

Burkina Faso national day

Development of an emerging nation benefits from peace and stability

Lambert Alexandre Ouedraogo
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF BURKINA FASO

Dec. 11 is the day Burkina Faso celebrates its independence day. This year we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Burkina Faso's independence from France. On this auspicious occasion, it gives me once again a great pleasure to address the readers of The Japan Times and convey on behalf of the President of Burkina Faso H.E. Blaise Compaore and the Burkinabe people our best wishes for peace, good health and prosperity to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the rest of the Imperial household. I also wish to extend our warm greetings to the government led by Prime Minister Naoto Kan, the Diet members and the friendly people of Japan.



To the government and the people of the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Singa-

pore I would like to convey my heartfelt greetings.

Our country became independent in 1960 with the name Upper Volta, given by the colonial master. In 1983, Upper Volta became Burkina Faso, meaning the country of upright people.

Since 1991, Burkina Faso has been under a democratic process that allows a periodic electoral consultation. This year, a fair presidential election was held in November, which resulted in the victory of President Compaore from among seven candidates. Burkina Faso has benefited from a long-term rule of peace and stability under Compaore.

The new president, guided by the political manifesto "Build together an emerging Burkina Faso" on the basis of which he has been elected, has outlined his vision and set out priorities for the government to make Burkina Faso an emerging economy by 2020. These priorities are based on four pillars: human capacity building, focusing on education, health and training; institutional development, fo-



President of Burkina Faso
Blaise Compaore

cus on good governance; economic development, based on sustainable growth; and territorial management, based on a decentralization policy.

In my last article in The Japan Times, I pointed out that peace is indispensable for development. But peace cannot be built without political stability. Therefore, peace building is a central point in our national policy and the government is always working toward peace. Peace among

our citizens inside the country, and outside the country with our neighbors or around the African continent.

Burkina Faso is therefore engaged in the peace process in many countries, including Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Guinea and Sudan, where President Compaore has been nominated as mediator.

2010 also marks the 48th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Burkina Faso and Japan. Thus, for more than four decades, our two countries have managed to forge a successful friendship and partnership. The strength of the bonds lies in mutual respect and a shared vision of international issues, including economic cooperation, peace promotion, human rights, environment and cultural exchanges.

Since Dec. 31, 2008, Japan has been a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the 10th time and our two delegations had the opportunity to work together on many issues inside the council during the whole of 2009 to promote regional and

international peace. Promotion and protection of human rights as well as international security and nuclear nonproliferation are our common concerns.

In 2011, the two countries will hold their third bilateral consultations. The second bilateral consultations between Burkina Faso and Japan took place in Oct 2009 in Ouagadougou and the next one will be in Tokyo. A number of projects in priority areas such as education, agriculture, health and environment are under way to enable Burkinabe people to fight poverty and meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

I would like to reiterate on behalf of the government of Burkina Faso my gratitude to the government of Japan for its quick and prompt action of solidarity when Burkina Faso faced natural disaster due to floods in the capital and some other regions two years ago. The Japanese Embassy in Burkina Faso, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) did very much on the ground to help people overcome difficulties.

But our bilateral ties are reinforced in the multilateral frame of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. Indeed, Japan is working hard to fulfill the TICAD IV commitments despite the consequences of the international financial and economic crisis.

Allow me to also address Japanese investors.

Burkina Faso offers many opportunities and is known as a country that welcomes visitors and investors. The main factors are a strategic location at the heart of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, a peaceful and a stable democratic system for 20 years and a standardized business law. Free enterprise remains the main characteristic of the investment environment. Agriculture, mining, energy telecommunications and tourism are among sectors open and waiting for private investors.

Burkina Faso is also known as a culturally rich country. Several international cultural events are organized on a regular basis. The SIAO, the International Arts and Crafts Show of Ouagadougou organized every two years, represents the largest arts and crafts show on the African continent, and took place this year. The FESPACO, the Pan-African Cinema and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, which takes place every other year, is planned for 2011. Some other events like the SNC, National Week of Culture, and the SITHO, the International Tourism and Hotel promotion, are also attracting foreigners every year.

This 50th anniversary is celebrated in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso's capital of culture. We are inviting everyone to attend and enjoy African hospitality. To my fellow compatriots living in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Singapore, I say congratulations.



Remembrance and hope: The official logo of the 50th anniversary of the independence of Burkina Faso

Mutually united in understanding

Norimasa Matsuyama
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-BURKINA FASO
FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

I would like to congratulate Burkina Faso on its 50th independence day from the bottom of my heart. It is a great joy for me that I can greet all friendly people through this newspaper article.



Since establishing diplomatic relations in 1962, Burkina Faso and Japan have continued to deepen their mutual understanding and friendship.

Furthermore, united in understanding, both countries have aimed for new developments in areas such as the eco-

nomie, social and cultural fields to contribute to world peace and prosperity.

And I believe that one of the countries Japan should trust most in the world is Burkina Faso. Japan is allied with the Burkinabe people in a close relationship of mutual trust and is convinced that the friendly relationship between the two countries should continue to be strengthened further.

The Japan-Burkina Faso Friendship Association hopes to be a bridge in deepening the fertile bilateral friendship and mutual understanding by cooperating with all people and organizations of both countries. I would like to thank all people who have contributed from both countries, and I wish 2011 will be full of happiness and prosperity for them all.

Congratulations to the People of Burkina Faso



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Keep Moving

If there's no path, make one.
If the wind is blowing, run with it.
Hardship means opportunity.
Whatever the circumstances, keep moving.
For a better future,
for one person, one city, one country,
one planet, we will sprint ahead.

Always keep moving.

Marubeni

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