

Kenya National Day Special

Toward stronger ties and sustainable growth

TABU IRINA
AMBASSADOR OF KENYA



Dec. 12 marks the 58th independence anniversary of the Republic of Kenya, Jamhuri Day. On this auspicious occasion, I wish to convey on behalf of the government and the people of Kenya residing in Japan, warm greetings and best wishes to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, H.E. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, the government and friendly people of Japan. I also wish to congratulate the prime minister on his election in October. I further wish to congratulate Japan for successfully hosting the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As we celebrate Jamhuri Day, we take note of the long-standing and cordial Kenya-Japan relations that have spanned 58 years. These amicable relations, anchored by the five key pillars of infrastructure and private-sector development; agriculture; the environment, water and sanitation; human resource development; and health continue to grow as demonstrated by our exchange of high-level official visits, increasing trade and investment, our strategic partnership and mutual collaboration. Our priority is to further strengthen and deepen these relations for sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

Kenya is a regional economic hub with stable economic growth averaging 5.5% over the past 10 years. With a gross domestic product of \$101.05 billion, Kenya is the dominant economy in East Africa, contributing more than 45% of the region's GDP, and the third-largest and fastest-growing economy in sub-Saharan Africa. Kenya's

strategic investment attractions include being a gateway to East and Central Africa, offering convenient access to regional and international markets and political and economic stability. The country also features resilient growth, a fully liberalized and diversified economy, a well-developed financial sector, a large domestic consumer market, and a young, trainable and productive labor force. As a leading information and communication technology innovation hub in Africa, Kenya also boasts ease of doing business and an advanced infrastructure.

Kenya is the leading recipient of Japanese official development assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa, with the second-largest number of Japanese companies in Africa. In 2021, 35.1% of the Japanese companies in Africa voted Kenya as the top investment destination in Africa for the sixth consecutive year.

Kenya Vision 2030 and the Big Four Agenda (manufacturing, food and nutri-

tion security, universal health coverage and affordable housing) present Kenya's development priorities. The Japanese government has supported Kenya in implementing these priorities, especially through landmark infrastructure projects including the expansion and modernization of Mombasa Port, the construction of roads and bridges, and the development of hydropower and geothermal power infrastructure. Kenya is ranked the eighth-largest producer of geothermal electricity in the world and first in Africa. In 2019, Kenya launched the 310-megawatt Lake Turkana Wind Power Project, the largest wind farm in Africa. It is expected to accelerate the country's efforts toward 100% renewable energy use by 2030.

Kenya Vision 2030 and the Big Four Agenda present enormous investment opportunities for Japanese companies to take advantage of by participating in various projects. These include the Mombasa



Left: A view of one of three swimming pool areas at Heritage Hotels' Voyager Beach Resort in Mombasa. Right: Mombasa Port is a busy, fully functional facility.

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Port Expansion Project Phase III; the Dongo Kundu Special Economic Zone development project; construction of the Mombasa Gate Bridge; the Lamu Port development project and Konza Technopolis, a 5,000 acre (2,000-hectare) IT hub expected to attract business process outsourcing, software development, data centers, disaster recovery centers and light assembly manufacturing industries, among others.

Kenya has a well-developed tourism industry with vast attractions ranging from epic savanna landscapes, abundant wildlife and beautiful palm-fringed beaches. Kenya

was ranked as Africa's leading tourist destination in 2020 by the World Travel Awards, with Nairobi named Africa's leading Business Travel Destination. The country's tourism industry continues to recover from the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We invite the Japanese tourists to visit Kenya and experience our diverse tourism products in a safe environment.

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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the Republic of Kenya
on the Anniversary of
Their Independence*

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