

## Cote d'Ivoire independence day/world

## On the road to reconstruction and development

Boa Liliane Marie Laure  
AMBASSADOR OF COTE D'IVOIRE

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is celebrating today the 51st anniversary of its independence.



On this commemorative occasion, I would like to extend, on behalf of H.E. Alassane Dramane Ouattara, president of the Republic

of Côte d'Ivoire, the government and the Ivorian people, and on my own behalf, warm and deferential greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial Family, Prime Minister Naoto Kan, the government and the people of Japan.

I also take the opportunity to express to the whole people of Japan our compassion for the magnitude 9.0 earthquake that severely struck the northeast of Japan on March 11, triggering a devastating tsunami and a nuclear crisis at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, causing thousands of deaths, a great number of displaced persons as well as important material damage.

To the families of the victims, I express our heartfelt and deepest condolences.

I am convinced that, with regard to its history, Japan will find in itself the necessary energy to overcome these painful moments and get back, as quick as possible, to its former economic performances.

#### Outcome of political crisis

As you may know, Côte d'Ivoire has recently faced political tensions that surged after the presidential election held on Nov. 28, 2010. After his election victory, Ouattara was proclaimed, president of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and the swearing-in ceremony took place in Yamoussoukro, the political capital of the country, on May 21.

The recognition of Ouattara in the capacity of president of Côte d'Ivoire put an end to one of the most severe political crises the country had ever faced.



H.E. Alassane Dramane Ouattara, president of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

It's consequently a salutary outcome not only for the Ivorians themselves, but also for foreign nationals living in the country as well as for our development partners.

The holding of this presidential election was a component of the Political Agreement of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) signed in March 4, 2007, by the major involved Ivorian parties to end the effects of the military crisis that started in September 2002.

#### Time for reconstruction

With the confirmation of Ouattara as the president of Côte d'Ivoire and the nomination of Kigbafori Guillaume Soro as prime minister, a new government was set up on June 1.

It's now time for all Ivorians to rally around the government to create a sustainable peaceful environment and pursue the country's efforts toward social and economic development.

In this context, the priorities of the government are, among others, to heal all resentments and restore trust among the Ivorians through a true reconciliation process based on forgiveness and the safeguard of our common interests and achievements.

This will then make possible the economic viability of the country in order to render it more attractive for foreign investments, as Côte d'Ivoire is blessed with natural resources and skilled human potential.

Thus, the country can rely on



Economic center: Highly industrialized and urbanized, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire's largest city, is the administrative and commercial center of the country. EMBASSY OF COTE D'IVOIRE

its prosperous agricultural sector, which remains the pivotal foundation of its development. It is therefore important to recall that agriculture provides about 70 percent of the country's export revenue, which is led by cocoa and coffee, and cotton, rubber and cashew nuts.

In the near future, it is also important to mention that the Centre National de Recherche Agronomique (CNRA), through its technological research station, has developed a range of excellent-quality liquors named Cordial.

Besides the export crops, Côte d'Ivoire is ensuring its self-sufficiency in many agricultural crops, such as yam, cassava and plantains, although rice remains a critical target.

Côte d'Ivoire also has important potentials in the mining and energy sectors. Several exploration works undertaken for many years have allowed us to find a lot of mineral deposits (iron, copper, nickel, manganese, bauxite). Natural gas potential is also important and the country is likely to increase its crude oil production.

Moreover, the country has a very good economic infrastructure, including an important road and railway network that allows rapid links between the main cities of the country and facilitates the supply of goods to neighboring countries. Two

international airports, particularly the one in Abidjan served by several international airlines, are offering many flights a week.

The country also enjoys two modern international harbors (in Abidjan and San Pedro), used as transit ports by some landlocked countries. The Abidjan Port Authority is progressively imposing itself, not only as the first tuna port in Africa, but also as the first transit and transshipment port in the sub-region; the commodities traffic at the Abidjan Port Authority continues to increase.

#### Foreign investment

An attractive investment policy makes Côte d'Ivoire a good place to invest in West Africa. Indeed, numerous investment opportunities exist in the country for private business, especially in the framework of the transfer of the capital city to Yamoussoukro.

