

**Speech by Prime Minister Abe at the Closing Ceremony for the 120th
Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and
Argentina**

His Excellency President Macri,

Dear Argentine friends who work constantly for our bilateral relationship,

Dear representatives of Nikkei communities,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very delighted to attend the closing ceremony to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relationship. I would like to warmly congratulate President Macri for his tremendous leadership during the G20 Summit as Chair.

Argentina is a partner with whom we work together to build a free and open international economic system. Therefore, Japan strongly supports both President Macri's economic reforms and the open of accession discussions for Argentina to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The witnesses of our historical friendship are present here today. There is Mr. Yoshio Shinya, grandson of the first immigrant to Argentina who boarded the Ship of Sarmiento that called in Yokohama 120 years ago, a year after the signing of our Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation. Also, several leaders of various organizations in various areas are in attendance today, such as Ms. Maria Kodama

and Ms. Alicia Terada.

During the long history of the Japanese descendants to Argentina, the Nikkei community has overcome many difficulties, by taking pride as Japanese. Today, many of you are quite active in various fields, earning respect of the Argentine community. I pay my deep respect to you, who, through your efforts, serve as "bridges" between our two nations. I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Argentine community for living harmoniously with the 65 thousand Japanese descendants in your country.

More than three hundred memorial events have been held on a large scale during this commemorative year in both of our nations. I am very pleased that exchanges at the people to people level have developed so much, involving the Nikkei community, in various fields such as culture, sports etc.

Economically, the number of Japanese companies in Argentina has doubled in the last three years, which reflects Japanese private sectors' hopes for the administration of President Macri. It should be noted that the Japanese investment is also increasing. JBIC and NEXI signed a general agreement regarding the provision of an export credit line with the Bank of Argentine Nation. In this way, we will contribute to furthering the development of Argentine infrastructure through Japanese technology.

The signing of the investment treaty, the agreement in principle of the double tax

agreement, the mutual lifting of restrictions on the import of Argentine and Japanese beef to each other are some of the important outcomes this year. Before this visit, I tasted delicious Patagonian beef at my residence for lunch. We held several promotion events of Japanese beef in Buenos Aires in July and of Patagonian beef in 3 of Japan's major metropolitan cities, including Osaka in November.

I put forward the 3 guiding principles "Juntos!!" four years ago with the objective of cooperating hand-in-hand with the Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries: "progress together", "lead together" and "inspire together". Under these principles, we have developed a very fruitful relationship. As a next step, I would like to propose a further ambitious initiative, "Japan's Initiative to Enhance Connectivity between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean".

The first pillar is the "Enhancement of Economic Connectivity". We will move forward together to maintain and strengthen a free and open economic system that has benefited both Japan and the LAC region. We will promote improvement of measures such as investment treaties so that Japanese companies can contribute to the development of building value chains. Furthermore, quality infrastructure will serve as basis for sustainable development.

The second pillar is the "Enhancement of Connectivity of Values". Japan and the LAC region are beneficiaries of the international order based on fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law. A free and open maritime order is another important element of this international order. Through high-level

governmental exchanges, we will lead together the efforts to maintain this international order that faces numerous challenges today.

The last pillar is the "Enhancement of Connectivity of Wisdom ". To resolve the main issues of SDGs such as environment, poverty, security, health and hygiene or aging society, it is indispensable to share knowledge beyond the region. Japan has vast experience and expertise in addressing such issues as ICT, disaster risk reduction. It would also be splendid if Japan and the LAC countries can work together to share their wisdom with other countries that need it.

As strategic partners sharing 120 years of friendship and cooperation, Japan and Argentina can work together in numerous ways under this initiative. I conclude my words by hoping that our bonds of friendship will strengthen even more in the next 120 years.