

# D.R. Congo National Day Special

## Steady on path of advancement, innovation

**LUBANGA KASELA KASS**  
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



My fellow compatriots, it is with great honor that I salute you and via this message celebrate alongside you the 60th anniversary of independence of our beloved country the Democratic Republic

of Congo (DRC), as well as 60 years of bilateral relations with Japan, our home away from home for all those residing here.

On behalf of President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo and the government of our country, I would like to seize this opportunity to present my heartfelt greetings to the newly ascended Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, Their Majesties Emperor Emeritus Akihito and Empress Emerita Michiko, as well as the distinguished members of the government and the Diet of Japan.

Sixty years of diplomatic relations have seen key accomplishments, among them the



**The Congo River is an essential waterway for transport and commerce in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.**

Marechal Bridge in the harbor city of Matadi, the creation of the National Institute of Professional Vocation and others.

The successful meetings held during the seventh Tokyo Conference on African Development (TICAD 7) in Yokohama in August further strengthened the ongoing projects through discussions between both heads of state, opening doors to successful conversations on the DRC's priority development programs. The ties between both countries were consolidated following the invitation extended by the newly ascended emperor to our president at the enthronement ceremony in October.

2020 was meant to be our year — with the president's intended visit to Japan to follow up on and concretize the ongoing discussions that were held during TICAD 7 and to accentuate the presence of Japan in the DRC as its key partner for development.

Japan has always shown its strong support to the DRC and I strongly believe for the remainder of this year and despite the ongoing situation regarding the coronavirus, we shall be able to partner on numerous mutually beneficial projects. The follow up visit of high-level delegations at the beginning of this year shows our desire to continue to build economic ties with our Japanese counterparts, as well as create new opportunities for joint efforts.

Regrettably, the COVID-19 pandemic put an untimely halt to international exchanges. As the world has been deeply affected by the coronavirus, we would like to commend the quick response of the Japanese authorities regarding the pandemic that protected the people from the full impact of what could have been as a result of the propagation of the virus. The DRC would like to praise and express its gratitude to the Japanese government for its timely support in our health industry, proving its solidarity and kinship

during these trying times.

The DRC prior to the pandemic enjoyed momentum in several aspects and, despite being a developing country, we have shown proof of advancement, innovation and

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resilience. One such achievement was the awarding of the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize to one of our own compatriots, Dr. Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum, recognized for his research in confronting Ebola and other deadly viruses, and for his efforts in training legions of disease fighters. This is a testament of our efforts as a nation to better not only the societal conditions of our countrymen, but also to

elevate ourselves on a global level with other academics of high caliber. Additionally, in anticipation of the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, our teams and athletes underwent training for participation in the games to represent our country in the fields of handball, athletics, wrestling and judo.

It was with utmost pleasure that we worked with one of the most prominent Japanese sporting companies, to create customized uniforms and training gear for our athletes and would like to extend our sincere gratitude to them for their aid in this regard. We hope that we will soon be able to collaborate again on this and look forward to a successful Olympic Games next year.

My hope is for the rapid containment and eventual cessation of the coronavirus,

allowing for further collaboration and partnership between our beautiful country and yours from a social, economic and cultural perspective.

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



**Workers at a coffee plantation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**Congratulations  
to the People of the Democratic  
Republic of the Congo  
on the 60th Anniversary of  
Their Independence**

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Head Office : 4-9-8, Meieki, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya 81-52-584-5000  
Tokyo Head Office : 2-3-13, Konan, Minato-ku, Tokyo 81-3-4306-5000

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