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# Haiti National Day

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## Noteworthy fiscal stability and development

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CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF HAITI

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Today, Jan. 1, marks the 212th Anniversary of the Republic of Haiti. On this glorious day, I wish to convey, on behalf of my government



and the people of Haiti, our deepest respect and warm greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of the Imperial family, the government and the people of Japan.

Today represents a solemn occasion to pay tribute to the founding fathers of Haiti: Toussaint L' Ouverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines and Alexandre Petion, while showing reverence to our heroes: Francois Capois (aka Capois La Mort), Boukman, Catherine Flon and Mackandal for their bravery. It is also a time to underscore pride in our African roots.

As we celebrate, we recognize liberty, equality, fraternity and peaceful human coexis-

tence as the core values of our national unity. These bind us with the world and in friendship with our true ally, Japan. I would like to congratulate Japan on its election as a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council.

My government has stressed economic stability and development. After nearly five years under President Michel Martelly, I am delighted to say that Haiti has made major progress toward economic stability while recovering from the devastating 2010 earthquake. Our democracy, rule of law, human rights and security situation have all improved. Additionally, extreme poverty has been reduced, foreign direct investment has increased and our economy has grown. Japan has contributed to the recovery process and recently provided \$8.4 million to support Haiti's elections. Additionally, Japan has disbursed more than \$200 million since 2010 for the reconstruction of the country.

Japan has focused its assistance to restoring basic social services in the health, hygiene

and education areas, as well as bolstering Haiti's electoral systems. Last March, Japan agreed to provide roughly \$6.8 million for a water supply facility reconstruction project in Leogane, as well as an additional \$7 million for a hospital reconstruction project in Jacmel. Moreover, Japan signed a document with UNICEF to provide assistance of almost \$2.5 million for a cholera-prevention project, which saw cases drop from 350,000 in 2011 to approximately 20,000 in 2015.

Another sign of progress is meeting most of the U.N.'s eight Millennium Development Goals. Haiti has increased primary education for both boys and girls, halved the number of underweight children under age five, while the number of pregnant women having at least one gynecological visit has increased, resulting in decreased infant mortality.

Regarding economic development, despite the 2010 earthquake, which killed more than 230,000 people, including 30 percent of civil servants, GDP rose from \$1,548 per person in

2009 to \$1,670 in 2014. In recent years, Haiti has experienced a real growth rate averaging 3.8 percent and per capita GDP growth of 2.4 percent. The recent opening of the \$45 million, 175-room Marriott in Port-au-Prince places the country back on the world tourism map. The Marriott joins the Best Western Premier, the NH El Rancho Hotel and the Occidental Royal Oasis, all in the Port-au-Prince suburb of Petionville.

Recent developments in law saw efforts to reform the country's 179-year-old criminal law framework with the goal to decrease prolonged pre-trial detention.

In closing, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to The Japan Times for giving me this opportunity to address its distinguished readers on this special day. On behalf of my government and the people of Haiti, I also wish to express our thanks to the government and people of Japan for their continuing support.

Best wishes for a happy, prosperous and peaceful 2016. Vive Haiti! Vive Japon!