

# Senegal Independence Day Special

## Growing West African energy hub

**JEAN ANTOINE DIOUF**  
AMBASSADOR OF SENEGAL



April 4 marks the 66th anniversary of Senegal's accession to international sovereignty. Later this year, Senegal and Japan will celebrate the 66th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

Looking back since our last article in The Japan Times, a number of landmark events have taken place, both in Senegal's journey toward economic and social progress and in the context of its partnership with Japan.

A young nation recognized for its political stability and democracy, Senegal ranked among the 10 fastest-growing African economies in 2025, with a 7.8% growth rate. Its strategic geographical position, placing it an 8-hour flight from the U.S. and 4 hours from Europe, makes it a natural hub for trade and an ideal destination for foreign direct investment in West

Africa, particularly within the framework of the Economic Community of West African States regional market and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

These achievements derive from ambitious reforms to the business environment, including a new investment code that offers favorable tax and customs incentives to investors, as well as greater legal security. They also stem from the diversification of the economy into strategic sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, digital transformation and energy.

In the energy sector, oil production since 2024, followed by liquefied natural gas production in 2025, positions Senegal as an emerging energy hub in West Africa. Hydrocarbon production has provided a significant boost to the manufacturing sector and exports, offering excellent opportunities for a country such as Japan seeking to ensure energy security.

In its ambition to bring about structural transformation of the Senegalese economy, the government has resolutely opted for digitalization through the Technological New Deal, one of the flagship programs of the Senegal 2050: National Transformation Agenda. This program, which aims to achieve the country's digital sovereignty, focuses on three key areas: the digitization of public services, the development of the digital economy and positioning Senegal as a digital hub in Africa.

I therefore invite Japanese companies, which are at the forefront of technology and innovation, to seize these business opportunities. I am already delighted to see the growing number of Japanese companies investing in Senegal, thereby strengthening our dynamic and multifaceted bilateral cooperation.

As part of his participation in the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African



Development and Senegal's National Day at the Osaka Expo in August 2025, Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Diakhary Faye consolidated this partnership, which was elevated to a strategic level in 2022.

This is an opportunity to acknowledge Japan's contribution, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, to the implementation of projects in vital sectors such as health, education, agriculture and strategic infrastructure, including the Mamelles seawater desalination plant.

As part of efforts to strengthen human capital, Japan supports Senegal, notably through the Senegal-Japan Centre for

Vocational and Technical Training, which signed a memorandum of understanding with JICA and five Japanese multinationals (Toyota Tsusho, Daikin, Toda Corp., NEC and Yamaha) on the sidelines of TICAD 9.

In the security sector, Japan supports the organization of the Dakar Forum on Peace and Security in Africa, the 10th edition of which will be held on April 19 and 20.

Looking ahead, 2026 will be marked in Senegal by the hosting of the fourth Youth Olympic Games in Dakar from Oct. 31 to Nov. 13. This will be the first Olympic sporting event to be held in Africa. Following its performance in the Africa Cup of



Left: Senegal's soccer team celebrates after the final match of the Africa Cup of Nations on Jan. 18.

Right: President Faye signs the guest book at Senegal's Pavilion at the Osaka Expo on Aug. 25.

EMBASSY OF SENEGAL

Nations, Senegal will have another opportunity to shine on the international sporting stage through this historic event.

Together with the entire Senegalese community living in Japan, I therefore invite the youth and the Japanese people to take part in this great rendezvous of giving and receiving, as the great poet and former President of Senegal Leopold Sedar Senghor would put it.

*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 Republic of Senegal  
on the Anniversary of Their Independence



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