

Ghana Independence Day Special

Mutual cooperation strengthens relations

FRANK OKYERE
AMBASSADOR OF GHANA



On the happy occasion of the 64th independence anniversary of Ghana, I am honored to extend, on behalf of the government and people of Ghana, warm compliments to Their Imperial

Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, members of the imperial family, government and people of Japan, as well as Ghanaians living in Japan. As the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Ghana to Japan, I would like to express heartfelt appreciation for the profound friendship of the government and people of Japan.

This year's 64th independence anniversary, on March 6, is being celebrated at a time when the coronavirus pandemic remains a global challenge. Indeed, the pandemic has highlighted the need for indispensable international cooperation. It is in this light that the people of Ghana join me in recognizing the leadership demonstrated by His Majesty Emperor Naruhito and the government of Japan in combating

the pandemic. Ghana looks forward to collaborating with Japan and the global community in finding new ways to promote vaccine multilateralism, and therapeutic treatments for the deadly virus. I would also like to commend all health professionals in Japan who are on the front lines of the pandemic.

While looking at a variety of strategies for combating the deadly virus, it is important to acknowledge the successes that have been marked over the period. I am pleased to note that Ghana consolidated her democratic credentials by holding successful presidential and parliamentary elections on Dec. 7, which culminated in the re-election of President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo. His excellency the president was sworn into office on Jan. 7 and has since commenced his second term. As we celebrate this 64th independence anniversary, we wish to thank the government and people of Japan and the international community for their support before, during and after the elections.

We also mark this independence anniversary at a time when President Akufo-Addo was unanimously re-elected as the chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on Feb. 2, by the heads of state and governments of ECOWAS for another year. President Akufo-Addo in his

inaugural acceptance speech pledged to provide the leadership that will enable the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), whose secretariat is in Accra, to succeed. Fortunately, on Jan. 1 trading officially commenced on the AfCFTA platform. I hope this will serve as an additional incentive to the Japanese private sector to take advantage of the continent's huge market potential.

Within the context of Ghana-Japan relations, I am happy to note that our ties have been strengthened over the years. We are grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan Development Service Co. for their healthy and innovative collaboration, which has been essential in enhancing the friendly relations between our two countries. Furthermore, the Japan External Trade Organization office in Accra was finally opened in December. The JETRO office will facilitate trade and investment and also boost private-sector participation. Ghana is also grateful to the government and people of Japan for their continued support of the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research in Accra. The institute continues to play a pivotal role in Ghana's fight against COVID-19, as well as serving the subregion in various capacities.

In anticipation of Ghana's participation in the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Embassy of Ghana took part in the Harmonious and Inclusive Society Project aimed at promoting inclusive societies worldwide, organized by the town of Inawashiro, Fukushima Prefecture, the home of Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, who researched yellow fever in Accra. The town, which is also Ghana's host town for the upcoming Olympic Games benefited from a cooking and tasting event featuring Ghanaian cuisine. Online interactions also took place between schoolchildren in Ghana and their counterparts in Inawashiro.

It is hoped that these successes will herald even greater success in other areas of ongo-



Ghana's Ambassador H.E. Frank Okyere (left), poses with Inawashiro Mayor Hiroshi Zengo as Hideyo Noguchi Foundation President Yoshifumi Takeda looks on during a ceremony to present a Ghanaian stool to the foundation in January 2020. EMBASSY OF GHANA

ing cooperation between Ghana and Japan. In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to our partners and The Japan Times for their sponsorship and their publication of this special independence message. To my compatriots in Japan, and all friends of Ghana, I wish you hope,

good health, peace and happiness. Long live Ghana-Japan relations.

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 Republic of Ghana
on the Anniversary of Their Independence



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