

Egypt national day

A promising land of great opportunities

Ismail Khairat
AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT

This year Egypt celebrates the 63rd anniversary of its 1952 Revolution with iconic events illustrating the Egyptian people's commitment to the pursuit of dignity, freedom and justice.

On this occasion, on behalf of the Egyptian government and people, I would like to extend our utmost appreciation to the Japanese government and people for their continued support of Egypt's growth momentum and development.

At such crossroads of Egypt's nascent democracy, it is critical to take a step back and assess Egypt's achievements and aspirations and, of course, how we see our beneficial cooperation with Japan — a partnership for growth — going forward.

Road map

The civic engagement in June 2013 has given the Egyptian government the mandate to revitalize and refresh the political framework and to do so, the government enacted the Three Stage Road Map. The first stage called for a new constitution and was successfully realized in January 2014 following a public referendum with a strong turnout. The second phase was completed when the Egyptian

people freely and fairly elected President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi to lead the nation forward. The final stage entails a parliamentary election, which is expected within the coming months.

Pillars of growth

The well-thought-out road map serves as a steppingstone for Egypt to progress its political, economic and social agendas. Essentially, what differentiates Egypt from other developing nations are three core elements representing our foundation for growth: demographic profile; geographic location; and heritage and natural environment.

Regarding our demographic profile, Egypt has a large and growing domestic market of about 90 million people, of whom 65 percent are of working age. With rising standards of living, the purchasing power of the domestic market will drive growth in many sectors. In addition, Egypt has a huge, competitively priced workforce available to accommodate investor requirements.

Our strategic geographic location is another factor contributing to Egypt's prime investment destination, as it is the shortest link between the East and West. Egypt's Suez Canal accounts for 8 percent of the world's maritime shipping and is expected to increase following expansion to be completed in August. The Suez Canal development zone can transform the area into a global logistics hub and indus-

trial processing center that would connect the European and Asian markets, including the Gulf markets, creating sustainable growth.

Known for its beaches and rich history, tourism also plays a key role in the Egyptian economy. Egypt hopes to increase revenue from tourism by 2020 by attracting 20 million visitors. The tourism sector is ready and working around the clock to return to, and exceed, previous numbers of tourists. Egypt has a strategic plan that includes holding marketing and promotional campaigns and boosting regular and charter flights, as well as highlighting Egypt's tourism attractions.

Active steps

The implementation of transparent, sustainable and feasible policies is a key initiative of the Egyptian government to ensure inclusive growth and development.

The government has spearheaded several initiatives to spur growth and allow Egypt to be better equipped for private-sector-led growth. The government has established policies aimed at boosting exports and upgrading national industry. Understanding the importance of the private sector, Al Sisi endorsed an amended investment law aimed at reducing obstacles facing foreign investors. The investment law reduces bureaucratic requirements, establishes a clear and transparent framework bolstering equal opportunities. The investment law also has guarantees for deals signed with the government and offers incentives for labor-intensive projects.

Moreover, Egypt has recently adopted a bold and ambitious reform plan to ensure fiscal sustainability and solve macroeconomic imbalances with the objective of reducing economic risk and bolstering confidence among investors. The reform plan aims at increasing the tax base, streamlining spending on fuel and electricity subsidies, leveraging

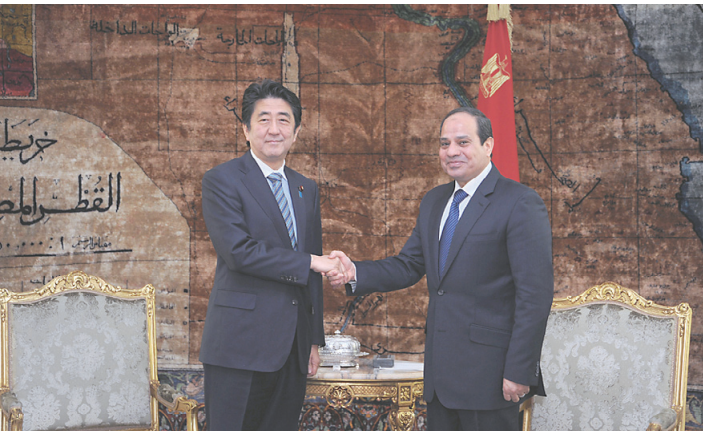
capital spending and allocating more resources to public services and social security.

The government's commitment to economic development and growth was apparent in the recent Egyptian Economic Development Conference (EEDC) held in Sharm El Sheikh and attended by top officials from 89 nations and 23 regional and international organizations. The international community was in full support of the government's unified vision for the future, "Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt's Vision 2030." The strategy sets three main goals for Egypt: economic development; market competitiveness; and human capital.

Partnership for growth

The Egyptian government welcomes the support of its trusted ally Japan in the process of achieving the 2030 plan. The representative of the government of Japan at the EEDC, Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Kentaro Sonoura, reaffirmed Japan's support for Egyptian and Middle Eastern growth and prosperity. Sonoura confirmed that the government of Japan intended to provide new loans in the fields of water, transportation and electric power, as well as extend ¥1.5 billion in grant aid to the Cairo University Children Hospital.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Egypt in January highlighted the strong bilateral rela-



Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi meets with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Jan. 17 in Cairo. EMBASSY OF EGYPT

tionship between Egypt and Japan. The prime minister's confidence and support of the Egyptian economic reform plans was indicative of the strength of our nations' partnership. The Ninth Joint Meeting of the Japan-Egypt Business Committee highlighted Japan's intent to participate in national projects that will contribute to Egypt's sustainable growth and development.

