

Algeria National Day

Boosting ties for more dynamic relationships

Mohamed El Amine Bencherif
AMBASSADOR OF ALGERIA

Sixty-one years ago, on Nov. 1, 1954, the Algerian people launched the national revolution that continues to inspire the internal and external policies of Algeria.

I seize this auspicious opportunity to extend my warm greetings to Your Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the government and people of Japan.



As the new ambassador of Algeria to Japan, I am pleased to address the readers of The Japan Times through this message of friendship while I send my best wishes for more progress and prosperity for Japan.

Algeria enjoys a stable and secure internal situation backed by sustainable economic growth over the last 15 years, making Algeria an attractive destination for trade and investment.

Indeed, after the attainment of its stability due to the successful national reconciliation policy launched by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika in 2005, Algeria led continuously for

several years profound structural reforms that freed the initiative of businesses while investing significant resources in the economic and social development through pluri-annual investment programs of \$150 billion between 2004 and 2009 and \$286 billion between 2009 and 2014.

Algeria's new investment program for 2015 to 2019 with \$260 billion of public spending aims to diversify the economy by building a modern industry, especially in the areas such as mining, automotive, agribusiness, food processing among others. It intends, in particular, to pursue the expansion and modernization of infrastructure, the improvement of human resources and the promotion of Algerian companies. It offers foreign investors the opportunity to contribute to the emergence of a strong network of companies, equipped with knowledge and managerial skills with the availability of funding by the Algerian banking system.

Through this program, Japanese businesses can make Algeria a production base for export to neighboring regions by enjoying the benefits taken from geographic closeness and granted, in particular,

thanks to the partnership agreements signed with the European Union and the Greater Arab Free Trade Area.

Indeed, Algerian-Japanese business relations date back to the first years of Algerian independence. Since the 1960s, Japanese companies have often accompanied the development efforts of Algeria. This gave rise to great achievements especially in the hydrocarbons sector, in maritime transport and public works. This economic permanence, nurtured by deep mutual confidence, remained even during the difficult period our country went through in the early 1990s.

Furthermore, the attractiveness of the country is supported by political stability; very sustainable macroeconomic framework; reassuring classification of risk; and a privileged geographical position that puts Algeria at the crossroads of Europe and Africa. Algeria has had a growth rate of 3 to 4 percent over the last 10 years and is supposed to continue on that path in the coming years. The government aims to reach 7 percent growth rate by 2019. This explains the incentive measures enjoyed by the business sector and the efforts to modernize

it and prepare it for international competition.

Those conditions are supported by the large size of Algerian market, with 39.1 million inhabitants with purchasing power, as well as huge natural resources, including oil, natural gas, uranium, gold, phosphate and others. Also supporting the conditions are the important infrastructure in terms of electricity, telecommunications and transport; strong financial reserves; well-trained human resources; the advantageous costs of input through competitive wage costs; and an incentive tax regime which can give tax holidays for foreign investments from three to 10 years, depending on the area.

Japanese businesses could be involved in various fields, especially the petrochemical, pharmaceutical, electronic, renewable energy, desalination and automotive industries, as well as ITC in which Algeria is one of the most dynamic markets in the Mediterranean basin.

In its cooperation with Japan, Algeria tends to focus on academic and university exchanges, which are supported by many legal frameworks, in particular, the agreement signed in March

between the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Japanese National Institute of Materials Science (NIMS). These agreements will encourage universities of both countries to pursue joint scientific researches in various fields.

One of the promising projects in cooperation between the two countries is the Sahara Solar Breeder project, which aims to extract silicon from Sahara sand. This silicon can be used to develop solar panels with a high capacity of solar energy captivity.

These projects and opportunities of business doing in Algeria will certainly widely contribute to further deepen and diversify partnership between the two countries.



Located 600 km south of the capital Algiers, Mzab Valley is a major tourist destination in Algeria. It features traditional architecture from the 11th century and is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. EMBASSY OF ALGERIA



Inaugurated in November 2014, the new Renault factory in Oran in the western part of Algeria has diversified the country's automobile industry. EMBASSY OF ALGERIA

JGC Group enjoying a long history of engineering in Algeria

Yoshihiro Shigehisa
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS OF JGC GROUP

On the occasion of the 61st National Day of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, I am sincerely honored to have the opportunity to offer my warmest congratulations.

