

Guinea national day

Promising development across a wide range of areas

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AMBASSADOR OF GUINEA

The celebration of the 57th anniversary of independence of the Republic of Guinea is a timely opportunity to express to their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, the government and people of Japan the gratitude and the recognition of the Guinean people, its government and President Alpha Conde for the invaluable contributions and the substantial support provided in connection with its policy development process, both economic and social, especially in this difficult time marked by Ebola.

On this memorable day, we pay tribute to all the men, women and children who have struggled to free people from colonial yokes, but also salute the importance of the Japan-Africa partnership looking to the intensification and diversification of areas of cooperation.

The history of the Japan-Guinea partnership dates back to 1975, based on friend-

ly and fraternal relations, against a backdrop of cooperation focusing on shared values such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, good governance and mutual obligations for sustainable and effective development.

With enormous mining potential, agropastoral resources and fisheries, Guinea is also a culturally attractive country. Despite historical and cultural differences, Japanese and Guinean peoples have nourished a strong and sincere friendship and have an affinity for each other. As such, both parties have identified several strategic areas of partnership, including water resources, fisheries, energy, private sector development, tourism, infrastructure, education, health and agriculture.

Since the beginning of our cooperation, various grants and subsidies were provided to Guinea to support its economic development. With the advent of the Third Republic, a time in which the rule of law in Guinea flourished, guided by the vision advocated by Conde, which is that of a resurgent Guinea, Japan was able to form a strategic partnership with Guinea, involv-



President Alpha Conde of the Republic of Guinea

ing cooperation, a “win-win” mutual responsibility, transparency and accountability.

However since 2014, this support has faced a decline following the emergence of Ebola, which resulted in numerous human casualties and destabilized the economy. This caused a decline in economic growth (1.3 percent in 2014 followed by zero growth forecast in 2015) and deterioration in the exchange rate.

So, through its implementing agencies, such as the

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japanese government has provided several grants and subsidies to Guinea as a response against Ebola. These were used to finance basic social sector projects and programs, including education, health, water and energy, agriculture and food security, the environment, the development of small and medium enterprises, institutional capacity building, human and managerial support to the administration, the private sector and society.

The International Conference on African Development, TICAD initiative launched under the impetus of the Japanese government in 1993, has promoted a high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and Japan on economic challenges facing Africa. Today TICAD has become the main global framework to coordinate the implementation of programs to promote the development of Africa, according to two guiding principles. These are the appropriation by African ownership of their development process and international partnerships between all stakeholders. Thereby an assistance program was

dedicated to Africa worth €24 billion, €10.8 billion of official development assistance, and €13.2 billion representing the aid that will support Africa's efforts toward democratization, peace, political stability and economic development in various fields. These include infrastructure construction and the fight against poverty, education and human resource development, not to mention the already deployed programs, which aim to support the process of reintegration of some states in the international community. These actions are essential foundations for the growth and prosperity of Africa.

The Republic of Guinea, since its return to constitutional order and the implementation of its program of economic and financial reforms in 2011, has achieved significant results in reviving economic growth (4 percent in 2011 and 2012 and 2.5 percent in 2013), the reduction of inflation from 20.8 percent in 2010 to around 8.5 percent in 2015) and stabilizing exchange rates.

These performances helped achieve many programs such as the Initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), the National Agricul-

tural Investment and Food Security Program and the National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan.

As for the human and social development, significant progress has been made since 2011 through the implementation of various policies.

The “Doing Business,” policy, which was launched eight years ago encourages measures for business creation. The policy, through granting construction permits, employing workers, enabling property transfers, securing credit, protecting investments, enforcing tax payments, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and insolvency solutions, helped establish effective regulations to foster a mutually beneficial partnership.

I want to conclude this address by expressing the deep gratitude of the people and the Guinean government for the invaluable contribution of the international community and its solidarity to fight for the eradication of Ebola and the rehabilitation of countries affected by this epidemic.

Guinea, is at a crossroads and can look to the future with hope, but to have long suffered the weight of history, the country now needs to play a leading role in promoting the development of its growth sectors and providing essential contributions to the

economic development of other nations, through the promotion of partnerships, including the one with Japan, which is one of the most

promising.

Finally, I extend my gratitude for the opportunity to convey my message to The Japan Times.

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Guinea on Their Independence Day

Cooperation through Projects
in the Environmental Sector



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