Investments are also welcome in the energy sector, such as the electrification program for many villages, the third phase of the Azito thermal power station, the setting up of a fourth thermal power station in Abidjan, and the interconnection of the Côte d'Ivoire-Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire-Mali electricity grids.

But since 2002 until the recent political crisis at the end of

2010, Côte d'Ivoire's economic, industrial and business structure has suffered severe damage that has plunged the country into a social and economic decline.

For instance, many national and foreign private businesses have lost their assets and the implementation of many projects and programs funded by our development partners have been suspended.

Thus, with a view to restore its economic viability, Côte d'Ivoire will continue to rely not only on its own efforts but also on cooperating with friendly countries and international financial institutions.

#### Relations with Japan

In this regard, I would like to reiterate, on behalf of the government of Côte d'Ivoire, our deepest gratitude to Japan, which, in the framework of the long-standing and fruitful cooperation between the two countries, has always assisted the people of Côte d'Ivoire.

In this connection, we also rely on the Japanese private sector, especially educational and social welfare entities such as Tokushukai Group, which still intends to provide Côte d'Ivoire with a medical network and share with us its knowhow in the field of hospital operations and maintenance.

Côte d'Ivoire also expects to

benefit from Japan's commitment to the implementation of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) IV Yokohama Action Plan through the followup meetings in order to enable the African countries to take further initiatives for ownership and appropriation of the full TICAD process. All this will be under the leadership of the African Union in matters of economic growth, aid for trade, health and education, in the framework of the global challenge of climate change to address food security and poverty alleviation in Africa.

In this way, small-scale exhibitions such as the African Festa in Yokohama are a good and efficient channel to promote our products in Japan. In the tourism field, our exchanges with Japan have registered a significant progress from 2000 to 2009. Therefore, overcoming the political crisis will make Côte d'Ivoire a tourism destination to cheer for in Africa.

In this context, Côte d'Ivoire also takes stock of the third TICAD followup meeting in Dakar, Senegal, from May 1 to 2, when the government of Japan reiterated its commitment to faithfully implement the comprehensive pledges made at TICAD IV.

Furthermore, the international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the African Development Bank have re-established full cooperation with the country since the end of the political crisis.

To conclude, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to The Japan Times and our partners again this year, Tokyo Kankan Co. and Hotel Ibis, who, together with Mitsubishi Corp. and Ajinomoto Co., have so generously sponsored the embassy on this memorable occasion of the 51st anniversary. I thank them for their interest in Côte d'Ivoire. I also greet my Ivorian citizens who live in Japan and benefit from the hospitality and opportunities offered to them. They are the living bridge between Japan and Côte d'Ivoire.



Resources: The offshore discovery of oil and natural gas deposits suggest plenty of potential. EMBASSY OF COTE D'IVOIRE



Agriculture: Côte d'Ivoire is a leading producer and exporter of cocoa beans, accounting for 46 percent of the world's supply. EMBASSY OF COTE D'IVOIRE

Congratulations  
to the People of  
the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire  
on the 51st Anniversary of  
Their Independence Day

Eat Well, Live Well.  
**AJINOMOTO**

**AJINOMOTO CO., INC.**

1-15-1 Kyobashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-8315  
<http://www.ajinomoto.co.jp/>

Congratulations  
to the People of the  
Republic of Cote d'Ivoire  
on the 51st Anniversary of  
Their Independence Day

 **Mitsubishi Corporation**

Congratulations  
to the People of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire  
on the 51st Anniversary of Their Independence Day

 **hotel IBIS**  
ROPPONGI  
**HOTEL IBIS ROPPOINGI**

<http://www.ibis-hotel.com>  
phone: 03-3403-4411 fax: 03-3479-0609  
14-4, Roppongi 7-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire  
on the 51st Anniversary of Their Independence Day

 **KAW KAW**  
Gallery KANKAN

**TOKYO KANKAN CO., LTD.**  
GALLERY KANKAN  
1-47-1 DAITA, SETAGAYA-KU, TOKYO  
TEL : 03-5486-3123 / 03-5486-3122

**GALLERY KANKAN AOYAMA**  
OKAMOTO BLDG.1F, 3-9-5 KITA-AOYAMA, MINATO-KU, TOKYO  
TEL : 03-3499-1910

