

Cameroon national day

Cameroon and the challenges of the 21st century

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AMBASSADOR OF CAMEROON

Today we are celebrating the 37th anniversary of our National Day. This day marks the peaceful revolution of May 20, 1972, when Cameroonians in their majority voted for the creation of a unitary state through a referendum. It is therefore a day for us, as a nation, to carry out some soul-searching and plot our future path. It is a moment of joy and pride for all Cameroonians for the path we have traveled together so far, and a time to reflect together on the future of our great nation.

I would like, on behalf of the people and government of Cameroon, the entire staff of the Cameroon Embassy in Japan and myself, to extend our most sincere and warm greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the friendly people and government of Japan.

In the same token, I would like to congratulate the Emperor and Empress on their golden wedding, and to wish them good health and success in all their



undertakings.

Permit me also to use this medium to wish the city of Tokyo success in its quest to host the 2016 Olympic Games; a quest that has the support of my government.

Cameroon is indeed a developing nation facing many challenges in the complex and interdependent world of the 21st century. Internally, it has to meet the development aspirations of its citizens in such areas as poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, social peace, national cohesion and governance.

In this context, the government has initiated a development program called Cameroon Vision 2035. The program envisages a three-phase approach in the long and medium term, with the goal of transforming Cameroon into an emerging market economy. Cameroon Vision 2035 is built around five strategic pillars:

- * the consolidation of democracy and national unity;
- * economic growth and employment, especially for the youth;
- * population challenges;
- * urban development; and
- * governance

In the first phase (2010-2019), the objective will be to modernize the economy and strengthen its growth. The second phase

(2020-2027) will seek to make Cameroon an emerging economic power while during the last phase (2028-2035), the focus will be on making Cameroon an industrialized country.

This program is certainly ambitious but well within the reach of Cameroon, given its enormous and recognized potential, and the accompanying political will demonstrated by the government and people of Cameroon to make it attainable and achievable.

Taking into consideration the commitment of the government of Japan to accompany African governments in their efforts to pursue sustainable development and economic growth, it is our firm conviction that this program provides a viable opportunity for the private and public sectors in Japan to play an important role in its implementation.

It is a fact that Cameroon is open to Japanese investors. The investment climate has been overhauled, the process simplified, the judiciary better equipped to offer protection for investments, and the government is determined, with the contributions of its friends and neighbors, to resolve any security issues involving armed gangs along its maritime frontier.

At the international level, Cameroon is determined to work with like-minded nations

in promoting and maintaining international peace and stability, which is fundamental in at-

taining economic and developmental goals. The current global crisis highlights the necessity for reform and presents an ideal opportunity for concerted action involving all members of the international community.

In this regard, we believe that there is need for a profound restructuring of the global financial system that takes into consideration the concerns of developing countries. We appreciate the commitment of the government of Japan to the restructuring of the current system.

My government continues to emphasize that the common destiny of humanity should guide the efforts to seek lasting solutions to problems; notably, the preservation of the environment, and its sustainable use and management.

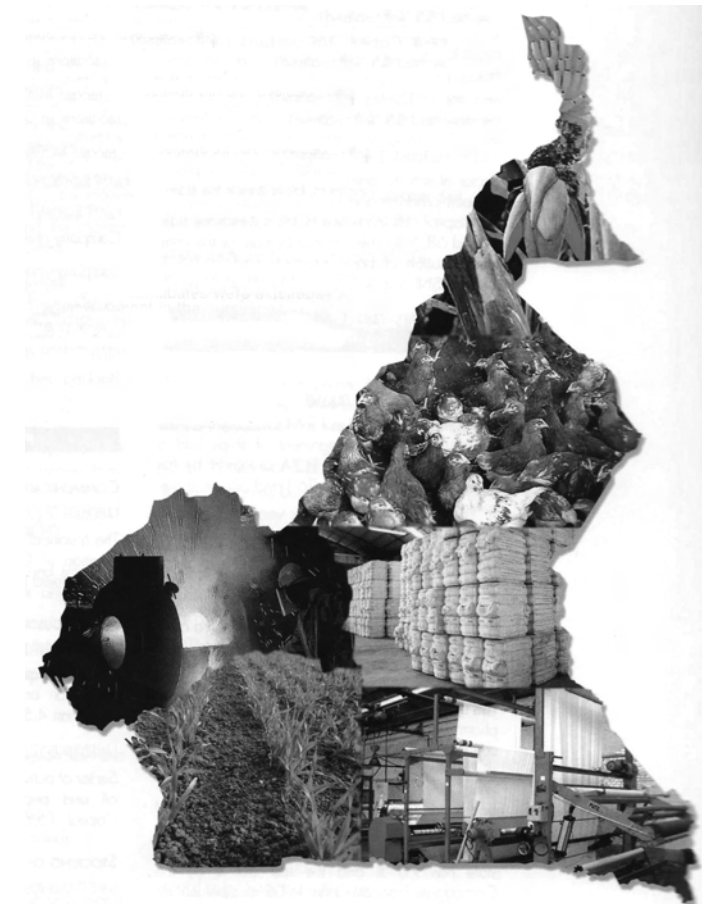
The priority of my government is to work within the framework of our engagements in regional and international institutions along with other bilateral and multilateral partners in the pursuit of our developmental goals. The support we have received from friendly countries has been valuable in this regard.

For these reasons, we appreciate the role of the government of Japan for not only initiating the TICAD process but most importantly for its commit-

ment to the implementation of the Yokohama Action Plan, which addresses developmental issues of major concern to our continent.

The achievement of the objectives enshrined in that plan

will further contribute to enhancing the socioeconomic development of the African continent and the well-being of its people, thus making the continent more attractive to investors and tourists.



Taking shape: Aspects of Cameroon's economy are highlighted as an outline of the Central African country. CAMEROON EMBASSY

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Cameroon on Their National Day



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