

Cote d'Ivoire Independence Day Special

Committed to growing economic relations

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AMBASSADOR OF COTE D'IVOIRE



Today, Cote d'Ivoire is celebrating 63 years of independence, with plans to commemorate next year the 60th anniversary of the Feb. 24, 1964, opening of the Japanese Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire.

The commemoration of our independence is taking place in a peaceful political environment. The country is doing well and aims to become both a producer and processor of agricultural products. These include cocoa, cashew nuts, palm oil and rubber. The aim is to become one of the top middle-income countries by 2030, by consolidating the peace, security and justice triptych.

The cooperation between Cote d'Ivoire and Japan is an exemplary partnership. In terms of political and diplomatic cooperation, several high-level visits between the countries have been organized. These include the attendance of H.E. President Alassane Ouattara in June 2013 at the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development in Yokohama, and for

the enthronement of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito in October 2019. Additionally, in 2014, then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe traveled to Cote d'Ivoire for a friendship and working visit, which led to the signing of several bilateral agreements.

This momentum continued with the meetings between Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly and Abe at TICAD 7 in Yokohama, in August 2019, and the working lunch between Ivorian and Japanese delegations led respectively by Prime Minister Patrick Achi and Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, at TICAD 8 in Tunisia in August 2022.

Cote d'Ivoire and Japan are committed to strengthening economic cooperation. The signing of several bilateral deals, notably the Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Reciprocal Investments between our governments, as well as the setting up of a committee to improve the business environment for the activities of Japanese companies in Cote d'Ivoire, are eloquent testimony to this good cooperation.

Moreover, Japan welcomes the improved economic performance of Cote

d'Ivoire, whose indicators are in the green, making it the economic powerhouse of West Africa and the driving force of the West African Economic and Monetary Union. The resilience of the Ivorian economy, which is appreciated by our Japanese partner, is underlined by a growth rate of over 6% in 2022, after having recorded a positive rate of 2% during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, when several countries posted negative growth.

The Japanese government also welcomed the National Development Plan (NDP 2021-2025) drawn up by the Ivorian government that amounts to \$98 billion. A significant share, 73%, is reserved for the private sector and bilateral and multilateral partners, including Japan.

Japan's commitment stems from the intention of the Japanese and Ivorian authorities to support the expansion of Japanese companies in Cote d'Ivoire through the creation of a committee to improve the business environment, in particular with the opening of the Japan Desk at the Centre de Promotion des Investissements en Cote d'Ivoire (CEPICI).

Similarly, TICAD 8, held in Tunisia on Aug. 27 and 28, 2022, provided an opportunity for bilateral meetings where high-level Ivorian and Japanese delegations discussed the need to deepen bilateral relations through the Japan-Cote d'Ivoire investment agreement and efforts to promote and stimulate investment in Cote d'Ivoire.

In line with this, Solange Amichia, director general of CEPICI, later made a working visit to Japan in February at the invitation of the Japanese government. During her stay and on the occasion of various meetings, she encouraged the Japanese business community to invest in Cote d'Ivoire in accordance with the TICAD 8 Declaration, stressing the importance of Japanese private investment for inclusive and sustainable economic growth and African development.

Our two countries have been linked since 1960 by an exemplary partnership based on shared values. Cote d'Ivoire and Japan share a common view on international issues and have consistently given joint priority to strengthening multilateralism, fighting climate change and fighting terrorism.



The New Alassane Ouattara Bridge is scheduled to be inaugurated later this month.

In this respect, Cote d'Ivoire appreciates Hayashi's announcement to support the development of the northern region of the country because of its importance in maintaining the stability of Cote d'Ivoire and the West African sub-region.

Cote d'Ivoire recognizes the vulnerability of food security in Africa and intends to cooperate with Japan to strengthen food security on the continent. Regarding the importance of transparency and equity in development financing, our countries confirmed their cooperation.

In addition, Cote d'Ivoire and Japan have agreed to continue working together to

address regional and international issues, including the strengthening of U.N. functions in general and the reform of the Security Council, in particular.

In conclusion, I would like to thank our partners — Marubeni Corp., NS Semicon Co., Toyota Tsusho Corp., Sakai Heavy Industries Ltd. and the Japan-Cote d'Ivoire Friendship Association — for their continued support.

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

Congratulations

*to the People of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
on the Anniversary of Their Independence*

Japan Cote d'Ivoire Friendship Association (JCIFA)

<https://jcifa.org/>

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Their Independence



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On Cote d'Ivoire's Independence Day

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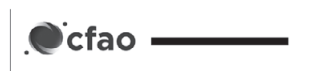
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