

# DR Congo national day

## DRC invites Japanese private sector to seize opportunities

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Every year on June 30, the Congolese people commemorate their National Day, celebrating their nation's independence. On this occasion, the Congolese people renew their honor to the Fathers of Independence of our country: the first President of the Nation H.E. Joseph Kasavubu, the first Prime Minister Patrice Emery Lumumba ("Martyr of Independence") and others.

In this moment of the celebration of our 52nd anniversary of independence, and on behalf of the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and on my own behalf, I take this opportunity to express my congratulations to all Congolese people living in Japan and wish them happiness, health and success during their stay in this beautiful and friendly country of Japan.

On this sacred day, I have the honor and pleasure to extend hereby the warm greetings with deep respects from the President of the Democratic Republic



of the Congo H.E. Joseph Kabila Kabange, the government as well as all the Congolese people to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to all distinguished members of the Imperial family, members of government and to all the people of Japan.

Recently, the Japanese government has commemorated the tragic disaster that hit the Tohoku region. We still keep in mind the image of this drama and continue to feel compassion to all the people of Tohoku and wish them a complete recovery. Also, we express our admiration for the government's efforts for the reconstruction of Tohoku.

The celebration of the 52nd anniversary of our independence is an appropriate moment to assess the progress of our country in many fields and on bilateral relations with our partners of development in general and with Japan in particular.

First of all, we express our joy to celebrate this 52nd anniversary of our independence in the wholehearted unity of all our population, despite difficulties, and to see all the Congolese living together as one nation.

In fact, many conflicts in Congo have been caused by those who like to perpetuate their domination on our country and

on its natural resources. This bad intention to divide our country, the Balkanization of Congo, continues. But all our nation's people are determined to keep the country united with the help of people of good will all over the world.

Today, under the new leadership of H.E. President Kabila, our country is in a new era of reconstruction with priorities for the Cinq Chantiers (five major reconstruction projects for the country): infrastructure, education, health, energy and water, and transportation (airports, railways, seaports, etc.).

It is known that infrastructure is one of the big gaps in the development of African countries in general and the Congo in particular. As the 52nd celebration of our independence coincides with the preparations for the fifth meeting of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V), which is scheduled for June 2013, it is a good moment for the Japanese private sector to take a step toward investing in the DRC as other Asian, American or European companies have done.

The DRC is doing its best to build a new country. But the structural gap in infrastructure constitutes a big handicap for economic growth and poverty reduction.

On Nov. 28, 2011, the Congolese

people re-elected H.E. President Kabila for a new five-year term. This re-election is a sign of good leadership and good governance.

In fact, many people coming from abroad are witnessing a big change, not only in the capital Kinshasa but also all over the country. These foreigners are surprised by a new, dynamic nation-building, which has never been seen in this country — big public works of reconstruction and modernization of the country under the leadership of H.E. President Kabila.

This is the reason we invite the Japanese private sector to join other partners of Congo. We know Japan needs all kinds of minerals for its industries. The DRC has many opportunities in this field (copper, cobalt, diamonds, gold, coltan, uranium, cassiterite, niobium, manganese, tin, nickel, gas, oil, etc.). We hope the Japanese private sector can remember the Japanese copper company Sodimiza, which had investments in Katanga Province, but closed many years ago.

Since 2001, the government has initiated economic reforms aimed at stabilizing the macroeconomic situation and promoting economic growth to attract investments. So the country has a code of investments and a mining code.

In the energy field, the Japa-

nese private sector can join the efforts of other DRC partners (South Africa, the European Union, the U.S., etc.) to finalize the large hydroelectric dam of Inga on the Congo River. It has become a regional project to provide electricity to many African countries. It is known that sustainable development cannot occur in the absence of electric power.

The Inga site is located about 200 km southwest of Kinshasa. Phases I and II have been completed and provide electricity not only to Kinshasa, but also to Brazzaville in the Republic of the Congo and Zambia. The next two phases, III and IV (Grand Inga), are to be finalized by NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) and other partners. The capacity at Inga in the final phase will be 45,000 megawatts.

Other fields that can interest the Japanese private sector are tourism, agriculture, textiles and transport (railways, airways).

Tourism is one of the growing industries and is based on wildlife, nature reserves, flora and fauna. The country also has 46 percent of Africa's equatorial forest with many species available for timber. This rich environment is the reason the DRC plays an important role against the effects of global warming.

The relations between Japan

and the DRC have been strong for many years. Japan has assisted our country during and after the conflicts not only through the U.N. peacekeeping operations known as MONUSCO, but since our independence in 1960; also in the field of education at the University of Kinshasa and others; health; police training for security reasons; refugee problems when Madame Sadako Ogata was the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, etc. The DRC is happy to see the number of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) experts rise more and more since

the reprise of cooperation to help our country fight poverty.

In conclusion, I can say we are happy to see strong relations between Japan and the DRC. We reiterate our thanks for all Japan has done for the DRC to help our country to consolidate its peace by MONUSCO, JICA and others.

We hope the Japanese private sector will follow the Japanese government's step to invest in our country for the mutual benefit of our two countries. The DRC offers many opportunities in mining and other fields for Japanese industries.

In this period of TICAD V

preparation, it is important for the Japanese private sector to make the decision to invest in the DRC and other African countries because the TICAD process is the Japanese government's initiative to help the African continent achieve the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals.

In the same way, our country would like to consolidate its cultural relations with Japan in the field of martial arts or Bushido, as karate and other arts give the young generation of Congolese the spirit of patriotism, courage and love of work.

**Congratulations**  
to the People of the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
on the 52nd Anniversary of Their Independence

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