

## The Turkish Republic is 91 Years Old!

Republic Day is a day on which many people in Turkey celebrate the anniversary of the foundation of our republic. It is celebrated on October 29 by organising performances and participating in traditional ceremonies with flags and musical bands. After Turkey's victory in the War of Independence (1919-1923), the Turkish parliament proclaimed the new Turkish state as a republic. The Turkish Republic's founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, proclaimed Republic Day as his greatest work. "We founded The Turkish Republic; it is you who will enhance and maintain it," he said. This year is The 91<sup>st</sup> anniversary of this success. Since its initiation, Republic Day has been celebrated in schools and local stadia. Performances usually consisting of theatre sketches, poetry readings and traditional Turkish dances are prepared for this special event. Parades may take place in some cities, and politicians may give public speeches. Many people also lay wreaths at Atatürk's monuments or visit his mausoleum in the country's capital, Ankara. The leader in the Turkish War of Independence, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk became the country's first president on the same day. Republic Day is an official national holiday in Turkey. Public administration buildings, schools, post offices and many small businesses are usually closed on this day.

Celebrating Republic Day is so important because it commemorates our independence. Over the years me and my IMT classmates have participated in many ceremonies. We read poems, made speeches, played in skits. In my high



school each year on October 29 a choir sings the best Republican songs and Atatürk's favourite songs. Some specially chosen students march in the parades arranged for the day. Bands are another irreplaceable part of Republic Day. Most of our families fly a flag in the windows or from the balcony. Children take a flag in their hands.

Every year on Republic Day we remember our ancestors. That's so important because Mustafa Kemal Atatürk charged us with memory. We are the ones who keep the results of their sacrifices alive. We will always look out for our ancestors' escrow. The Republic is the greatest present given to all of us. It is not only a day which is a holiday, but also our duty, our greatest heritage, and most importantly our future.

Happy Republic Day to all of you!  
And happy ninety-first birthday to the Republic of Turkey!

