

Togo National Day Special

Bilateral meetings and celebrations reflect evolving partnership

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On the auspicious occasion of the 60th Independence Day of the Republic of Togo, I wish, on behalf of the government and people of Togo, to convey warm congratulations

to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, all members of the imperial family, the government and people of Japan.

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of independence takes place in a context in which the Togolese government has committed to the consolidation of its economic, social and political achievements.

Indeed, the days after the presidential election of Feb. 22, His Excellency Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe was re-elected to be president of the republic for the next five years. With his re-election, the Togolese people opted for peace, security, stability and development.

The people have also chosen to maintain and amplify the progress made by their country which is ranked first in reforming countries in Africa and third in the world, according to the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report.

This new chapter that we have just embarked on will place particular emphasis on deepening the land reform to encourage more direct foreign investment so that the implementation of the "National Development Plan 2018-2022" will be successful. In addition, the government has set the course for new reforms in the business climate to make Togo a

preferred destination for international investors and a land of growth for the private sector by developing modern infrastructure as well as a sound macro-economic framework, associated with massive investments in human capital especially young people and women.

In the same perspective, Togo is committed to creating a tax police unit to fight more effectively against corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism in order to reduce the negative effects on the projects and programs of development of our country.

Before the presidential election of Feb. 22, the Togolese people had already been summoned in June 2019 for municipal elections. At the end of this process, mayors and elected municipal councilors were invested.

This bodes well for the establishment of local governance and paves the way for decentralized cooperation initiatives between the entities thus formed and external partners.

Our nation's *kanreki* (60th birthday), celebrated after the The Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7); the enthronement ceremony of Emperor Naruhito that induced the Reiwa Era, which means "beautiful harmony"; and before the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games — initially scheduled in 2020, but will be held in 2021 due to COVID-19 — is a great opportunity.

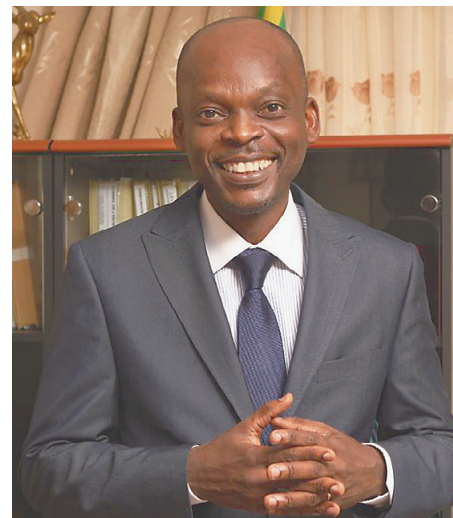
Not only are we able to reflect on our common past, but above all, develop new perspectives and strategies to consolidate cooperation between Japan and Togo. I would therefore like to congratulate the Japanese government for the organization of TICAD 7 that has enabled Japan and its African partners, including Togo,



Togo President H.E. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe

to boost their cooperation across three key pillars: accelerating economic transformation and improving the business environment through innovation and private sector engagement, promoting a sustainable and resilient society, and strengthening peace and stability in Africa. I remain confident that the conclusions reached by participants will be implemented to serve the interests of both parties under the beneficial auspices of the Reiwa Era.

The bilateral meeting on Aug. 29, 2019, between the head of state and prime minister allowed the two high-ranking personalities to discuss subjects of common interest and the consolidation of cooperation between Togo and Japan. The Reiwa Era started on May 1, 2019 and celebrations reached their height with Emperor Naruhito's official enthronement ceremony at the Imperial Palace on Oct. 22, 2019. The ceremony was attended by sev-



Togo Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration Robert Dussey

eral foreign dignitaries, including Togo's head of state. The abdication of Emperor Emeritus Akihito and this ceremony reflected a globally recognized approach to tradition.

The Togolese head of state's two visits to Japan in 2019, taking place in August

and October, perfectly illustrate the manifest interest he attaches to cooperation between Japan and Togo and the affinity of Togolese for the Japanese and their highest leaders.

In the run-up to the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, I would like to salute the efforts of the Japanese government in their organization and express

to the city of Hyuga, Miyazaki Prefecture — within the framework of the Host Town Initiative — the recognition of the Togolese government and the Togolese National Olympic Committee for the attention given to the Togolese Olympic and Paralympic team that will deepen friendship and cooperation at local levels. Long live Japan-Togo cooperation!

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

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to the People of

the Republic of Togo

on the 60th Anniversary of

Their Independence



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