

Ghana Independence Day Special

Strong ties flourish on trade, people-to-people exchanges

GENEVIEVE E. APALOO
AMBASSADOR OF GHANA



I am simply elated to be representing Ghana at this period of heightened bilateral ties between Ghana and Japan. This relationship, which began in the late 1920s, through the selfless work of

Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, the renowned Japanese bacteriologist in what was at the time known as the Gold Coast, matured into the establishment of full diplomatic missions in our respective countries, soon after Ghana's independence on March 6, 1957.

On behalf of the government and people of Ghana, I wish all my compatriots and friends of Ghana here in Japan a happy 66th Independence Day anniversary. May we live to celebrate many more such occasions commemorating the valuable ties between Ghana and Japan.

Our countries have come a long way, and the rewards of the relationship are visible for all to see, both at the bilateral and multilateral levels. Indeed, Ghana con-

tinues to enjoy very strong support from Japan's overseas development assistance programs in its resolute strides toward socioeconomic development, notably in the areas of agriculture, health, infrastructure and education.

Ghana is one of three African countries selected for assistance in the piloting of the universal health coverage program. The government of Japan also provides substantial assistance in the area of capacity-building for various categories of personnel from Ghana. The assistance is mainly implemented by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and its overseas affiliate the Japan Development Service Company, and we look forward to strengthening our collaboration in the coming years.

One strong link in our people-to-people relationships is the biannual dispatch of young Japanese volunteers under the aegis of the Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program to teach and offer vocational training in selected Ghanaian schools. The program has been in operation for 30 years, with positive results for both countries. Currently, efforts are underway to further enhance it to foster greater cultural bonds.



President Nana Akufo-Addo
EMBASSY OF GHANA

In recent times, the trade and economic ties between Ghana and Japan have been flourishing to our mutual satisfaction. I am happy to note that despite the lull brought on by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Japan External Trade Organization opened its ninth African office in Accra in 2020. And to the credit of the excellent partnership between our countries, JETRO has, as recently as February, concluded a 30-member Japanese trade mission to Ghana. Members of the delegation were pleasantly surprised at the huge investment opportunities available to them within the Ghanaian economy. Therefore, I wish to seize this opportunity to invite many more Japanese investors and entrepreneurs to visit Ghana to see for themselves the myriad of economic and trade opportunities available in the country.

It is my utmost belief that Japanese investors in Ghana will be reaping the huge and exponential economic benefits held out for them by the current intra-African



Ghana boasts miles of pristine beaches. Below: Formerly a trading post, Elmina Castle is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

GHANA TOURISM
AUTHORITY



trading that has begun under the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, headquartered in Accra. The AfCFTA is considered a vital key to unlocking the vast economic potentials of this resource-rich continent, and that is the reason why African countries are working hard to attract businesses from Japan.

Within the larger multilateral settings, relations between Ghana and Japan have benefited from the Tokyo International Conference for African Development, the triennial summit between Japan and Africa that provides the political and economic frameworks within which Japan and Africa continue to work on the world stage. In August 2022, Ghana participated in the eighth TICAD summit in Tunis, giving a strong indication of Ghana's active political engagement with Japan.

At the United Nations, both Ghana and Japan are currently nonpermanent members of the Security Council, working together to ensure that the global body's foremost peace and security organ becomes more efficient and effective. Suffice it to say that Japan's focus on the Secu-

rity Council, which is championing the need to bring back onto the global stage the rule of law and order into international governance, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in many ways coincides with Ghana's objectives. These target the menace of terrorism and insecurity in the Sahel as well as piracy along the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa.

It is my fervent hope that as the world

works to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, Ghana and Japan will identify further areas of expansion of our bilateral ties for our mutual benefit. Happy 66th independence anniversary!

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Kwame Nkrumah
Memorial Park is
named after the first
president of
independent Ghana.
GETTY IMAGES

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