

# Jamaica Independence Day Special

## Partners dedicated to economic diplomacy

**SHORNA-KAY RICHARDS**  
AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA



Aug. 6, 1962, represented a watershed moment in Jamaica's long quest for self-determination: the gaining of its independence from Great Britain. Today, I am honored to join the Jamaican community in Japan to commemorate the 59th anniversary of Jamaica's independence and celebrate our hard-won achievements.

In reflecting on the sacrifices of our forefathers and the continued resilience of our people, we are mindful that this 59th anniversary is being celebrated amid the devastating impact as well as the unprecedented and uncertain circumstances of the pandemic — much like the year before. Amid these challenges, we are buoyed by the solidarity and cooperation of the international community, which has sought to counter the waves of the coronavirus.

A proactive member of the international community, Japan continues to demonstrate a deep understanding of the vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States like Jamaica, providing much-needed grant resources to bolster our public health capacities, as well as to ensure equitable vaccine distribution. As Jamaica and fellow countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) intensify the call for equitable access to vaccines, we applaud Japan's leadership role in the fight against COVID-19, in which it focuses not only on its national needs, but also extends vast support to bilateral partners, regional mechanisms and global facilities.

Over the past year, Jamaica-Japan bilateral relations and cooperation have continued to grow and expand despite the limited opportunities for face-to-face engagement.



**Ambassador Shorna-Kay Richards poses with Seiko Hashimoto, president of the Tokyo 2020 organizing committee, on Dec. 22, 2020.**

EMBASSY OF JAMAICA

In November 2020, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of Jamaica's participation in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme — a significant driver of education cooperation and people-to-people connections that enrich our partnership. Beyond the Tokyo 2020 Games, we intend to capitalize on the successful participation of our athletes to forge greater connections through sports.

On the trade front, Japanese importers of Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee and West Indian Sea Island Cotton continued to honor their contractual arrangements, notwithstanding the widespread economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. We value these partnerships, not only for their economic benefits, but also for the positive socioeconomic impacts on the local communities that produce these sought-after commodities.

As we seek to increase economic cooperation, the signing of the Jamaica-Japan double taxation convention — during the official visit of Prime Minister Andrew Holness to Japan in 2019 — set the stage for enhanced bilateral trade and investment ties. 2021 saw the launch of the government of Jamaica's Economic Diplomacy Programme (EDP),

which gave impetus to this shared economic agenda.

The launch of our EDP was coupled with the appointment of Jamaica's first-ever honorary investment adviser in Japan to assist in its efforts to pursue mutually beneficial avenues for trade and investment. We have identified several areas of focus — agribusiness, renewable energy and logistics, including the development of special economic zones and smart cities — as we explore partnerships with Japan's private sector.

Active political dialogue at all levels has remained a key feature of Jamaica-Japan relations. At the bilateral level, we continue to enjoy fruitful relations based on mutual respect, shared interests and common values, including democracy, the rule of law, freedom of navigation, free trade and economic prosperity. Our synergies have led to several high-level political engagements over the past decade, which have provided fertile ground for advancing bilateral relations. In July, Jamaica was pleased to welcome Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi to the island — a historic first among Japanese foreign ministers.

Jamaica has also been working at the regional level to strengthen ties between CARICOM and Japan — a long-standing development partner in the region. We were pleased to host the 7th CARICOM-Japan Ministerial Meeting in July and have led efforts to revitalize the Japan-CARICOM Parliamentary Friendship League.

Amid our celebration of nationhood, Jamaica continues to strive for greater economic independence to improve the lives of our people and attain sustainable development. As we do so, we see Japan as a natural partner whose human security approach to development aligns with our national priorities and ambitions. We also welcome continued cooperation to tackle global challenges, including climate change.

Next year, Jamaica will commemorate

her diamond jubilee — 60 years of independence. As we eagerly anticipate this glorious milestone, we are confident that 2022 will give us many reasons to celebrate as we partner for recovery and building back better. Happy Independence Day, Jamaica!

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



**Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi exchanges greetings with Sen. Kamina Johnson Smith, minister of foreign affairs and foreign trade, during his visit to Jamaica last month.**

EMBASSY OF JAMAICA

### Congratulations to the Government and People of Jamaica on the Anniversary of Their Independence

#### Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee

Ataka Trading Co., Ltd.  
Kanematsu Corporation  
MC Agri Alliance Ltd.  
UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.  
Wataru & Co., Ltd.  
Yutaka Trading Co., Ltd.  
<http://www.bluemountain.gr.jp>

### Congratulations to the Government and People of Jamaica on the Anniversary of Their Independence

**Marubeni**

<https://www.marubeni.com>