

Uganda independence day

Fifty-year journey since independence: a firm foundation for transformation

Wasswa Biriggwa
AMBASSADOR OF UGANDA

Today marks 50 years since Uganda gained its independence. It equally marks 50 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two sister countries, Uganda and Japan.



As we celebrate this 50th anniversary of our bilateral relations, I wish to extend, on behalf of the government and the people of Uganda my heartfelt and sincere greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of the Imperial family, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, the government and the people of Japan.

A strong bilateral framework of cooperation with Japan is a key component of Uganda's foreign policy and we appreciate the commitment shown by the government of Japan to the warm bilateral relations that

were further strengthened by the visit to Uganda in June of Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino.

Peace, security

Uganda celebrates this national day as a more stable democratic and united country. In the area of peace and security, the country has been instrumental in ensuring both national and regional stability through various regional initiatives like the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia), among others, by working closely with regional countries to collectively address the problem of negative forces as a common security threat.

Uganda is further committed to ensuring lasting peace in Somalia, and it is within this framework that it contributed over 6,600 peacekeepers to AMISOM for assistance in protection of the Transitional Federal Institutions, security for key infrastructure and necessary security conditions for the provi-

sion of humanitarian assistance. Uganda also contributed to the Regional Task Force of the AU to bolster collective efforts toward ending the activities of the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) rebels in accordance with U.N. Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2012/18 of June 29, 2012.

Economic transformation

Regarding the area of economic development, thanks to the measures taken under the wise leadership of President Yoweri Museveni, Uganda has registered positive, consistent overall growth rates of its economy over the last 20 years. The government in 2007 approved the Comprehensive National Development Planning Framework to be implemented through six five-year National Development Plans (NDPs); Sector Investment Plans (SIPs) and Local Government Development Plans (LGDPs).

This long-term planning framework consolidates the previous efforts, lessons learned and analysis of our past development strategies and future projects, and takes into

account emerging development opportunities, e-revolution, globalization and economic integration, among others, with the aim of creating employment, raising average per capita income levels and reducing poverty so as to accelerate socioeconomic transformation for prosperity.

It is in this regard that I take this opportunity to invite Japanese investors, companies and SMEs to come to Uganda and take advantage of the existing conducive environment for doing business that was created by a private sector-driven economy.

Furthermore, companies can exploit the opportunities in the nascent petroleum sector as well as recently discovered viable deposits of iron ore, phosphates, gold, limestone, gypsum and other metals.

Tourism

Selected as the No. 1 tourist destination for 2012 by Lonely Planet, the world's largest travel guidebook, Uganda boasts an unprecedented diversity of attractions. With more than half the world's remaining mountain gorillas, over 1,200 bird species,



Cooperation: A computer image shows the bridge that will be built across the Nile at Jinja, Uganda, a pillar of Japanese development assistance to Uganda. EMBASSY OF UGANDA

all of the "big five" species (buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion, rhinoceros), the continent's largest freshwater lake, snowcapped mountains astride the equator, the source of the world's longest river, and about 50 different

cultural groups, Uganda offers exceptional opportunities for authentic adventure.

I encourage Japanese visitors and other tourists to visit Uganda and experience this unique adventure, ranging from rafting

down the thundering rapids of the Nile, tracking endangered primates through lush rain forests, to viewing wild animals across the sprawling savanna.

Finally, I am further pleased on this occasion to extend warm

congratulations to the Uganda community living in Japan as well as all the friends of Uganda in Japan.

I wish you all dear readers a happy Oct. 9 Uganda national day celebration.



Wildlife: Uganda is home to various animals from impala to half the world's remaining mountain gorillas. EMBASSY OF UGANDA



Congratulations
to the People of the Republic of
Uganda on the 50th Anniversary
of Their Independence



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