

Malawi national day

Reforms make country a good place for investment

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AMBASSADOR OF MALAWI

Today marks 49 years since Malawi attained independence from Britain and it is my greatest pleasure to convey warmest greetings from the President of the Republic of Malawi H.E. Joyce Banda to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the people of Japan.

Malawi as a country continues to encourage peaceful co-existence of and respect of human rights and the rule of law, and democratic principles that support full human participation in all social causes affecting humanity.

Economy

Malawi continues to register strides in its economic direction. Last year, the government embarked on a drive to revive its economy by having five core areas in its Economic Recovery Plan (ERP). These are energy, mining, agriculture, transport and infrastructure and tourism. This was an immediate, short-term and medium-term intervention that outlined reforms undertaken to improve socioeconomic growth. The fiscal policy was to prioritize expenditure to sectors that would enhance economic growth, create employment and boost production and diversification for the export market for quick foreign exchange generation focusing on agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

This year Malawi has started to experience its first signs of economic recovery. The theme

for Malawi this year is "Malawi on the road to transformation." From last year's financial results Malawi is now emerging from the short- and medium-term recovery plan to now focus on the long-term recovery plan. The emphasis this year is on enhancing the sustainability of growth and development policies that consolidate economic stability, reinforce resilience to shocks, both internal and external.

Trade and investment

Malawi continues to institute a number of reforms in its fiscal policy to ensure that investors do find it easy to do business and open their activities in Malawi as a safe and reliable investment destination. The country has reviewed and simplified the tax regime to make it friendly to business investors and to support job creation. Procedures for business

licensing, work permits and visas have also been reviewed and simplified to encourage foreign investment and tourism.

On the five priority areas, each of them has numerous and interesting opportunities for both small and medium-size enterprises and multinational enterprise investors. For example, Malawi has abundant mineral resources that can be exploited. These include bauxite, rare earths, heavy mineral sands, monazite, coal, uranium, precious and semiprecious stones, limestone, niobium, dimension stones and rock aggregates and also the prospect of oil reserves in Lake Malawi.

Agriculture remains key to the country's economic growth, wealth creation and food security. There are lots of opportunities in the value-addition industry and modern farming. Malawi can do with improved

technology, infrastructure and markets. Agriculture is dominated by tobacco, tea, coffee, cotton, maize, groundnuts and macadamia nuts, sunflowers, soybeans, pigeon peas and sugarcane.

Tourism has been underutilized and there is need for further development to create ecotourism and recreation facilities for development. Malawi would like to develop support infrastructure, like electricity, water and transport in tourism. The country would also like to train staff, supervisors and managers to enhance tourism promotion.

Infrastructure projects

Transport and infrastructure is vital to Malawi. Malawi is landlocked and has challenges in transport infrastructure, which has an impact on economic growth and development. The Nacala Corridor is important to Malawi as it would link it to regional gateways and ports. More crucial to Malawi is the development of the Sena Corridor, which will reduce time spent on the road to transport goods in and out of Malawi. The Japanese government has assisted in the study of this development. Rail transport is a challenge as there is need to rehabilitate and expand the railway line to create linkages to ports, industrial sites and regional and international markets.

Relationship with Japan

Malawi cherishes its relationship with Japan, which has existed since 1964. Recently, this has been solidified by the President of Malawi H.E. Banda participating in TICAD V, which just took place in Yokohama last month. H.E. President Banda had meetings with Prime Minister Abe where they held talks on mutual partnership and investment enhancement. H.E. Banda also participated in a number of bilateral meetings. Along with her were also four ministers: of economic planning and investment, trade, mining and foreign affairs. Prior to that, the minister of mining took part in the J-Summit in Tokyo, which was held earlier this year in May, where high-pow-



Long-standing relations: H.E. President Joyce Banda of Malawi meets with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the sidelines of the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) in Yokohama on June 1. CABINET PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE



A map of the Republic of Malawi EMBASSY OF MALAWI

ered delegations met to discuss mining prospects with businesspeople and companies.

Malawi as a true partner of Japan really appreciates the tre-

mendous support Japan has offered to Malawi, which includes infrastructure development, education, health, agriculture and tourism.

Last but not least I would like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors for making it possible for us to publish this message.

Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic of Malawi
on the 49th Anniversary
of
Their Independence



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