

Algeria national day

Historic links foundation for ties with 'new' Algeria

Sid Ali Ketrandji
AMBASSADOR OF ALGERIA

Since we are celebrating the 55th anniversary of the launching of our national struggle for independence, my natural move is to pay tribute to the Japanese friends who supported my country during that difficult struggle, and whose solidarity resulted in 1958 in the opening of our Liberation National Front office in Tokyo.



The choice of Tokyo as a place for pre-independent Algeria to establish an office covering the whole of East Asia was certainly not accidental; it was to be understood with reference to that pre-existing active solidarity within a large spectrum of academicians, journalists and parliamentarians.

Let me underline the pioneering role of eminent Japanese parliamentarians in the 1961 creation of the Maghreb-Japan Association, whose leaders met the same year, in Tunisia, the leaders of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic.

Considering that historical background, there is no mystery to the fact that the Algeria-Japan economic relationship immediately followed the Algerian independence in 1962. The 1964 opening of the Itochu Corp. office in Algeria paved the way for the strong involvement of Japanese companies in our national development effort, in particular the building of Algeria's hydrocarbon sector.

We are happy to note that the same interest is still vivid, in the context of the liberalization of our economy and the return of security after the victory over terrorist groups, which threatened our country in the 1990s, thanks to the na-

tional reconciliation policy of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and the return of conditions for the promising new Algeria we are striving to build.

The convention for mutual protection of investment, under discussion, will certainly provide the institutional framework needed to bring economic relations closer to their existing potential. It will come in support to the valuable work of the Keidanren Algeria-Japan Committee, chaired by Yoshihiro Shigehisa, chairman emeritus of the JGC group.

Algeria will again invest during the 2010-2015 period no less than \$150 billion to sustain its development. It is hoped that Japanese companies will participate in numerous planned infrastructure projects. As they currently do, for example, in the construction of the eastern part of the East-West highway, the most important social infrastructure project ever undertaken abroad by Japanese com-

panies, and in diverse petrochemicals and natural gas projects.

Fortunately, the current international financial and economic crisis has not affected Algeria's foreign currency reserves earmarked for important new investments during the next five years. As many governments did, ours has taken measures to protect the national economy from the indirect effects of that crisis, without renouncing overtures to the world economy, while pursuing economic, political and institutional reforms.

Algeria has adopted new regulations that give a solid perspective to long-term foreign investors. The rational behind them is clear: Public-sector partners with foreign investors will be "sleeping partners." That means that they will refrain from interfering directly or indirectly in management and decisions while holding majority in capital. Thus, the Algerian govern-

ment will insure investment financing, with expectations of technology transfers and know-how.

The new regulations also aim to diversify foreign investment through our private sector. Foreign investors associated with private Algerian partners are invited to finance their projects by resorting to the Algerian banking system as well, taking advantage of the important financial resources available in the country. We are looking forward to seeing Japan's economic involvement in Algeria increased and diversified.

Algeria is familiar with Japanese technology and know-how, and does appreciate its technical cooperation. The technical cooperation agreement, signed in 2004, is full of possibilities, in particular in the fields of research and university exchanges. For instance, discussion is taking place between Oran Science



La Grande Poste: Built in 1910, the central post office of Algiers is a shining example of Algerian architecture and one of the many reasons why the Algerian capital is also known as "Alger la blanche (Algiers the White)." EMBASSY OF ALGERIA

A bright new chapter in Japan-Algeria relationship begins

Akira Urabe
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-ALGERIA ASSOCIATION

I am honored to be given the opportunity to write for the National Day of Algeria.



This year is an especially important year for the relationship between Algeria and Japan. I have taken an initiative, with the energetic support of the Algerian ambassador to Japan, to reinstate the Japan-Algeria Association, and on March 27, many enthusiastic promoters and supporters gathered, and began writing a new chapter of Japan-Algeria relations, af-

ter 20 years of blank pages.

The purpose of the Japan-Algeria Association is to provide a milieu for cultivating mutual friendship and collaboration between the two countries, with special focus on friendly exchanges in the areas of common interests, such as culture, arts and sports.

The history of the Japan-Algeria Association dates back to 1961, when the Japan-North Africa Association was established by the late Tokuma Utsunomiya, who was at that time a member of the House of Representatives, to support the independence of Algeria.

Japan enjoys excellent relationships with numerous countries and there exist many as-

sociations that are based on these favorable bilateral relations. However, I believe that the creation of bilateral associations dating back prior to the declaration of independence is quite rare.

The Japan-North Africa Association forged the foundation for Japan's auspicious relationship with Algeria and in 1981, the association renamed itself the Japan-Algeria Association. Unfortunately, after 1989, due to a sudden political crisis in Algeria, the association halted its operations. As the absence of its activities continued for a long period of time, the organization and the networks that the association had accrued over the years ceased to exist.

The association embarks on a new beginning this year. We have decided to preserve the name, the Japan-Algeria Association, since the founding principle remains unchanged: to establish an amiable relationship between Japan and Algeria.

As the bilateral interactions between Japan and Algeria

date back several decades, we have many "Friends of Algeria" in this country. In addition, because of the recent dynamic development of Japan-Algeria relations, the number of Japanese visitors to Algeria and residents in Algeria continues to multiply. This has resulted in a rapid increase in individuals who are interested in Algeria and who have become new "Friends of Algeria."

Until now, those people who have been interested in Algeria did not have any facile ways to meet with each other. We strongly hope that the Japan-Algeria Association will be able to take on the role as a platform for those people who wish to increase their ties with Algeria as well as for those who wish to share their ideas related to Algeria. We welcome both veteran and new "Friends of Algeria" to our group.

