

Mozambique national day

Hopes are high as nation develops, growth accelerates

Belmiro José Malate
AMBASSADOR OF MOZAMBIQUE

This year we are celebrating the 37th anniversary of our National Day. On this auspicious occasion, I wish to convey, on behalf of the government of Mozambique and that of my own, warm and cordial greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and my best wishes for happiness and prosperity to the people of Japan. I also wish to take this opportunity to extend my greetings and best wishes to members of the Mozambican community residing in Japan.



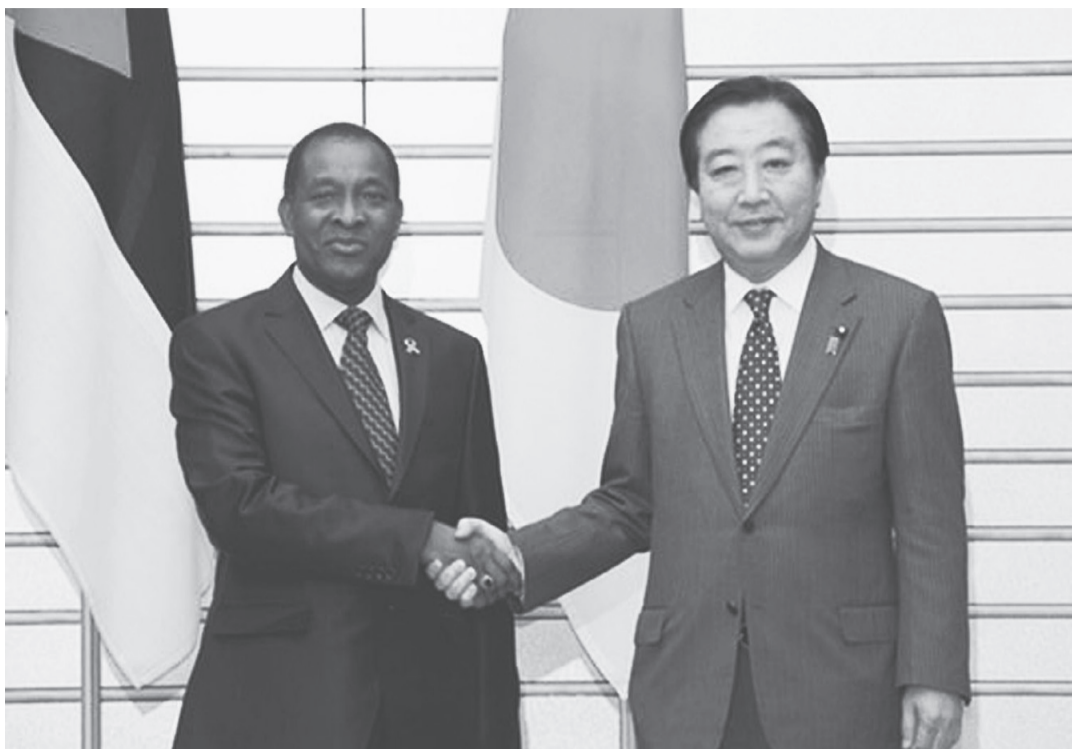
justice, where all citizens can freely exercise their democratic rights. Mozambique is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, with an average growth of 7 percent for the last 10 years. These remarkable achievements are a product of clear vision in the articulation of our goals, committed leadership in bringing all citizens around a common objective and determined citizens who were able to transform challenges into opportunities of progress.

While a lot has been done, challenges are still significant if we consider that more than 50 percent of the population live in poverty, food security is still a goal to be achieved and infrastructures are a pressing need to be addressed in order to secure the smooth flow of goods and people within the country. Although access to primary education has increased significantly, a lot of our people cannot read and write. These issues mean that we need to redouble our energies to resolve the pending problems.

Our aspirations are high since so far we have been able, with limited resources, to mobilize the necessary efforts to bring about the positive changes that Mozambican society is experiencing today in all sectors. Our convictions of continued success are high because we count on the support of many partners like Japan who joined hands with us when we were taking our first steps as a newly independent country, supported us during the difficult and trying times of our conflict, and are today working with us in the process of reconstruction and development.

Today we look at the future with confidence because the country is discovering important natural resources, particularly related to the energy sector, which have a great potential to contribute to accelerated growth. In fact, enormous reserves of natural gas have been discovered in the northern part of the country, making Mozambique an important player in the international gas market. The country also has large reserves of mineral coal, important for the power and steel industries.

In this context it is the desire of the government of Mozambique and of the people in general that these discoveries will generate additional resources to



Strengthening ties: Mozambique Prime Minister Aires Ali meets with Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda in Tokyo on Feb. 21. CABINET PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE



Potential: A successful flow test is conducted at a large-scale liquefied natural gas project off the coast of Mozambique. Right: Pemba beach has developed into a major tourist destination for divers and those who enjoy water sports. ANADARKO PETROLEUM CORP. / KODAI MATSUOKA

accelerate growth and development. But for that, the first and most important element is that they should be explored in a sustainable manner. It is also important that these resources do not transform Mozambique into a mere producer and exporter of primary goods. Value addition is paramount since it leads not only to industrialization but also to job creation and technology transfer,

among others. So, as we engage with Japanese companies that are actively participating in the development of these resources, we would like to see the emerging of an innovative partnership that is anchored in the pillars of mutual benefit.

