

Egypt national day

Cooperation helps nations move ahead

Walid Mahmoud Abdelnasser
AMBASSADOR OF THE ARAB
REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

July 23 marks the National Day of the Arab Republic of Egypt. It offers Egyptians the opportunity to reflect on past developments and look forward to a brighter future, and allows us to express satisfaction at the state of Egyptian-Japanese relations and continue joint action to further consolidate our partnership.



This year, the National Day of Egypt is exceptionally special. It's the first one after Jan. 25, 2011, when a peaceful and civilized revolution — a revolution that is inspiring people all over the world to strive for the quest of living in freedom, dignity and justice — set the pace for a fully democratic Egypt, one that lives up to the aspirations of its people and engages more effectively with its friends and allies in the regional and global forums.

On this occasion and on behalf of the government of Egypt, I would like to convey our deepest respect to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor Akihito and the Empress Michiko, and to H.E. Prime Minister Naoto Kan. I would also like to express gratitude to the government and

people of Japan for the sincere friendship they have consistently accorded Egypt.

This year was also special in a different sense in Japan. I would like to seize this opportunity to express once again the condolences, solidarity and support of the Egyptian government and people to the Japanese government and people for the human and physical losses, in particular those in the areas devastated by the earthquake and tsunami of March 11, and the subsequent nuclear incident in Fukushima. Japan has started the recovery process. We are confident that this recovery will be speedy and the negative aspects of the disasters would be turned around into re-inventing the Tohoku region to be a model for the world in creating a community able to defend itself and cope effectively with disasters.

On this occasion, I also would like to give special tribute to both the victims of the Jan. 25 revolution in Egypt and the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Both will not be forgotten.

As 2011 has been Egypt Year in Japan, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the first encounter between the two peoples of Egypt and Japan in modern history, I would like to highlight some of the developments we recently have witnessed contributing to enhancing the relationship between Egypt and Japan.

The guideline for our ongoing cooperation has been the partnership launched between our two countries in 1999. Our long engagement has both demonstrated Japan's recognition of Egypt's geopolitical importance and pivotal regional and global role, and reflected Tokyo's commitment to strengthening the strategic partnership with Egypt in the Arab world and Africa. As Egypt has assumed the Presidency of the Non-Aligned Movement starting July 2009, Egyptian-Japanese cooperation will have even more positive ramifications for world affairs.

Egypt and Japan are cooperating on projects that will leave an enduring imprint on our bilateral relationship. Ongoing projects include The Grand Egyptian Museum, which upon its completion will be the largest open museum in the world, displaying more than 1 million pieces of antiquities. Both countries also already agreed in February 2010 to establish the largest wind farm in the region to generate energy in the Gulf of Alzait area, close to the Gulf of Suez. The Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), also open to Arab and African students, was inaugurated in June 2010. On the same day, a bilateral scientific and technological cooperation agreement was signed. Egypt is already looking forward to its

partnership with Japan in launching line No. 4 of the Cairo Metro subway lines in the days to come.

This year witnessed a relative decline in Japanese tourism flow to Egypt due to the travel advisory declared by the Japanese government regarding travel to Egypt after the Jan. 25 revolution. However, we are determined to work with our Japanese friends to reverse this trend. A few weeks ago, the Japanese government was convinced of our argument that the situation in Egypt is getting back to normal and lowered the grade of the travel advisory for Egypt. We hope that this move will bring more Japanese tourists to Egypt in the future and we also hope that the lowering of the grade of the travel advisory will cover all parts of Egypt.

As this year has been Egypt's Year in Japan, it was marked by mutual support, the most recent being Egypt's support to Japan in dealing with the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis. I was honored to have had the chance to visit the devastated areas twice, to offer support and solidarity to the victims. Also, the government of Egypt appreciates the support and confidence of the Japanese government following the Jan. 25 revolution. We appreciate the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) sending two Japanese experts to Egypt to assist in preparing for the upcoming elections and in the preparation of the next Egyptian five-year socioeconomic development plan. We equally sincerely appreciate the declaration

of the Japanese government that it will continue cooperating with Egypt in meeting its new and arising needs in order to introduce an upward and qualitative transformation in our partnership.

Egypt and Japan are equally partners in trilateral cooperation projects in African and Arab countries. The above-mentioned E-JUST and the CARD initiative to double rice production in Africa are only two examples. There are promising prospects for further expanding this cooperation.

Moreover, Egypt and Japan coordinate on multilateral affairs. Bilateral consultations regarding both disarmament and United Nations issues are happening regularly. Earlier this month, a new bilateral mechanism for consultation on human rights issues was introduced. I was honored to participate in the eighth round of the Inter-Civilizational Dialogue between Japan and the Islamic World in Tokyo in February 2010, a forum that I was also honored to participate in during its first round in 2002. Strategic dialogue at the level of deputy ministers was held earlier this month in Cairo.

The above-mentioned accomplishments represent new milestones in a long history of Egyptian-Japanese interaction that began 150 years ago and has been sustained by dedicated efforts on both sides. We have nurtured what we consider to be a unique relationship and we believe that the prospects that we both are interested in exploring are unlimited.



