

# Rwanda National Day Special

## A country on the move, driven by innovation

**ERNEST RWAMUCYO**  
AMBASSADOR OF RWANDA



Rwanda is celebrating 29 years of liberation that led to the stopping of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi on July 4, 1994, and marked the beginning of the process of rebuilding into a new and transformed Rwanda. We also commemorate 61 years since Rwanda's attainment of independence.

Nearly three decades after liberation, Rwanda has made strong social, economic and governance progress. Like the proverbial phoenix, Rwanda has risen from its ashes. A country that was a failed state over 20 years ago has become a model for successful post-conflict nation-building.

Rwanda has invested heavily in its population to improve people's health, skills, wealth and productivity. Elementary school net enrollment has expanded to cover 96% of school-aged children. Free education covers the cycle from primary to nine years of basic education. Literacy rates have subsequently grown to over 70% of the population. About 95% of the Rwandan people are covered by the country's

community health insurance plan, guaranteeing access to health care services by the majority of the population. This has led to drastic declines in infant, child and maternal mortality, with a significant rise in life expectancy for the general population. As a result, life expectancy increased from 51 years in 2002 to almost 70 years in 2022, according to the 2022 Rwanda Population and Housing Census Report.

After setbacks to economic growth due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and increases in food and energy prices due to disruptions in the global supply chain

caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, economic growth has rebounded quite strongly, thanks to sound macroeconomic policies and good economic governance.

According to the Africa Development Bank's economic outlook report for 2023, Rwanda's real gross domestic product is projected to grow 7.6% in 2023 and reach 8% in 2024. Per capita income has more than quadrupled from \$220 in 2000 to an estimated \$970 in 2023.

Visionary leadership has been critical in steering Rwanda away from its tragic past and toward a stable and prosperous future.

President Paul Kagame has provided the inspiration, leadership and vision that have drastically transformed the country.

Last year, Rwanda and Japan celebrated 60 years of bilateral diplomacy. Over the last six decades, our countries have built an unbreakable bond of friendship. Since bilateral relations between us were established in July 1962 when Rwanda gained independence and became a member of the United Nations, our countries have had a convergence of interests exemplified by a long history of strong bilateral cooperation, a mutual belief in multilateralism



and demonstrated collaboration on key multilateral issues. These include climate change, green growth, global peace and security, reform of the U.N. Security Council, sustainable development goals and most recently, global action on the coronavirus pandemic and equitable access to vaccines.

Japan was a key contributor to the COVAX facility that enabled equitable vaccine access, and I believe our friendship will flourish for many years to come.

Rwanda is the first country in the world to have a parliament with a majority of female members.

EMBASSY OF RWANDA

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

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their Independence  
and Liberation Day Anniversaries.**



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