Bilateral cooperation

Our hopes are also renewed because in the course of the current

year we witnessed the renewal and deepening of our bilateral relations of cooperation. In February this year, Mozambique Prime Minister Aires Ali paid an official visit to Japan. During his visit, Prime Minister Ali had a very productive bilateral meeting with H.E. Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda. In that meeting, a number of areas were identified for mutually beneficial cooperation.

The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening their cooperative relationship in the area of resource development, including coal and natural gas. They agreed to start negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement with a view to promote investment in Mozambique. Japan expressed its commitment to continuing assistance for Mo-

zambique's development efforts, including the implementation of the ProSAVANA Program, as well as infrastructure development in the Nacala Development Corridor. The two leaders expressed their desire to see the Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD) process renewed and strengthened during the upcoming meeting scheduled to take place in June 2013. Prime Minister Ali also had a productive meeting with the CEOs of Japanese companies that are currently investing in Mozambique and assured them of the continued support of the government of Mozambique in their undertakings.

Also this year, Mozambique's minister of health, the vice minister of trade and industry, the vice minister of transport and communications and the minister of mineral resources have come to Japan with the goal of further strengthening the good relations between the two countries and establishing solid grounds for continued Japanese support to Mozambique. Japan has a vast and multifaceted program of cooperation with Mozambique, covering the areas of health, education, infrastructures (roads and bridges), water man-

agement infrastructures, food security, de-mining, environment protection, tourism, training and capacity building. About 50 Japanese volunteers are currently working in different sectors in Mozambique.

On the other hand, various Japanese government and private business delegations have visited Mozambique with the objectives of establishing good relations and promoting economic interests and cooperation between Japan and Mozambique. Of these, it is worth noting the visit of Tadahiro Matsushita, the then vice minister of economy, who had cordial and constructive meetings with Mozambican authorities that contributed to consolidating bilateral relations. A public-private mission of Japan, Brazil and Mozambique that visited the Nacala Development Corridor in April to get first contact with the area where the ProSAVANA program is going to be developed, as well as to establish first contact with the local authorities.

The ProSAVANA, a triangular program to be jointly implemented by Mozambique, Japan and Brazil, was launched in October 2010, within the TICAD IV South-South cooperation, and is

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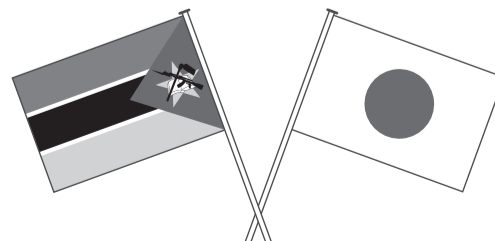
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Collaboration: Mozambican and Japanese researchers work together in a field in Nampula Province under the framework of the ProSAVANA Program. JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY

Boosting cooperation with Japanese companies

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designed to transform the Nacala Development Corridor in northern Mozambique into a highly productive agricultural zone. The program will benefit from the positive experiences of a similar program that was implemented in the Cerrado region of Brazil, since it shares similarities in terms of climate and landscape.

Moreover, the number of Japanese companies that are already established in Mozambique and those who have shown great interest in establishing businesses in the country has grown particularly in the area of energy and mineral resources such as coal and natural gas. These include corporations such as Mitsubishi, Sojitz, Mitsui, Hitachi, Nippon Steel, Marubeni and Sumitomo.

Added responsibilities

The country is also committed to carrying on with its regional and international obligations and for that reason, this year in

particular has committed itself to organizing two important events. One is the 32nd Summit of the Heads of States and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which will take place in Maputo in August, when Mozambique will also take over the rotating presidency. SADC is an important organization of which Mozambique is a member and has been at the center of the promotion of regional integration. It is our conviction that Mozambique will use the occasion to contribute to the materialization of the memorandum of understanding that was signed between the SADC and Japan in March this year since it will contribute to strengthen political dialogue and boost cooperation in areas such as regional infrastructure development.

Mozambique will also welcome the Summit of the Heads of States and Government of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP),

which will be held in Maputo on July 20 under the theme "CPLP and the Challenges of Food Security and Nutrition."

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Japan and the Japanese government for their continued support and cooperation in promoting friendly relations between our two countries. I would like to also extend my special appreciation to the non-governmental organizations that, one way or another, have been supporting poor communities in Mozambique. Small as it may appear, it is in fact a great contribution coming from ordinary Japanese citizens committed to eradicating poverty in the world to the common citizens of Mozambique. Your efforts are highly regarded by our people.

Finally, I would like to thank The Japan Times for granting me the opportunity to address and greet its esteemed readers on this occasion, and to thank the companies that sponsored this page.

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