

Zimbabwe Independence Day Special

Long ties boon for progress and investment

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On the auspicious occasion of the 44th anniversary of the Republic of Zimbabwe's National Day, I would like to extend warm greetings from the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe His

Excellency Emmerson Mnangagwa and the people of Zimbabwe to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako and members of the imperial family, as well as the government and people of Japan.

This year marks the 44th anniversary of Zimbabwe's independence from British colonial rule, which came after a protracted armed struggle against the settler administration. On April 18, 1980, the Union Jack flag was lowered, signaling the end of more than 100 years of colonial rule and the founding of Zimbabwe, a significant milestone in the achievement of majority rule and the establishment of democracy.

The 2024 independence celebrations are appropriately titled Zim@44: Unity, Peace, and Development towards Vision 2030. The theme serves as a poignant reminder of Zimbabwe's route to independence, which was defined by togetherness, collaborative effort and determination. It is a call to recognize previous sacrifices, while working together to create a future of wealth, peace and growth and prosperity.

Zimbabwe's development objectives are contained in Vision 2023, which aims to transform the country into an upper medium-income economy by 2030, with fewer income discrepancies and a strong middle class.

Zimbabwe's economy, anchored by the National Development Strategy (NDS1),

the plan for achieving Vision 2030, has recovered since the COVID-19 pandemic, and economic activity has increased despite global shocks. The World Bank recently acknowledged Zimbabwe as one of the fastest-growing economies in the 16-member Southern African Development Community in 2021, 2022 and 2023. These growth patterns were driven by ongoing expansion in agricultural output, elevated commodity prices and a rebound in mining production, which has seen Zimbabwe become one of the largest exporters of lithium.

The NDS1 has underpinned the economic progress of recent years. It aims to achieve sustained and inclusive economic growth, leading to increased employment opportunities and reduced poverty, while improving infrastructure, particularly in transport, energy, water and information communication technology, to support economic development and enhance quality of life. It also looks to transform the agricultural sector to ensure food security, increase productivity and enhance rural livelihoods, and improve access to quality education, health care and social protection, leading to improved health.

Japan has continually supported Zimbabwe's economic and social develop-

ment projects since our independence. I am convinced that there are numerous opportunities for further cooperation once Japanese official development assistance to Zimbabwe is reactivated and more Japanese private-sector enterprises participate in bilateral trade and investment activities.

Zimbabwe is a country with enormous natural resources, a stable business climate, well-developed infrastructure, strong mining, agricultural and tourism sectors, a competent workforce and a plethora of other advantages that make it easy for investors to establish operations.

The 2025 World Expo in Osaka, which is aiming to attract participants from 150 Bureau of International Exposition member countries and 25 international organizations, will be yet another opportunity for Zimbabwe to strengthen its cooperation with Japan and showcase its achievements in priority areas. On March 28, Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade the Hon. Frederick M. Shava unveiled the country's logo and theme for the expo, titled "Zimbabwe: Beyond the Limit Expo 2025 Osaka."

I am happy that the number of Japanese visiting Zimbabwe is increasing. In March, Zimbabwe received a group of students

from various Tokyo universities who are members of Millennium Promise Japan, a nonprofit organization that supports African development and seeks to raise awareness of the continent. The students' familiarization tour included visits to Zimbabwe's major tourist attractions in Harare, Bulawayo, Hwange and the iconic Victoria Falls, as well as experiences with the country's culture, music, cuisine and history.

Arigatō gozaimasu (thank you).



Victoria Falls is shown in this aerial shot taken by Zimbabwe's national tourism agency. VISIT ZIMBABWE

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the Republic of Zimbabwe
on the Anniversary
of Their Independence*



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Congratulations

We use a mineral called Petalite from Zimbabwe to make Donabe, a fire-proof casserole pot.

私たちは、ジンバブエ共和国のペタライトという鉱物で、土鍋を作っています。

Peace

平和への願い

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