

Jamaica Independence Day Special

Strengthening people-to-people exchanges

SHORNA-KAY RICHARDS
AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA



On Aug. 6, Jamaica will celebrate the 61st anniversary of its independence under the theme “Proud and Strong.” The theme reminds us of two important characteristics of our people that have

helped us chart our course — from slavery to an independent nation that has made indelible marks in numerous areas of human endeavor at the global level.

Indeed, a reflection on our dynamic history will reveal that our pride and strength are behind the actions that have shaped this young nation. Firmly committed to “reigniting our nation for greatness,” the Jamaican

government is forging ahead in 2023 with plans for the country to transition to a republican system of government.

In terms of our ongoing nation-building, Jamaica is partnering with like-minded countries at various levels to advance our development agenda. Sharing many common values and interests as island nations, Jamaica and Japan continue to pursue an enhanced development partnership, building on more than 59 years of cooperation.

This past year was an active period of engagement for our countries as Jamaica celebrated its 60th independence anniversary. We remain grateful to the vibrant and ever-expanding network of Jamaican diaspora, as well as our Japanese partners whose collaboration throughout the year made our Diamond Jubilee celebrations successful.

The past year has allowed us to deepen the “J-J partnership” in different ways. Our coffee and cotton stakeholders undertook

several exchanges as we sought to maintain and boost commercial ties. In fact, 2023 has been a particularly significant year for our coffee partners, who are celebrating the 70th anniversary since the first direct shipment of Jamaican coffee to Japan. Those familiar with our bilateral history are cognizant of the role coffee has played in our partnership.

The embassy also collaborated with the Japan-Jamaica Friendship Association on several initiatives and commends its commitment to strengthening our people-to-people bonds as the association approaches its first anniversary on Aug. 27. Culturally, the Reggae Bon Bon Project with the Japan International Cooperation Agency created a music-dance fusion enjoyed by many.

Over the past 11 months, reciprocal high-level visits have strengthened our cooperation agenda. Jamaica’s tourism minister and our minister responsible for agriculture and fisheries visited Japan in late 2022. Masa-

toshi Akimoto (parliamentary vice minister for foreign affairs) and Shunsuke Takei (state minister for foreign affairs) visited Jamaica in Oct. 2022 and May 2023, respectively.

The latter’s visit during Jamaica’s chairmanship of the 26th Meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was a pivotal moment in Japan’s relations with our region. It reflected Japan’s commitment to reinforcing the bonds of friendship and goodwill that underpin its relations with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). It was also a tangible demonstration of Japan’s commitment to enhancing cooperation with its LAC partners — an important pledge emanating from the Hiroshima G7 summit earlier this year. We congratulate Japan on its successful hosting of the summit, which underscored the importance of maintaining “a free and open international order based on the rule of law” amid efforts



Shunsuke Takei, Japan's state minister for foreign affairs, shows the winning Friendship Year logo, flanked by Jamaican Foreign Minister Kamina Johnson Smith (left) and CARICOM Secretary-General Carla Barnett.

EMBASSY OF JAMAICA

to develop together as a global community.

Jamaica and CARICOM will seize this momentum to develop closer bonds with Japan — a genuine and reliable partner. We have two significant milestones in 2024: the 60th anniversary of Jamaica-Japan diplomatic relations and the second Japan-CARICOM Friendship Year. We welcome the ongoing visit to Jamaica (Aug. 6 to 8) by Hiroshige Seko, the Liberal Democratic Party’s Secretary-General in the House of Councilors, and other senior Diet mem-

bers. We anticipate that the visit will spur the revitalization of the Japan-CARICOM Parliamentary Friendship League — one of several mechanisms in place to upscale our relations.

Happy 61st Independence Day to all Jamaicans in Japan and everywhere!

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

**Congratulations
to the Government and
People of Jamaica
on the Anniversary of
Their Independence**

**Association of Japanese Importers
of Jamaican Coffee**

Ataka Trading Co., Ltd.
Kanematsu Corporation
MC Agri Alliance Ltd.
UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.
Wataru & Co., Ltd.
Yutaka Trading Co., Ltd.
<http://www.bluemountain.gr.jp>

Congratulations
to the People of
Jamaica on the
Anniversary
of Their
Independence



Kondo Spinning Co., Ltd.
spins Sea Island cotton
from Jamaica.

 <https://www.kondobo.co.jp>  renment

Congratulations
to the Government and
People of Jamaica
on the Anniversary of
Their Independence

Marubeni
<https://www.marubeni.com>

Congratulations
to the Government and
People of Jamaica on the
Anniversary of Their
Independence



*west indian
sea island cotton*
West Indian Sea Island Cotton Association
<https://www.kaitoumen.co.jp>

