

# Mauritania National Day Special

## Fostering political dialogue and security for prosperity

**EL HACEN ELEYATT**  
AMBASSADOR OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC  
OF MAURITANIA



Let me welcome you all to this special article about my country Mauritania, which celebrates today, Nov. 28, its 58th National Independence Day. I thank The Japan Times editors for giving me this wonderful opportunity to address its readers.

On this 58th anniversary of our national independence day, I would like to express on behalf of the government and people of Mauritania, myself and my colleagues in our embassy in Japan, our respectful and profound greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of the Imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and friendly people of Japan.



**President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania H.E. Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz**

Since the accession of H.E. Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, president of the republic, Mauritania has quickly understood that sustainable development cannot be achieved without sustainable peace and security. Therefore, the Mauritanian government adopted a national approach to counter terrorism and violent extremism.



**Chinguetti Mosque in the city of Chinguetti in northern Mauritania was founded around the 13th century, serving the caravans crossing the Sahara desert. The town was known as a trading and religious center.**

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This approach has taken into account innovative methods of combating terrorism, where security and development factors are strongly linked and interdependent.

This global and complete vision is based on the harmonious conjunction of three components. The first is the security dimension; adopting a strategy of means for defense and security forces. The second is the political dimension through the consolidation of the rule of law, empowerment of women and youth, with special attention to the most vulnerable of the society, full participation of civil society, the open dialogue initiated by the Ulema Council (religious experts) with the young, religious extremists on the peaceful nature of Islam and the organization of an inclusive political dialogue between the majority, the opposition and civil society. The third component is an adequate response to the socioeconomic concerns of citizens.

This remarkable improvement of the security system and defense arsenals was not at the expense of promoting individual and collective freedoms. According to Reporters Without Borders, for three consecutive years, Mauritania has been ranked first in the Arab world in terms of freedom of expression and press. Also, one of the latest United Nations Development Programme reports recognizes that Mauritania is ahead of the Sahel countries in terms of the human development index.

To boost the economy and improve the well-being of its people, the Mauritanian government adopted strict policies to combat corruption and rationalize public spending. These measures led to unprecedented development in all key sectors of the economy. A number of infrastructure projects such as roads, ports, hospitals, modern universities, giant electricity projects, as well as



potable water facilities were put in place, in a very limited time.

Also, the free zone of Nouadhibou, which was launched in 2013 by the government, offers an advantageous legal framework to attract investment projects and aims to facilitate conducting business in convenient conditions.

Japan and Mauritania are long-standing friends and share mutual commitment to common ideals of peace and security. The government of Japan contributes generously to the development of Mauritania through its official aid, as well as its positive impact in vital sectors such as infrastructure, food and security, fisheries, health and education. Mauritania is firmly committed to strengthening its cooperation with Japan through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development process, which will be held next year in Yokohama, and through the Arab-Japan Economic Forum.

I am glad that I can avail myself of this opportunity to express, on behalf of the people and government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, our sincere thanks and appreciation for all the support Mauritania has been receiving from the friendly people and government of the country of the rising sun.

**The port town of Nouadhibou is Mauritania's second-largest city.**

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*This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.*

**Congratulations**  
to the People of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania  
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Their Independence



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