, that symbolized both the past and the future history of the Serbian people.

After World War II, our two countries resumed their diplomatic relations. Since then until now, 34 bilateral state agreements have been signed, representing the framework of our relations and their further development. The last of them, the Agreement on Technical Cooperation, signed in October 2005 and ratified in May 2006, is of a special significance for further bilateral exchange and enhancement of ties in various fields.

Today, the Republic of Serbia and Japan dynamically build and develop their relations, based on their long-standing and proven friendship.

Although geographically far apart, Serbian and Japanese people have many similarities and complementary interests. We think that we can learn a lot from Japan, a leading economic and increasingly emerging political power in the world.

Serbia would like Japan to play an even more important role in the international arena and to contribute even more to solving major international issues. That is not another reason presenting Serbia to see Japan as its strategic partner in Asia and for Japan to be present in Serbia in the best of its capacity.

In the course of the last few years, we have witnessed dynamic development of bilateral relations in various fields. First of all, I would like to extend, on behalf of the government and the people of Serbia, our deepest gratitude to the government and people of Japan, for their undeviating aid and assistance to the economic recovery of our country, which is highly appreciated and will never be forgotten. We are very proud and pleased that the Japan Agency for International Cooperation operated its office in Belgrade last autumn, as its regional office for the Western Balkans.

Renowned Japanese companies are already present in Serbia. For May, Japan Tobacco International invested in the Serbian Tobacco factory in Senta, Vojvodina (a northern province of Serbia). Well known companies such as Mitsui & Co. and Mitsubishi Corp. have been registered in Belgrade for a long time. Topos Motor Corp. found its market in Serbia, while Inaceta Corp. develops business with Serbian partners. We expect many other Japanese corporations interested in doing business in Serbia to open their offices in Belgrade soon.

Serbia is a center of the Western Balkan market, comprising 60 million people. No doubt it will become a member of the European Union. Nevertheless, our wish is that the ethos of Japanese economic and cultural creativity be omnipresent in Serbia, helping Serbia to grow steadily and accordingly interesting our future and prosperity.

The Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in Tokyo will do its utmost to build the strongest possible bridge between our two nations, with the sincere hope that, one day, "Nihonbashi" will rise in Belgrade, as a real token of our everlasting friendship.

In conclusion, I would like to express once again my gratitude to "The Daily Yomiuri" for giving me the opportunity to address its esteemed readers on this joyous occasion. I would also like to thank all those Japanese friends and associations actively engaged in deepening our mutual understanding and deepening our bilateral relations, with my best wishes for the welfare and prosperity of the Japanese people, as well as for further deepening of our friendly relations and overall cooperation in the years to come.

Democratic, stable Serbia essential for Europe

By Ichiro Aisawa

President of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentary League of Friendship

On behalf of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentary League of Friendship, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the National Day of the Republic of Serbia.

Since our league was established in 2000 for the purpose of building a bridge of friendship between Japan and the then Yugoslavia, we have been trying to make our relations as close as possible. The league would like to make further efforts to strengthen our ties in various fields through

the exchange of both countries' performances.

Serbia recently has made great efforts toward developing its economy and strengthening democratic institutions as well as improving bilateral relations with its neighbors, such as neighboring countries. We



ICHIRO AISAWA

strongly hope that a new democratic government soon will be formed under the leadership of President Boris Tadic in order to address internal and external challenges now facing Serbia as well as to make progress in its European integration. We are convinced that a democratic and stable Serbia is essential for the stability of Europe.

The Japan-Serbia Parliamentary League of Friendship will continue cooperation with Serbia for further consolidation of our friendly bilateral relations, and for the promotion of democratic and stabilization of Serbia.

Congratulations to the Republic of Serbia



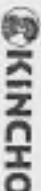
KINCHO wasabi oshi (the wasabi for enjoyment) will

bring happiness and the sense of "homeland" to all Japanese companies in Serbia. It has a rich perfume flavor and the beautiful appearance.

"KINCHO" has an additional benefit with Serbia.

Mr. Shobun Ueyama, director president, serves as Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Serbia in Osaka.

The Shop of the Kincho wasabi is in Osaka.



Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic of Serbia
on the Occasion
of
the National Day



SERBIA NATIONAL DAY / WORLD

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to the People
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the National Day



Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Serbia on Their National Day

We salute the Republic of Serbia, as a mining country
with vast mineral potential, as a leading producer
of metals in Europe, and as an important country at the
crossroads of Europe, Asia and Russia.



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Congratulations to the Republic of Serbia



KINCHO mosquito coil
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"KINCHO", has an additional bond with Serbia.
Mr. Nobuhiko Ueyama, KINCHO president, serves as Temporary Consul
General of the Republic of Serbia in Osaka.

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