

Burkina Faso national day

Strong leadership preserves nation's peace, security

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CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF BURKINA
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Dec. 11 is the 51st anniversary of the independence of Burkina Faso. This event gives me once again an opportunity to address with great pleasure the readers of The Japan Times and to convey the best wishes for good health, happiness and prosperity on behalf of H.E President Blaise Compaore and the people of Burkina Faso to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as all Japanese people.



Regarding the March 11 tragedy in Japan, Burkina Faso would like to reiterate its very sincere and deepest sympathies and encouragement to the peo-

ple and government of Japan, in particular to the victims and the bereaved families, hopeful that the hardships brought by such unfortunate events will be overcome soon. The prompt message of sympathy sent by the president of Burkina Faso to His Imperial Majesty along with his signature in the condolence book at the Japanese Embassy in Ouagadougou can be a testimony to the great solidarity between the two countries.

The country named Upper Volta by France the colonial master got its independence in 1960 and became Burkina Faso in 1983 under revolutionary rule. Since 1991, Burkina Faso, which means "Country of Upright People," has been engaged in a democratic process with a periodic electoral consultation allowing it to benefit from 20 years of peace and stability.

However, the country known and hailed for its stability and



President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso

social peace, and committed to the democratization processes and edification of the liberal rule of law, faced this year during the period from February to June an unprecedented social crisis that disrupted social tranquillity,

shook the republican institutions and dangerously questioned the state's authority. The country's image, which had been built by dint of much sacrifice, was unfortunately affected both at the regional and international levels.

This crisis was, notably, manifested in various civil and military demonstrations in several cities all over the country and resulted in important material and human damage; it traumatized the population, worried most of Burkina Faso's partners and surprised friendly countries.

In view of the situation, the national authorities have taken action that made it possible to pacify the social tension, bring back peace and gradually restore the state's stability. At this prospect, a ministry in charge of political reforms was created and an Advisory Council for Political Reforms was created in order to begin consultations aimed at making the reforms operational.



Monument: The memorial to the martyrs of Burkina Faso is located in the new district of the capital Ouagadougou. EMBASSY OF BURKINA FASO

The great wisdom and the strong leadership of H.E President Compaore have been decisive in stabilizing the situation and bringing back peace of mind for foreigners. This quiet environment brought back the Japanese experts and volunteers to Burkina Faso by September to continue their duties for the welfare of the people of Burkina Faso.

In the economic field, Burkina Faso continues to welcome investors. The main factors are its strategic location, political stability and rule of law. Within the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) common market of 280 million people, Burkina Faso is also located

at the heart of the West African Economic and Monetary Union and offers the private investor access to a market of 70 million consumers with a reliable legal system, standardized business law and diversified economic potential. Free enterprise is the main characteristic of the investment environment. Agriculture, mining, gold, manganese, zinc, phosphates, energy, telecommunications and tourism are all sectors open to private investors. But the foundation and prerequisite of all these possibilities are the peace and security that we are trying to preserve.

This is what also allows Burkina Faso to organize international

Kindness of people of Burkina Faso offers encouragement for Japan

Norihisa Matsuyama
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-BURKINA FASO FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the 51st anniversary of the Independence Day of Burkina Faso. It is a great pleasure for me that I can greet all friendly people through this article again this year.

The activities of the Japan-Burkina Faso Friendship Association have entered into its 17th year, which has helped further deepen the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

While building new schools and digging wells, which we have annually conducted, remain the major projects for us, the international exchanges between students have become more active. Last month, the students of Shiroy Dai-ichi elementary school from Chiba Prefecture and Burkina Faso's Cabane elementary school have conducted real-time TV conferences to exchange opinions and to present performances of singing and dancing.

In the aftermath of the March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake, many people from Burkina Faso extended their deep condolences to the victims and offered invaluable donations. I cannot estimate how much we Japanese were encouraged by the kindness toward others, which, I believe, is a national character of the people of Burkina Faso. I am seized with gratitude.

As the end of the year approaches, I would like to express my appreciation to all the people who have contributed to both countries and wish a happy and prosperous year 2012.



**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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