

On the Occasion of Sekai Nippo's 35th Anniversary of Publishing

January 1, 2010

On behalf of the Government of Afghanistan, I would like to convey my deepest respects to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan, H.E. Prime Minister Hatoyama, and the readers of Sekai Nippo. I would also like to congratulate Sekai Nippo its 35th anniversary of publication.

2010 is a significant landmark in Afghanistan's special relationship with Japan as it was 80 years ago that the Afghan-Japanese Treaty of Friendship was signed by Marshal Shah Wali Khan and Tsuneo Matsudaira in London. In reality, however, through the old Silk Road and its influence, our peoples have been united through shared ideas and values far longer.

Our mutually supportive bonds have been reaffirmed many times and this has especially been the case since 2001 when Japan extended its assistance to our reconstruction. Japanese support has been valuable and tangible, providing hope and help to our citizens in such areas as health care, schooling, agriculture, and infrastructure.

Recently, the Japanese government pledged a generous new assistance package. This contribution is graciously received and will aid us in our steps forward, improving the quality of Afghan lives.

The challenges ahead of us are many, but 2010 will serve as further proof that together with our Japanese friends' support, Afghans are capable of overcoming any obstacles.

Sincerely,

Eklil Hakimi

Ambassador of Afghanistan