The Japan-Algeria Association has already held the following events this year: On June 18, we screened "The Battle of Algiers" and asked Prof. Iwao Kobori of the United Nations University, who

visited Algeria the night before independence, to share with us the experience of being present at inarguably the most decisive moment.

On July 3, on the occasion of our independence, the ambassador of Algeria to Japan hosted a reception to which all members of the association were invited and were able to share the moment of reunion and promise for a new departure of the organization.

On Oct. 3, we organized a cooking class. The wife of the ambassador whose talent of cooking is widely reputed among gourmets in Tokyo, taught us how to make La Chorba (Algerian soup), Le Bourek (Algerian spring rolls) and the well-known couscous. Participants all in aprons enjoyed learning how to make Algerian cuisine and in particular savoring it.

We plan on continuing to have a variety of events and look forward to seeing an increase in the number of "Friends of Algeria" joining the Japan-Algeria Association.

Japan supports Algeria's privatization

Yoshihiro Shigehisa
CHAIRMAN, ALGERIA-JAPAN ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, NIPPON KEIDANREN

On the occasion of the National Day of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, I

am honored to have this opportunity to convey my most sincere congratulations to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the people of Algeria in my capacity as chairman of the Algeria-Japan Economic Committee of Nippon Keidanren.



Under the leadership of President Bouteflika, Algeria is performing outstandingly well in sectors ranging from the economic, diplomatic, and political fields, through to culture and sports. Algeria has firmly positioned itself among the leaders of the African continent. Though geographically far apart, Algeria and Japan remain very close, based on their long and special relationship they mutually enjoy.

On Nov. 24 and 25 of last year, the seventh Algeria-Japan Economic Committee was held in Algiers. Commencing from this committee session, the counterpart organization on the Algerian side was changed to the Algerian Managers Forum (FCE), composed of private enterprises and headed by Chairman Reda Hamiani.

Topics discussed by the Committee were widened to embrace diverse, typically private-sector issues that include pharmaceuticals, foods, IT, port facilities and fisheries, as well as traditional areas of national interest such as energy, natural resources and infrastructure. From the Japanese side, reports were made on the subjects of highways, solar power and housing, among other topics.

Reservoirs of oil and gas will certainly not last forever. It is my belief that the introduction of solar power in Algeria, maximizing the long hours of sunshine in the vast Sahara Desert area, and the promotion aseismic housing in earthquake-prone Algeria, similar to Japan, were highly

evaluated by the Economic Committee as prospective business areas. Moreover, at the dinner party hosted by Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia following the committee meeting, the Prime Minister spoke impressively about his unwavering resolve to continuously move forward with privatization as a matter of considerable importance to Algeria.

Nippon Keidanren is privileged to have close communications with the FCE and will endeavor to promote the utmost level of cooperation with Algeria in the areas of technology transfer, human resource development and investment opportunities. As chairman of Keidanren's Algeria-Japan Economic Committee, my heartfelt wish is for a furthering of the economic ties between Algeria and Japan, leading to the creation of enhanced business opportunities between us.

On Algeria's National Day, I would like to express my sincere wishes for Algeria's continued development and further prosperity.

Congratulations to the People of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on Their National Day



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Closer relations will open more doors to business

Eizo Kobayashi
PRESIDENT & CEO, ITOCHU CORP.

On the 55th anniversary of Algeria's National Day, I have the great honor of conveying my congratulations to H. E. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the people of Algeria. It is a great pleasure to celebrate this day.



I would like to express my sincere respect for your excellent leadership not only in improving public order and the political situation, but also in significantly reducing external debt and stabilizing current account balances, which have led to Algeria's sharp economic growth.

For more than 40 years, following the opening of a liaison office in Algiers in 1964 — just two years after Algeria's independence — Itochu Corp. has

sought various business opportunities. I am fully convinced that Algeria is one of the most important countries for our company and we will continue to strive to satisfy the various needs of your country.

Being convinced that Japan can cooperate not only in hydrocarbon projects but also for industrial-infrastructure consolidation as well as for the development of new energy resources, I believe that the various types of new technologies Japan can provide will contribute especially to the improvement of industrial-infrastructure.

My hope is that the relationship between our two nations will be strengthened, leading to the creation of new business opportunities.

On the occasion of Algeria's National Day, I would like to express my heartfelt wishes for Algeria's continued development and further prosperity.

Ties with 'new' Algeria

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and Techniques University and the Japanese side to launch cooperation in solar energy. We are moving ahead toward the signing of a cooperation agreement between Houari Boumedienne University of Science and Techniques and Tsukuba University after one signed in 2007 with Chiba University.

We do appreciate the work JICA is accomplishing in Algeria, and are looking forward to the opening of its office in the country, thanks to the re-establishment of security.

Bilateral political dialogue and consultation have gained momentum. The way is more open today to institutionalize

this process. Therefore, the foreign ministries of both countries are working toward the signing of a memorandum for a joint mechanism toward that aim, possibly on the occasion of the expected visit of our foreign minister, H. .E. Mourad Medelci.

I would like to conclude by addressing my best wishes to the new government of Japan, led by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, whose success in the last general election underlines the vitality of democracy in this friendly country, and saying how happy we are to work with him to consolidate and promote friendship and cooperation between Algeria and Japan.

Congratulations to the People of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

on Their National Day



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Congratulations to the People of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

on the 55th Anniversary of Their National Day



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