

Kenya National Day Special

Key business hub boasts stable economy

MOI LEMOSHIRA
AMBASSADOR OF KENYA



I assumed my appointment in Tokyo in August and am honored to represent Kenya in Japan, a leading development partner with growing ties across various sectors.

On Dec. 12, Kenya celebrates its 61st anniversary, commonly known as Jamhuri Day. This is an opportunity for Kenyans to honor past generations for delivering freedom, democracy, development and shared prosperity.

With equal pride, Kenyans also recognize and celebrate partners around the world who continue to inspire and support Kenya's development agenda. Japan recognized Kenya immediately after the declaration of independence in Nairobi on Dec. 12, 1963, and established formal diplomatic relations. The two countries have therefore had six decades of diplomatic relations with remarkable milestones that have attested to the intensity of this partnership, both at the bilateral and international levels.

Over more than six decades, Kenyan-Japanese relations have been informed by shared values for sustainable development and commitment to shared prosperity. Japan has consistently stood by Kenya, supporting development cooperation that amounts to an accumulative \$5.5 billion, the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa. Kenya appreciates Japanese support to the national priorities of health, agriculture, food security and energy, among others envisaged in Kenya's Bottom-Up Transformation Agenda for inclusive growth.

The intensity of the exchanges and high-level visits continues to boost Kenya-Japan relations, with formidable progress realized in strengthening political and diplomatic ties. The visit to Kenya by then-Prime Minister H.E. Fumio Kishida in May 2023 and the reciprocal visit to Tokyo by President H.E. William S. Ruto in February have given impetus to our relations.

Kenya has a stable economy with a business-friendly legal framework, as well as extensive incentives for foreign direct investments. The country has realized tremendous success in delivering transformational projects through partnerships with Japanese companies, such as those involved in the Olkaria Geothermal Project, which has contributed to Kenya's remark-

able achievement of 95% renewable energy status. Japanese companies are also leading in the development of Mombasa Port with the completion of construction of key road networks that will serve as a crucial link within the Eastern Africa coastline.

Kenya's geostrategic location on the Indian Ocean continues to attract businesses seeking opportunities in the larger Eastern Africa region. The successful transformation of Mombasa Port into a regional logistics center for international businesses in Eastern and Central Africa and leading global organizations, such as the United Nations, confirms Kenya's claim as a global business hub. Furthermore, as one of the largest economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya has unique opportunities to offer arising from championing the African Continental Free Trade Area.

A tech-savvy young population is driving Kenya's digital space and opening new avenues for foreign investment in startups. They also constitute an attractive labor market that Japanese companies can harness to provide technology solutions for businesses in Africa and beyond.

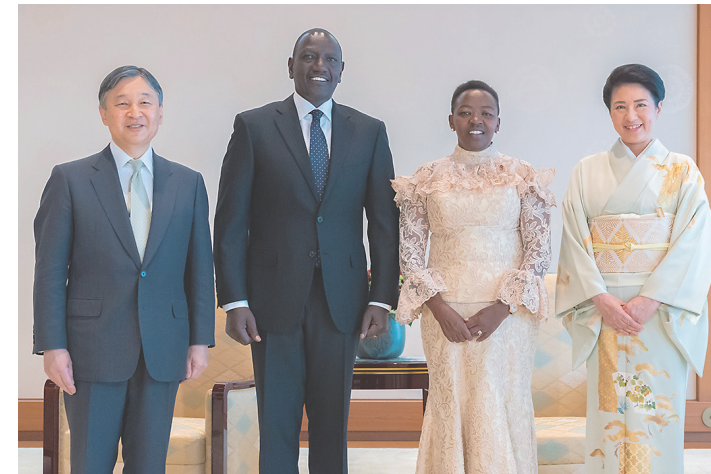
There is more potential in Japanese trade relations beyond the current estimated \$1 billion. Kenya recognizes the need to seek an extended business partnership through which Japan will increase its investment profile and transfers of technology. A high-powered joint trade and investment delegation from Japan will visit Kenya in mid-January to participate in a business forum as part of the commitment to build trade and economic portfolios. Kenya will also seize the forthcoming 2025 World Expo in Osaka to introduce ready investable projects, showcase its magical tourism products and facilitate business meetings between prospective partners.

The ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development to be held in Yokohama in August is also a great

opportunity for growing business partnerships. Kenya welcomes the Japanese business community to explore the unlimited opportunities as we elevate Kenyan-Japanese relations to a new high.

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



Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako host President William Ruto and first lady Rachel Chebet Ruto at a luncheon at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on Feb. 9.
IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD AGENCY



Visitors on a hot air balloon safari in Maasai Mara National Reserve watch giraffes at sunrise.
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