

Cameroon national day

Cameroon, Japan celebrating 50 years of friendship

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It once again gives me great pleasure to address readers of The Japan Times on Cameroon's National Day. This year's celebrations carry particular significance for all Cameroonians, as 2010 is a landmark year in the



history of our nation, marking as it does, the 50th anniversary of the independence and reunification of Cameroon. As we know, 50 years is a long time in the life of an individual, though not necessarily in that of a nation, and this year marks 50 years of diplomatic relations with Japan. It also is the first time for the FIFA World Cup to be held on African soil, and one of the highlights of the competition will be the match between the national teams of Ja-

pan and Cameroon on June 14. On this memorable occasion, I would like on behalf of the people and government of the Republic of Cameroon, the entire staff of the Cameroon Embassy, and myself, to extend hearty and sincere greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the friendly people of Japan. Let me also use this opportunity to congratulate the Democratic Party of Japan on their mo-

mentous victory in the last parliamentary election and wish the government every success in the future. I would also like to extend to the Emperor and Empress the sincere wishes of my government for good health and happiness; and to the people of Japan, courage and determination, especially in the face of the aftereffects of the current world financial crisis, which has affected livelihoods and economic activity across the world.

Relations between Japan and Cameroon go back 50 years, when a Japanese government delegation — led by Mr. Sensuke Fujieda, an LDP

member of the Diet — attended our independence celebrations on Jan. 1, 1960. Since then, our ties have deepened immensely, and Japan has been one of our most reliable friends in terms of Cameroon's development. Our relations have expanded beyond the government level and there has been increasing interest in Cameroon from both the public and private sectors. My wish is to see the continued prospering of these ties in all domains and to encourage more and more Japanese, either in the public or private sector — or even as individuals — to come to Cameroon. Their contribution, re-

gardless of the form it takes, will be deeply appreciated.

2010 promises to be a year of tremendous transformation, with the government launching its vision for a new Cameroon, known as the Strategy for Growth and Employment. This is a sectoral and global framework for government action over the next 10 years. This policy has a double objective: economic growth and the creation of jobs. In concrete terms, it seeks to maintain economic growth at 5.5% annually and create employment, reduce poverty, and ultimately, attain the nation's Millennium Development Goals. This year also witnesses the launch of several major development projects, as outlined in the president's "Great Ambitions" policy. The government is hopeful these projects will serve as a launchpad for modernization and an industrialization drive.

This strategy comprises five main pillars: infrastructure development, modernization of productive capability, human resource development, regional integration and financing of the economy. These are areas where the government would welcome investments from our friends, and I would like to use this platform to once again invite



Map of Cameroon EMBASSY OF CAMEROON

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Cameroon on Their National Day

DNC.

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Ready for action: The Cameroon soccer team poses for a prematch photograph. EMBASSY OF CAMEROON

the Japanese business community to take advantage of the competitive and attractive investment environment that the government has put in place. I would equally reiter-

ate that Cameroon welcomes working with various civil organizations, especially with regard to the attainment of the United Nations Millennium Goals.