

Togo national day

Pragmatic vision is helping to revive economic growth, stability

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It's a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 52nd anniversary of the independence of my country, Togo.

On this day, I would like to remember the sacrifice that was made by the first president of Togo, the late Sylvanus Olympio, and other Togolese citizens, which culminated on the night of April 27, 1960, in the proclamation of the independence of Togo.

Since that day, Togo has had its own destiny with very diverse historical realities, ranging from glorious periods to a long period of crisis, whose effects have begun to decline since 2005.

Today, with the pragmatic vision of the head of state H.E.



National symbols: The Independence Monument (left) created by the late Togolese artist Paul Ahyi stands in the capital Lome. The Tamberma mud tower-houses (right) make the Koutammakou region a UNESCO World Heritage site. EMBASSY OF TOGO



Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, Togo has overcome that difficult era of its history and, with its people more and more united, it has engaged its irreversible march toward development.

Recent years have indeed been years of great struggles to revive the economic growth and allow stability through many reforms, which have facilitated dialogue among the political circle and even among the Togolese citizens.

These positive results have

enabled Togo to be more present in international relations. Indeed, in its capacity as a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, Togo, like other members, has the responsibility to address the global challenges that shake the planet, keeping in focus stability and peacekeeping issues all around the globe.

However, this does not divert the Togolese authorities from their constant desire to offer to the Togolese people a much bet-

ter living environment, despite the efforts already made. That's why, since 2010, a public works strategy has been launched with the rehabilitation of infrastructures including roads, ports, airports, hotels. Agriculture, health or the supply sectors were not left behind, and efforts are now made to reach all sectors.

The celebration today of the 52nd anniversary of the independence of Togo also recommends me to talk about the bilateral re-

lations that exist, so happily, between Togo and Japan.

These relations were established after independence. Even if they have experienced difficult times, the cooperation upturn between Tokyo and Lome is increasing. More and more, Japan has been supporting Togo's development policy, especially focusing on the areas of water, agriculture, health, capacity building of state officials, etc.

The past two years are, with-

out any doubt, the most significant in our relations. By the will and vision of President Gnassingbe, Togo has come closer to its Japanese partner through the opening of a diplomatic mission in Tokyo.

Beyond that, I must recall the visit made by President Gnassingbe in June 2011, three months after the terrible events that struck the Japanese people, in order to give evidence of the compassion and support from the Togolese people, and their prayers and hope to see Japan recover quickly from the disaster.

Today, a year after, I can attest to the efforts being made by the people and the government of Japan in the reconstruction work that has taken place since March 11, 2011.

I would like to express, on behalf of my government, my heartfelt wish for Japan's quick recovery and prosperity, and my deep conviction in Japan's ability to create a new environment of hope and happiness, not only in Japan but also around the world.

**Congratulations
to the People of the Republic of Togo
on the 52nd Anniversary of
Their Independence Day**

PASCO is participating in the technical cooperation project, the study on the establishment of a topographic database in Togo, implemented by JICA.

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