

Zambia Independence Day Special

Taking steps toward cooperation in green energy

TOBIAS MULIMBIKA
AMBASSADOR OF ZAMBIA



On Oct. 24, as Zambia celebrates her 61st independence anniversary, I extend warm greetings from President Hakainde Hichilema to their majesties the emperor and empress of Japan and to the Japanese people.

On this day, we also celebrate 61 years of enduring diplomatic relations with Japan, a partnership built on shared values of peace, democracy and sustainable development. This friendship has flourished through mutual respect and understanding and deepened through cooperation.

In 2025, high-level engagements, led by Hichilema and Vice President Mutale Nalumango, reaffirmed both nations' commitment to mutual growth, prosperity and collaboration on investment, trade, technology and human development.

In his official visit to Japan in February, Hichilema met with then-Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba for a summit that showcased Zambia's dedication to a transparent, private-sector-led economy that encourages innovation and sustainable growth.

Meanwhile, Ishiba reaffirmed Japan's commitment to supporting Zambia's reform agenda and commended Hichilema for his debt restructuring and fiscal reforms, which have restored macroeconomic stability.

Both leaders agreed to strengthen collaboration

in mining, renewable energy, education and health, while emphasizing support for a rules-based international order and global financial reform to ensure fair access to capital for developing countries.

The visit also saw the signing of a key memorandum cementing bilateral relations, and an agreement on the promotion and protection of investment. This agreement provides a framework to attract and safeguard Japanese investment in Zambia while promoting equitable, transparent and sustainable economic relations.

The visit came against the backdrop of Japan's earlier pledge of \$1.5 billion in 2024 to support Japanese private-sector investment in Zambia's mining industry. In the president's meetings with major corporations, Toyota Tsusho expressed renewed interest in solar power and electric vehicle battery projects in Zambia, signaling a concrete step toward renewable energy cooperation and green industrialization.

In his address at the Zambia-Japan Business Forum in Tokyo, attended by more than 100 Japanese companies, the president emphasized that Zambia is open for business and committed to building a private sector that drives sustainable growth, creates jobs and uplifts livelihoods.

The president also met with Emperor Naruhito at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. This meeting symbolized the strong cultural and historical bonds that continue to define Zambia-Japan relations.

Building on this momentum, the vice president represented Zambia at the ninth Tokyo International Conference on Africa

Development in Yokohama in August, where she highlighted Zambia's peace, political stability and investor-friendly policies. She also reaffirmed Zambia's commitment to the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations sustainable development goals, emphasizing women's empowerment, human capital development and sustainable industrial growth.

On the sidelines of TICAD 9, the vice president held meetings with industry

leaders to discuss cooperation in renewable energy and industrial diversification.

As Zambia and Japan celebrate 61 years of friendship and cooperation, both nations look ahead to a future defined by shared prosperity and innovation. From renewable energy to digital transformation and manufacturing, the partnership continues to evolve anchored in trust, mutual respect and the creation of opportunities for the next generation.



Left: Victoria Falls is one of the world's largest waterfalls. Right: Lusaka is home to many modern buildings.

GETTY IMAGES



Working to strengthen relations

KATSUMI YAMAGUCHI
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-ZAMBIA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION; CHAIRMAN, ECC GROUP



Congratulations on the 61st anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of the Zambia. On behalf of the Japan-Zambia Friendship Association, students and staff from the ECC Group and

people of Japan, I am sincerely pleased to extend our warmest congratulations to President Hakainde Hichilema, and our love and friendship to all of people of the peace-loving country of Zambia.

I am very impressed to see Zambia continuing to make steady strides as a peaceful, independent nation. I hope through working together to promote bilateral

friendship and mutual understanding, ties between the Republic of Zambia and Japan continue to grow as outlined in the founding philosophy of the ECC Foreign Language Institute. The charter body of the fellowship states: "It is our goal, through the teaching of foreign languages, to contribute to the development of our students' capabilities, international awareness and leadership qualities. In this way, we hope to promote more interaction and understanding among the peoples of the world, thus helping to contribute to world peace."

It is the greatest pleasure for our association to attempt to serve the needs of the people of Zambia, even in our small way. The association will continue to make efforts in the hopes of strengthening and increasing the ties of friendship between our nations, and throughout the world, with the ultimate objective of eliminating the three great human tragedies of war, poverty and disease.

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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