

Cameroon National Day Special

Building up political, social and economic spheres

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May 20 marks the 53rd anniversary of Cameroon's National Day. I wish to use this special celebration day to convey, on behalf of the government and people of Cameroon,

my warmest compliments to their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, as well as to the government, the Diet and the people of Japan.

As a young and growing nation geared toward modernization and "emergence" by 2035, my government has been working tirelessly to consolidate the country's political, social and economic landscapes. In this regard, the pace of efforts for rehabilitation and structural economic transformation has been bolstered. In this year's message I would like to focus on a

few sectors to illustrate this trend.

Despite the particularly difficult international context of the past few years, Cameroon's economy witnessed renewed activity with a growth rate of 3.7% in 2024, as well as a significant decrease in our overall debt, which now stands at 41.7% of gross domestic product. Moreover, although several structural frailties are still hindering its full economic potential, my country is regularly praised by the relevant international financial institutions for its economic resilience to external shocks.

This is partly due to robust fiscal discipline, a dynamic domestic private sector, and measures to strengthen capabilities in agriculture, industrialization and mining.

In agriculture, to address the negative trade balance and ensure food sovereignty, the government is implementing an integrated mixed agricultural and fisheries import-substitution plan, which is starting to yield tangible outcomes. In 2024 for instance, 452 tons of seeds and

12,800 tons of flour were produced.

In industrialization, there is an upward trend marked by several initiatives that have been undertaken to progressively operationalize our economic zones, including the Kribi Port Authority's integrated industrial area, dedicated to the processing of commodities such as cocoa, coffee and rubber. Additionally, the opening of the largest tile production plant of the whole Central African region in Kribi, with the creation of more than 2,000 direct jobs, is further proof of the current positive industrialization trend.

There are bright prospects for developing the rich potential of Cameroon's mining sector. Two iron-processing units with a cumulative production capacity of 3 million tons annually are under construction in southern Cameroon. These plants are mainly destined to process the iron reserves of Bipindi Grand-Zambi, estimated at approximately 150 million tons. With preliminary treatment at the plants, its iron content will reach 65% prior to export.

While this very brief description provides a tiny snapshot of the current dynamism, the fact remains that Cameroon is facing numerous challenges that cooperation with a more advanced country like Japan could help address.

For instance, Japan's well-known expertise in disaster prevention, preparedness and management could be an opportune way to boost my country's capabilities and know-how when responding to the landslides and floods that have caused significant loss of human life and materials in recent months.

I would like to particularly commend the positive response of the Japanese government in the aftermath of the Dschang cliff landslide tragedy and look forward for any fruitful collaboration that could emerge.

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



**President of
Cameroon
H.E. Paul Biya**
EMBASSY OF
CAMEROON

**Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Cameroon
on the Anniversary of
their National Day**



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