Solidarity: Accompanied by Democratic Party of Japan Diet members Yumiko Himeji (in white T-shirt, above right) and Harunobu Yonenaga (in white T-shirt, above left), Ambassador Walid Mahmoud Abdelnasser (in white T-shirt, above and below center) visits the Haruyama refugee shelter in Tamura City, Fukushima Prefecture, on June 4. EMBASSY OF EGYPT



Egypt remains important friend, significant partner for Japan

Masahiko Komura
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-EGYPT
PARLIAMENTARIANS FRIENDSHIP
LEAGUE

As the chairman of the Japan-Egypt Parliamentarians Friendship League, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to H.E. Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, leader of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the government and the people of Egypt on the occasion of the National Day of the Arab Republic of Egypt.



Egypt has been going through big political changes since the beginning of this year after the Jan. 25 revolution. These changes have made a huge impact upon the Arab world and became the forefront of what is known as the Arab Spring. Egypt is now undertaking the various reform processes, and Japan together with international societies would like to support its effort.

This year, Japan was hit by an unprecedented disaster. The Egyptian government and people extended to us heartfelt condolences and messages of encouragement. Taking this oppor-

tunity, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the government and people of Egypt.

Egypt has played significant roles in realizing peace and stability in the Middle East and Africa with strong leadership, and has been a long-lasting and important friend as well as a significant partner of Japan. I am confident that Egypt will maintain these peace-loving characteristics and play an even more important role after the revolution.

One of the significant developments in the bilateral relation these days is the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), which officially opened in June last year to meet the need for human resource development in Egypt and Arab and African states. I am happy to see that more than 40 students are now studying in the six faculties, including computer science and engineering, under the curriculum of the Japanese system and that the faculty of chemical and petrochemicals engineering will open soon. I am convinced that E-JUST seeks not only to teach Japanese science and technology but also to provide its students with the opportunities to learn core spirits of Japanese industrial culture, such as discipline and teamwork, through its rich programs. I sincerely hope that E-JUST will contribute to capacity building and the development of exchanges between Japanese people and the people in the

region in the fields of science and technology.

Regarding our economic relations, the second Japan-Arab Economic Forum, which aimed to strengthen mutual economic relations between Japan and Arab countries through cooperation in a wide range of fields, such as trade, investment, energy, technology and human resource development, was held in Tunisia last December. Around 1,100 governmental officials and businessmen of both Japan and Arab countries, including Egypt, attended this forum. At the forum, Japan and the League of Arab States also agreed to deepen cultural exchange and cooperation. I hope for the further development of the multi-layered relations between Japan and Egypt through such a forum.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the tireless efforts made by H.E. Ambassador Walid Mahmoud Abdelnasser, who is about to leave Japan after the successful completion of his term, for his contribution to our bilateral good relationship and hope that the ambassador will continue to be a good friend of Japan for ever and ever. We, the Japan-Egypt Parliamentarians Friendship League, are determined to make our utmost efforts to further enhance this excellent bilateral relation.

Last but not least, I would like to express my best wishes to the people of Egypt for every success and prosperity.

New political system likely will fit Egyptian society appropriately

Yuriko Koike
MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

On this National Day, I am all with the people of Egypt to celebrate the 59th anniversary of Revolution Day.



The democratic movement that started Jan. 25, which was initiated by the young minds in Egypt, has given the world a sense of great potentials toward the new Egypt.

Back in the 1970s, I majored in sociology at Cairo University. I took a class called Infi-gar Assukkan, The Explosion of Population. This class made me aware how different a country's national agenda is from the one that another country is working on. At that time, Japan was, and still is, facing issues of a declining population and an aging society. Of course, there are problems that are common in many countries, such as an increasing population, excessive urbanization or an increasing unemployment rate and social divide due to the changes in the industrial structure.

Last year, the Egypt-Japan

University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) was founded, which was sponsored by the Japanese government. Egypt has an abundance of talented youth and the purpose of this university is to provide them with higher education in science and technology, the area that had contributed to the economic growth of Japan over the decades.

It is a proven fact that education is a key factor for the development of a country. I am certain that E-JUST will serve to bring hope to the youth as well as growth to the society, while contributing as another symbol of long-standing friendship between Japan and Egypt.

The wave of the Arab Spring is seen as a path for the creation of new orders. I believe that wise Egyptian people will go through it and establish new political governmental systems that fit to the society and do so in an appropriate way.

Last but not least, the great support by Egypt for the victims of the devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit the Tohoku area of Japan on March 11 was greatly appreciated. I am sure the "kizuna" (bond) that ties Egypt and Japan strongly will last forever.



Close ties: Ambassador Walid Mahmoud Abdelnasser and his wife, Dahlia (right), welcome Sadako Ogata, president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), to the ambassador's residence in Tokyo for a National Day reception. EMBASSY OF EGYPT

Congratulations

to the People of the Arab Republic of Egypt
on the 59th Anniversary of Their National Day



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