

Malawi national day

A peaceful environment for further development in several sectors

Reuben Ngwenya
AMBASSADOR OF MALAWI

On the occasion of 48 years of independence of the Republic of Malawi, it is my greatest joy to convey warmest greetings from H.E. Joyce Banda, president of the Republic of Malawi, to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, H.E. Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and to the people of Japan.



Peaceful environment

As I stated last year during a similar period, I am pleased to once again reiterate that Malawi continues to be one of the most peaceful countries, an environment conducive for meaningful development. A good example was in April this year when Malawi experienced a peaceful transition for H.E. Joyce Banda, who

was vice president, to ascend to the presidency in line with the constitution, following the sudden demise of President Bingu wa Mutharika. Being an unexpected incident that created a leadership vacuum, some people anticipated that there would be violence, but the entire country remained peaceful, confirming a well-known cultural trait of Malawians.

Even more encouraging now, President Banda has emphasized that Malawi will promote a more peaceful environment, including respect for human rights, rule of law, unity, equity and other democratic principles, which are key values for development. Malawi is moving in the right direction and the president's policies, spelled out and implemented just within three months of entering office, have attracted a lot of praise in Malawi and from the international community.

Strengthened relations

Malawi continues to enjoy cor-



H.E. President of the Republic of Malawi Joyce Banda

dial relations with Japan, which dates back to 1964 when Malawi attained her independence.

The relations have been and continue to be of mutual benefit to Japan and Malawi. Through the TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) process, Malawi has received a lot of assistance from the Japanese government, which includes infrastructure development, education, health, agriculture and tourism. The government of Malawi is very appreciative of this assistance.

Malawi continues to be a favorite destination for Japanese volunteers as we have more volunteers than any other country, signifying the great environment that Malawi has for development. We have also witnessed an increase in the number of scholarships awarded to Malawians to study in Japan.

It should also be noted that Malawi was the first country to have adopted the One Village One Product (OVOP) initiative in Africa, which has helped to uplift many rural livelihoods through the creation of jobs and the spirit of hard work. All these examples signify the great relationship that Malawi has with Japan.

Recently, we have also witnessed an influx of potential investors wishing to invest in Malawi, especially in mining, agriculture and manufacturing industries.

Trade and investment

Malawi has emphasized the need to promote trade and investment to improve the social welfare and economic situation of the country. In her State of the Nation address, the president has outlined policies and incentives that will promote trade for agricultural products and markets. Those wanting to invest are motivated as the government has removed punitive taxes for importing raw materials and machinery. The government has also made a bold decision to devalue the local currency by 49 percent. This will help to improve exports from Malawi as our products will now become competitive. At the same time the move has also made available the required foreign exchange to spur the economy and help businesses to acquire raw materials from abroad. Other incentives such as a reduction of taxes on essential commodities to promote trade and investment have been spelled out. All these are great opportunities for investors and businesses to take advantage to choose Malawi.

Investment opportunities are many. Being an agricultural country, most products need value addition, like fruit processing, etc. There is demand for opening up manufacturing companies to process these. Some of the agricultural products that are selling fast in Japan include the Malawi "Geisha" coffee, honey, tea, macadamia nuts and tobacco.

Other prominent areas of

investment include the following sectors: transport, tourism, ICT (information and communications technology), financial services, real estate and mining. Recently, there has been a scramble by foreign investors for mineral resources in Malawi. Rare earth metals for hybrid technology, coal, uranium and many other minerals have been discovered. We appreciate Japan's involvement in conducting feasibility studies on some

of these minerals. The country is also currently exploring oil in Lake Malawi and at the moment the exploration is under way by two firms. Very soon, Malawi will be a country of plenty.

Support initiatives

To effectively meet the demand of industries, the Government of Malawi has reached an agreement with her good neighbor Mozambique to tap into electricity from the Cabora Basa hydro-



Symbol: Since May 28, Malawi's national flag, which was changed to a full sun design from 2010 to 2012, has reverted to the old independence flag. EMBASSY OF MALAWI

electric dam. The government has also secured the American Millennium challenge aid for more power generation due to good governance and economic reforms. In summary, very soon electricity challenges will be the story of the past as Malawi has adopted the slogan "Electricity and Power Supply All Day."

There is abundant information on various packages for trade, investment and tourism opportunities in Malawi. Please visit the Malawi Embassy website in Japan or contact the embassy for additional information. We are looking forward to seeing you in Malawi, the "Warm Heart of Africa."

Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic of Malawi
on the 48th Anniversary
of
Their Independence



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Commercial and industrial: The Reserve Bank of Malawi started its operations in 1965 in Blantyre, the nation's center of finance and commerce. EMBASSY OF MALAWI