

DR Congo national day

Multitude of opportunities in mining, tourism, infrastructure

Raphaël Mwenda Baminganila
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

This year, my country, the Democratic Republic of Congo commemorates the 55th Anniversary of its Independence.



On this occasion, on behalf of the government of the DR Congo and on my own behalf, I take this opportunity to express my congratulations to all Congolese residing in this beautiful country of Japan and wish them happiness and success during their stay in this friendly country.

On this wonderful day, I have the honor and pleasure to extend hereby warm greetings with deep respect from the President of the DR Congo, H.E. Joseph Kabila Kabange, the government, as well as Congolese people to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to all distinguished members of the Imperial family, members of the government and to all the people of Japan.

The 55th Anniversary of our Independence is very important and special because it coincides with the organization of the local and provincial elections at the end of the year. Additionally, at the end of next year, legislative and presidential elections will be held.

As it is every year, the celebration of our Anniversary is a good moment to assess the progress of our country in many fields and on bilateral plans with our partners in general and with Japan in particular.

When the DR Congo became independent in 1960, Japan and my country established diplomatic relations and have since cooperated for a long time, making our relationship very strong. Since then, the Japanese have assisted my country in many fields: Education, health, in-

frastructure (bridge on the Congo River in Matadi), police training through a JICA program and with Congolese criminology experts, election preparation, a U.N. stabilization mission in the east of the country, the construction of a modern medical center in Kinshasa, work on the Route des Poids Lourds in Kinshasa and others.

In this period of peace and stability in our country, we hope the Japanese private sector will come and invest in our country, as have many other partners. So we welcome the African Business Education Initiative for Youth made during the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) to help African development and the training of many Africans experts in Japan.

We are also grateful Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sent a special envoy to my country last February to open a new chapter of cooperation under his leadership.

In fact, during the last Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Resources (JAMM2) held in Tokyo, the Congolese Minister of Mining H.E. Martin Kabwelulu invited the Japanese private sector to seize

opportunities to invest in the DR Congo not only because of good conditions, but also because the DR Congo has been one of the 15 most attractive Sub-Saharan African countries for investments over the last two years. The reasons are its many natural resources, the domestic market and major infrastructure projects. These opportunities on the African continent are continuing to grow and are expected to do so in the foreseeable future. Among the major projects is the INGA III mega hydroelectric dam on the Congo River, which is now a regional project.

Investment opportunities

Also during JAMM2, Minister Kabwelulu met many members of Japan's private sector interested in investing in our country, including Marubeni, the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOG-MEC), Mitsui and others. Speaking to them he said, "I would like to renew my invitation to all of you to come and visit the DR Congo and invest massively in the mining sector as other companies have already done in the DR Congo."

Mining projects include: Tenke Fungurume (Freeport-McMoRan), KCC (Glencor),

Sicomines (China), Metalkor, MMG, Ruashi Mining in Katanga for Copper and Cobalt, Kibali Gold, which produces 19 tons of gold annually, Twangiza Mining and Namoya Mining (Banro), Maniema and Sud-Kivu for gold, tin and other minerals.

Regarding legislation, the Mining Act of 2000 has resulted in an increase of mining activity, growing from seven operating mining companies in 1997 to 35 today. There have also been processing and metallurgical units for commodities such as copper, cobalt, tin and other ores created. Trading shops for precious and semi-precious minerals have also been established.

This is to harmonize with the constitution and international commitments of the DR Congo, including those to the South African Development Community and the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa, to further improve the business climate as indicated in the revised version of the Mining Act is currently under review in the parliament.

Additionally, the government strategy to develop the mining sector includes discovering new deposits, as only 15

percent of the land has been extensively explored.

To add more value to the merchant mining products, the government welcomes the local establishment of processing entities and the local implementation of diamond and gem cutting factories.

Infrastructure promotion

The Congolese government would like to see Japan join the financial group building the INGA III mega dam and the rehabilitation of the INGA I and II dams. The public-private financial group had its last partnership meeting in Paris.

Additional projects include extraction of methane gas in Kivu Lake, as well as solar and other renewable energies that should be explored. Others are road and communication corridors, oil extraction in the

east, west and central basin and forest conservation for a variety of timber species.

Tourism opportunities

Regarding the tourism sector, the DR Congo has many beautiful tourist spots. We encourage Japanese to visit to discover a country with a rare natural beauty, very hospitable people, a rich history and exotic sights in the heart of Africa.

The DR Congo has a lush landscape featuring a wide range of fauna and flora. Visitors can see okapi, bonobo and the baobab in Bas-Congo where legendary British explorer Henry Stanley took shelter when exploring the region. The country also has eight national parks, among which five are designated as UNESCO World Heritage sites and three others are in the tentative list.



Completed in 1983 with Japanese financial and technical assistance, the Matadi Bridge spanning the Congo River is a symbol of cooperation between Japan and the DR Congo.

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY/SHINICHI KUNO

In the east, there is a string of volcanoes, including Nyiragongo and Nyamuragira, and the 5,119-meter snow-capped Mt. Ruwenzori.

In addition to the mighty Congo River — the country's backbone — there are many other rivers, as well as lakes

such as Tanganika, Kivu, Edouard and more.

In conclusion, I hope the Japanese private sector has understood the invitation of Minister Kabwelulu, to come and join the many other foreign investors in our country, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Congratulations

to the People of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
on the 55th Anniversary of Their Independence

INPEX
INPEX CORPORATION

Akasaka Biz Tower, 5-3-1, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-6332, Japan

Congratulations
to the People of
the Democratic Republic of the Congo
on the 55th Anniversary
of Their Independence



from the president and staff of
AFRICAN HOME TOUCH
RESTAURANT & BAR

Yoko Central Roppongi Building 3F
3-15-22, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032
Tel: 03-6447-0116 URL: africanhometouch.com

Congratulations

to the People of
the Democratic Republic of the Congo
on the 55th Anniversary
of Their Independence



Construction of new buildings and technical cooperation for INPP (National Institute of Professional Preparation) in Kinshasa, DRC. We deeply appreciate the DRC's great friendship.

ORIENTAL CONSULTANTS GLOBAL

12-1, Honmachi 3-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, 151-0071, Japan
Telephone: +81-3-6311-7570