

Sudan independence day

Africa's largest country grateful for Japan's support

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AMBASSADOR OF SUDAN

Jan. 1, 2010, the Republic of the Sudan commemorates with pride the 54th anniversary of its independence.



On behalf of the government and people of the Republic of the Sudan I wish to convey my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, the government and the friendly people of Japan. Our sincere congratulations are also extended to the Sudanese compatriots living in Japan.

The year 2009 witnessed remarkable achievements in Sudan-Japan relations. It began with the visit of State Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Karti. The policy dialogue between the countries was a big success. The government of Sudan sent a strong delegation led by the undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And 2009 closed with the first Japan-Arab Economic Forum in which the Sudan delegation was head-

ed by the minister of international cooperation. Also, 2009 was the first year in which the Yokohama Action Plan (TI-CAD IV) entered the implementation stage. The government of Sudan will continue to support and fully participate in all endeavors specified under the action plan.

During 2009, bilateral cooperation between Japan and Sudan continued to blossom. There were several ministerial visits in both directions, between Tokyo and Khartoum. Our government is most grateful to the people and government of Japan for the assistance extended to the people of Sudan in the form of food aid, peace-building and construction of schools, hospitals and water systems. I must hasten to commend the small Japanese nongovernmental organizations that are providing vital services in our villages. I believe that 2010 will usher in a higher level of bilateral cooperation between our countries in all areas of mutual concern. This year, Sudan is going to have a historical election under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). I wish to thank the government of Japan for its big contribution to support the process of the elec-

tions.

Following is a short catalog of facts about the Republic of the Sudan:

Nature: Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the 10th largest in the world, sharing borders with nine countries — Egypt, Libya, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Not surprisingly, Sudan is inhabited by people of different ethnic identities, cultural practices and religious beliefs. Sudan has been characterized as “the melting pot” of African and Middle eastern cultures.

Natural Resources: Sudan's most important nonhuman resource is its agricultural potential. It has more than 80 million hectares of arable land supported by rainwater, surface water (rivers and lakes) and subterranean reservoirs. Currently, Sudanese pastures support 121 million head of sheep, cattle, goats and camels. The fisheries and forestry sectors provide a large percentage of our protein and domestic energy needs at present, but the two hold great promise for further development into yet another leg of Sudan's monetary and export economy.

Petroleum extraction has

now reached 500,000 barrels per day and could increase with more investment in other oil fields. Metals like gold, copper and others are believed to exist in the country.

Economy: The economy of Sudan is currently moving toward a liberal and free-market economy and getting ready for globalization. Rules and policies have been implemented to give noted advantages to foreign investors; these policies include non discrimination on the basis of foreign/national projects, exemption for capital goods and many other incentives and guarantees provided by the Investment Encouragement Act of 1999.

Remarkable changes in the structure of the Sudanese economy have occurred with the emergence of oil as a source of revenue, which created a massive demand for infrastructure to meet the expanding economic activities. The economy of Sudan is expanding. The resources are available, coupled with a favorable and encouraging environment. The Japanese business community is invited to look closely at the opportunities available in different sectors in Sudan.

Tourism: Sudan's environ-

mental diversity creates equally diverse tourist attractions. The Red Sea coast, which extends for more than 700 km, provides tourists with opportunities for diving, underwater photography, rowing and water skiing. The Red Sea offers many gulfs and coral reefs free from contamination.

The country enjoys ancient heritages and antiquities. These heritages are centered in the northern area, particularly Naga and Maswarat, where there are remains of pyramids and temples. Many of them are still unearthed. The ruins are considered World Heritage archaeological sites by UNESCO.

In the savanna belt is probably one of the world's largest

and most diverse zoos of flora and fauna. Efforts are under way to construct infrastructure that will open the area for global research and tourism.

Politics: The government of Sudan has a firm belief that the full utilization of its enormous natural resources cannot be achieved without finding a comprehensive political settlement to internal disputes. The signing of the historic Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in January 2005 has opened an unprecedented window of opportunity to turn the devastation of years of war, displacement and underdevelopment into a new era of peace and prosperity. Sudan's vast natural resource endowments and sig-



Ancient cemetery: The pyramids at the ruined city of Meroe are part of a UNESCO World Heritage site.

nificant human capital offer enormous development potential. Now is the time to consolidate and broaden the partnership that has been formed between the parties to the peace accord, civil society and the international community in order to realize the vision of a unified Sudan that responds to the needs of its diverse people.

The government is doing its best to find an end and final settlement to the Darfur prob-

lem through negotiations with the armed movements in the region. Also, the government assures the international community of its readiness for negotiations at any time set by mediation.

On behalf of the staff of the Sudanese Embassy in Japan, I wish the entire diplomatic corps in Japan and all our friends in various ministries and agencies a happy New Year.

Congratulations
to the People of the Sudan
on the 54th Anniversary of Their Independence Day
and wishing them a future of Prosperity and Peace.



Sudanese Community in Japan
www.sudan-japan.com

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