Japan's commitment to Egypt as a regional partner was of the utmost importance following the January 25th Revolution; a time when total investment in Egypt decreased, but Japanese investments steadily increased. With over 60 Japanese companies operating in Egypt in various sectors, including automotive, electrical appliances, energy, oil and gas, transportation, construction, infrastructure, food and agriculture, Japan has become a key partner to Egypt's success and growth.

Over the past three decades, Egypt and Japan have cooper-

ated closely through several initiatives with the main aim of boosting economic growth and human capacity building. The main initiative of cooperation, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), has evolved to emphasize the importance of partnerships for growth. The developments in TICAD's philosophy are most evident in E-Just, a joint platform aimed at human resource development in Egypt and Africa. The Egyptian government considers E-Just a crucial investment for the future of Egypt and the African continent at large. Most recently, E-Just held its fifth graduation ceremony, awarding 40 M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees to E-Just students in different fields.

The Egyptian government's mandate is to fulfill Egyptians' aspirations, through ensuring inclusive growth and development. The time for Egypt is now. Egypt is truly the land of opportunities.



Located on the banks of Lake Nasser in Aswan, in the south of Egypt, the Abu Simbel temples are designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. EMBASSY OF EGYPT

Building new nation under strong leadership

Yuriko Koike
CHAIRPERSON, JAPAN-EGYPT
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

I would like to cordially offer my congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of Egypt.

When I visited Cairo in May, I had the honor to pay a courtesy call on H.E. President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi. We spoke for about an hour in a very relaxed atmosphere thanks to the president's warm personality. I was impressed by the president's strong determination to build a new Egypt through the democratic process. I also understood his high expectations for Japan, which convinced me further of the importance of bilateral cooperation.

I would like to introduce an honorable phrase the president used during our meeting to de-

scribe the Japanese people. Speaking about the Japanese national character of diligence, he expressed that Japanese are "walking Quran," as they practice the teachings of the Holy Quran in everyday life.

I would like to pay my sincere respect for the fact that people of Egypt are building a new nation under the leadership of Al Sisi.

I would also like to take this opportunity to mention another aspect of the friendly relations between our two countries. To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Department of Japanese Language and Literature in the Faculty of Literature at Cairo University, a Japanese speech contest was held at the university in May and I was honored to be the head judge. Students, who study Japanese at the university and beyond, presented their thoughts on, and proposals to, the Japanese people. I was simply amazed by the ex-

cellent Japanese language skills of the participants.

It was a very successful event organized under the cooperation of the Japanese Embassy; the Sasakawa Peace Foundation; the Japan Foundation; Tokyo University of Foreign Studies; Japan Airlines; and the Japan-Egypt Parliamentary Friendship League, of which I serve as chairperson. The best speakers and other high achievers were awarded with glittering prizes.

As a graduate of Cairo University, I was deeply moved by the fact that the Department of Japanese Language and Literature marked its 40th anniversary. It is a pleasure that young people, who shall take charge of the future Egypt, study the Japanese language, as well as the history and culture of Japan, and play an active role as a bridge between the two countries and their cultures.

Glory to Egypt and the Egyptian people!

Working to further strengthen bilateral relationship

Masahiko Komura
HONORARY CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-EGYPT
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE



On the occasion of the National Day of the Arab Republic of Egypt, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations as honorary chairman of the Japan-Egypt Parliamentary Friendship League to H.E. President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi and the people of Egypt.

I strongly condemn the recent terrorist bombing that killed Egypt's prosecutor general and also the terrorist incidents in the Sinai Peninsula and would like to express solidarity with the government and people of Egypt.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Egypt in January opened a new chapter in the history of Japan-Egypt relations. I would like to

pay my respects to the government and people of Egypt, who are making undaunted efforts to realize the country's stability and prosperity under the leadership of Al Sisi. Egypt is a cornerstone of peace and prosperity in the Middle East and we promise Japan will continue to strongly support Egypt's endeavors on both the public and private levels.

We, the members of the Japan-Egypt Parliamentary Friendship League, are determined to make our utmost efforts to further strengthen our favorable bilateral relationship. I understand a parliamentary election is scheduled and a new Egyptian parliament will be formed. In that case, I would like to promote exchanges and cooperation between parliamentarians of both countries.

Last, but not least, I would like to express my best wishes to the Egyptian people for good health and happiness and sincerely hope for the realization of stability and prosperity in Egypt.

Congratulations


to the People of the Arab Republic of Egypt
on the 63rd Anniversary of Their National Day



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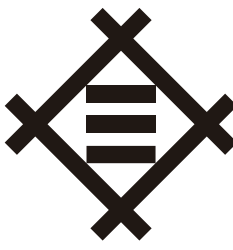
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