When I visited Algeria in the mid-1960s, JGC was awarded for the first time by the United Nations a technical-economic study for petrochemical industries, as well as a marketing and engineering study, which gained the recognition and appreciation of the Algerian government. This was a very impressive, landmark step in the commencement of the relationship between Algeria and JGC.

JGC has since enjoyed the distinct privilege of being permitted to provide professional services to the Oil & Gas business in Algeria for over 50 years. In leading my company's efforts in your esteemed nation, my heartfelt desire in the coming half-century and beyond is to contribute to the further development of not only the energy field through our most valued clients including Sonatrach but also other industries in Algeria.

As a major part of our commitment, starting from 2006 JGC has operated a local engineering subsidiary called JGC AL-



geria S.p.A. The number of employees is increasing and the company now has a staff of more than 330, with 99 percent being Algerian engineers. Local capabilities are being developed by their daily activities and accumulated experience, as well as through the success of projects undertaken, in addition to on-the-job training received.

Taking the opportunity on this special Day, I would like to express my most sincere wishes for Algeria's continued economic development and further prosperity, and for the heightening of the close relationship between Algeria and JGC, as well as between our respective nations.

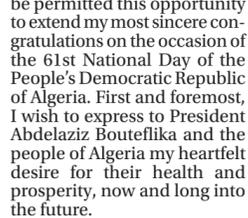
Keisuke Takeuchi
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-ALGERIA
ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, JAPAN
BUSINESS FEDERATION (KEIDANREN)

On behalf of the Japan-Algeria Economic Committee of the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren), it is an honor to be permitted this opportunity

to extend my most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the 61st National Day of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. First and foremost, I wish to express to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the people of Algeria my heartfelt desire for their health and prosperity, now and long into the future.

As chairman of the Japan-Algeria Economic Committee, I am committed to contributing to the further economic well-being of both Algeria and Japan. In such capacity, I organized a meeting of the committee on July 22 in which more than sixty Japanese businessmen participated. We were deeply honored to receive Ambassador of Algeria to Japan H.E. Mohamed El Amine Bencherif to the meeting. He most kindly gave a comprehensive presentation covering the recent political and economic situations, as well as the current business environment, of Algeria.

Keidanren will continue to assume a key role in the global economy through recognizing and promoting business opportunities between Japan and other countries. For its part,



Strengthening economic bonds

the Japan-Algeria Economic Committee wishes to continuously take the lead in strengthening the economic ties between our two countries through the further development of natural resources and other areas of mutual business interest.

As always, I am fully convinced of the importance of the special relationship between our nations and strongly anticipate its further development for many years to come.

Hoping to see the Algerian flag over Tokyo

Akira Urabe
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-ALGERIA ASSOCIATION, FORMER
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO ALGERIA



After its independence in 1962, the 1964 Tokyo Olympics were the very first Olympics Algeria participated in. Mohamed Yamani, a gymnast and the sole athlete representing Algeria carried the flag, wrote in an article: "The participation was symbolic for a republic which had just seen the first light after birth. The Algerian flag floating high in the sky of Tokyo was sufficient for us to be filled with jubilation. We had come before all to affirm our presence on the international stage."

Algeria is a remarkably a sports-loving nation and it has, apart from world-class footballers, numerous Olympic medalists in such events as track and field, boxing and judo. Judo is very popular across the country and constitutes an important chapter in Japan-Algeria cooperation. I still vividly remember the courteous demeanor and firm handshakes with the members of Algerian Federation of Judo headed by Mohamed Merija from gatherings at our house in Algiers. They shared

the stories about their experience of training and competitions with Japanese judoka in Tokyo. As a means to support their training, the Japanese Foreign Ministry donated various equipment, as well as tatami and judo-gi, to the Algerian Federation of Judo.

At that time, Salima Souakri, the African Champion and Olympic medal contender in Barcelona and Atlanta was one of the best-known Algerian judoka among the Japanese residents in Algiers. We called her the "Yawara-chan of Algeria." "Yawara-chan" was an affectionate nickname for Ryoko Tani, the legendary Japanese Olympic champion in the 48-kg weight category. The two medals earned by Algerian judoka in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in heavier weight categories. I remember calling the Embassy of Algeria in Tokyo the moment I heard the exciting news as I had been watching the two judoka from the time I was in Algeria.

I express my wish that in 2020 an Algerian flag will again fly over Tokyo and many athletes from Algeria will continue to have superb performances in the Olympic Games. On the occasion of the National Day on Nov. 1, let me express my congratulations and best wishes to the people and the government of Algeria.

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

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