

# Mauritania National Day Special

## Pride, strength built on rich culture

**SIDYA EL HADJ**  
AMBASSADOR OF MAURITANIA

Today we celebrate our Independence Day. Sixty-four years ago, a country was born devoid of any social or economic infrastructure. There were no schools, no hospitals, no roads, no ports, no airports, no administration of any type, no capital city and of course no public or private companies and very few graduates.

The people and government of Mauritania had to literally build their country from scratch, and we have come a long way from where we were in 1960, the year of our independence.

We have managed to build a modern state with all the required institutions thanks to the vision of the successive governments and the hard work and resilience of the people — people who reflect its history and the influences it has known over the years mainly from Arab and African cultures. Today's Mauritania has a variety of traditions, languages, music and cuisines, making up a rich culture that is the pride of the country and a source of its strength.

The successive governments have embarked on vast programs of investment in social and economic development. Many priorities were addressed, and first among them were health and education, which benefited from large investment and had positive results on the well-being of our population. There was also investment in economic infrastructure such as roads, ports and airports to facilitate local and international economic activities, including trade. Many programs and projects were aimed at fighting desertification and other negative impacts of climate change.

However, the country still faces many challenges in its development progress, challenges that are made more difficult with the present uncertain international environment marked by geopolitical tensions, the threat of pandemics and the catastrophic implications of climate change.

More recently, Mauritania has managed to maintain a stable political and economic environment in a geographical area threatened by insecurity. Political stability has been reinforced with the holding of peaceful legislative elections in 2023 and presidential elections in 2024.

Economic stability is highlighted by the maintenance of a stable macroeconomic framework marked by a low budget and balance of payments deficits. External debt has been brought down to sustainable levels. Inflation, which has risen recently because of the general increase in world prices brought about by the COVID-19 crisis and supply chain disruptions, has gone down substantially and is expected to continue this trend. Gross domestic product growth is expected to strengthen to an estimated 6.8% in 2024, mainly driven by a continued increase in the production of iron and gold, and Grand Tortue Ahmeyem, a major offshore gas project that is soon to be online.

The government has also put in place a system of social protection and enabled universal access to health care, which have decreased the level of poverty and are expected to ensure the population benefits from any future economic growth. These policies and their expected success are designed to assist the country in achieving the U.N. sustainable development goals by 2030.

The economy's main sectors of mining and fishing have performed well in recent



**President Mohamed Ould Cheikh El Ghazouani** EMBASSY OF MAURITANIA

years and brought significant export earnings to the country. However, other sectors such as livestock, agriculture, renewable energies and tourism that have substantial potential are yet to be fully exploited. They are now being prioritized by the government and are increasingly attracting local and foreign investment. Their increasing development will bring a much-needed diversification to the economy and increase their contribution to national income. The promotion of the Mauritanian private sector is among the priorities of the government, and its impact in terms of growth and employment is beginning to emerge.

Additionally, the government has put in place a business environment that is conducive to foreign direct investment, including simplification of establishment procedures, low or no taxation, transparent tax legis-



**Africa's second-largest camel market is on the outskirts of Nouakchott.**  
EMBASSY OF MAURITANIA

lation, customs exemptions for imports, favorable labor legislation, improved infrastructure and land tenure reforms.


The evolution of the socioeconomic situation of Mauritania since independence is largely positive and has elevated the country to where it stands today as a member of the international community contributing to peace, security and prosperity in Africa and around the world. Many partners, including Japan, have significantly contributed to the success of the development programs of Mauritania.

Japan-Mauritania relations are excellent and long-standing. Mauritania has benefited from many Japan-financed projects, including the building of infrastructure for the fishing industry and the provision of high-level expertise. Japan is one of the main destinations for Mauritania's fishing exports, mainly octopus. Mauritania imports much of its automotive equipment and machinery from Japan. The government of Mauritania is constantly working on strengthening and widening its relations with Japan, and I am convinced that the future holds excellent prospects for a stronger and more diversified Japan-Mauritania partnership.

I wish all the citizens of Mauritania in Japan a happy Independence Day.


*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 Islamic Republic of Mauritania  
on the Anniversary of Their Independence



JAPAN TUNA FISHERIES  
CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION  
31-1 Eitai 2-chome, Koto-ku, Tokyo

**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Islamic Republic of  
Mauritania  
on the Anniversary of  
Their Independence



**NICHIREI FRESH INC.**

NICHIREI FRESH INC.  
6-19-20, Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo