

Mauritania national day

Fostering an era of good governance, deep-rooted democracy

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AMBASSADOR OF THE ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

I would like first of all to take this opportunity to extend my most respectful wishes to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to all members of the distinguished Imperial Family.



I would also like on behalf of Mauritanian government and people to express my heartfelt condolences to the Japanese government and people after the deadly earthquake of March 11 that struck the east coast of Japan, with its disastrous aftermath and the Fukushima nuclear crisis. The Mauritanian government and people reacted with deep compassion through the prompt message of sympathy from H.E. President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania addressed to His Imperial Majesty Emperor Akihito, along with an official assistance aid to support construction efforts.

I further wish to convey my sincere gratitude to the editors of The Japan Times for giving me once more the opportunity to address their readers.

Since the inauguration of H.E. Aziz as president of the republic on Aug. 5, 2009, Mauritania has achieved resolute progress toward good governance by fighting relentlessly against the chaos and nepotism that has long been affecting the efficiency of our ad-

ministration. Furthermore, the president has stated firmly his determination to fight against terrorism, and the human and drug trafficking phenomenon that have been recurrent here and there recently in the Sahel region.

On the political level, a freshly ended, successful political dialogue between the presidential majority and opposition parties has concluded on the signing of a very comprehensive political accord that will surely help to strengthen the trust among national political stakeholders and would contribute to reinforce the democratic experience in the country.

On the economic level and within the context of the international economic crisis, the improvement of our peoples' living conditions is a central priority that has already led to the implementation of important programs to fight poverty by providing universal access to essential services.



Industry: Located in northern Mauritania, the town of Zouerat is a center for iron ore mining. AKEMI SHIGA



**H.E. President of Mauritania
Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz**

In this regard, the Mauritanian government has launched many infrastructure projects to build paved roads, hospitals, schools, etc. Furthermore, tremendous efforts have been made to bring clean water and electricity to every single household, taking into account environmental protection, mainly in the fight against desertification.

The repatriation of our fellow citizens who were refugees in

Senegal, combined with a consensual resolution of the humanitarian issues through compensation, contributed much to the further strengthening of national unity and social cohesion in the country.

At the international and regional level, Mauritanian diplomacy in the last couple of years has been very active. The president of the republic in his capacity as chair of the African Union Heads of States panel worked tirelessly to help the international community in its efforts to find solutions to both the Ivory Coast and Libya crisis, adding to this Mauritanian, eminently constructive, contribution to world peace efforts in its capacity of chair of the AU Peace and Security Council.

Given its highly strategic geographical position at the crossroads of North and sub-Saharan Africa, as well as its important potential in terms of mining and fishing resources, Mauritania offers nowadays expanding investment opportunities thanks to the launch of oil exploitation in 2006, added to many other prospects in iron ore that are going on the Taoudeni Basin, but also some huge discoveries in other rare metals, such as gold, that would very soon lift Mauritania to the ranks of the top African gold producers.

The Doing Business program adopted in conjunction with the World Bank shall lead to a better business environment and enhance the visibility of investment opportunities in our country.

In the tourism area, Mauritania has four cities — Chinguetti, Ouadane, Oualata and Tichitt — registered as UNESCO World Heri-

tage sites, with the Banc d'Arguin National Park, another registered site, offering Africa's largest protected maritime zone. Mauritania offers tourists a rich and diverse panorama that can be enjoyed in absolute tranquility.

By joining the Barcelona process and becoming a founding member of the Mediterranean Union, Mauritania's involvement in the Mediterranean prosperity sphere is strengthening its presence in an era of good governance and in a deep-rooted democracy that favors both growth and investment.

Our country stands resolutely committed toward economic liberalism and the realization, within the given time, of the U.N. Millennium Development Goals through the implementation of an appropriate strategy to combat poverty and illiteracy.

Its action in this field is stimulated by the assistance of friendly nations such as Japan, which remains one of the main contributors to public development aid

in Mauritania. In this regard, the Mauritanian government and people acknowledge greatly the positive impacts of Japanese official development assistance (ODA) on our vital sectors, such as food security, environmental protection, fisheries, health, etc. Mauritania also welcomes the expanding presence of Japanese private investment in the country.

The creation on Oct. 1 by Japanese nationals of a Japanese -Mauritanian friendship association will undoubtedly contribute to further enhancing the relationship between our two respective people.

Known for its commitment to the virtues of peace and tolerance, Mauritania greatly appreciates the values of peace, consensus, friendship and human prosperity that constitute the basis of Japan's international role.

Among other things, Mauritania appreciates very much the decision of Japanese authorities to keep on with the Tokyo International Conference for African

Development (TICAD) process, confirmed by the recent declaration of Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda in front of the 66th U.N. General Assembly to organize TICAD V by 2013.

The exchange of high-level visits between the two countries, such as the visit to Mauritania of then Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Makiko Kikuta in January 2011 and the recent successful visit of our Minister of

Foreign Affairs H.E. Hamadi Ould Baba Ould Hamadi, adding to the visit last December of the Mauritanian minister of fisheries and maritime economy to Japan, during which the fisheries agreement was renewed, have contributed tremendously to the reinforcement of our bilateral relations.

I am convinced that Mauritania can count on Japan's continued support and friendship as we continue our nation-building effort.

Congratulations to the People of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on the 51st Anniversary of Their Independence Day



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Congratulations to the People of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania on the Occasion of the 51st Anniversary of Their Independence Day



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