

Angola national day

Angola seeks to further development, enhance ties

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AMBASSADOR OF ANGOLA

It is for me a great honor to address your readers on this very important occasion to Angolans through The Japan Times newspaper. As a matter of fact, it was 37 years ago that after a long struggle of 15 years we achieved our freedom. I avail myself of this opportunity, on behalf of H.E. José Eduardo dos Santos, president of the Republic of Angola, to convey to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, warmest greetings and respects. On this special day, we express our thanks to all countries that supported us during the struggle. This day is also an opportunity to express solidarity and to celebrate unity and brotherhood. We would like to express to the Japanese People our gratitude for the support and solidarity rendered to the Angolan people throughout the years.



important role in its region as an active member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), CEAC and continentally as an active member of the African Union (AU). Angola has become a global player.

Economically, the peaceful and stable political environment existing in Angola since the end of the civil war in 2002 created the necessary environment for business and economic development.

The natural resources and in particular oil, gas and diamonds continue to be the main drivers of this vision. The Angolan economy has been growing steadily, and the financial system has played an important role in this. The process of re-industrialization of the economy is progressing, following the guidelines proposed in the short-term plan for the period of 2009-2013. Despite this fact and similar to other countries, the economy of Angola suffered a setback due to the international economic crisis.

Bilateral relations

After acquiring peace, Angola became the third largest economy in sub-Saharan Africa with a gross domestic product (GDP) in constant growth and projected to improve its ranking.

The bilateral trade between Japan and Angola stands at just approximately \$2.5 billion. Nevertheless, we are already major trading partners. And I am here to look at ways to move further with our partnership; to find ways in which Japan can work with Angola in diversifying its economy away from the usual major trading products (oil, diamonds and gas) and instead deliver its expertise and skills and continue to create the right environment for sustainable economic growth and social development. Remarks go to the contribution engagements from the government of Japan in the

Angola today

Politically, Angola is continuously improving the democratic process. As a matter of fact, Angola has registered dramatic changes since its civil war ended, such as the return and settlement of the internally displaced people and free circulation of people and goods inside the country up to the bordering areas. As regarding infrastructure, we were able to rebuild the roads and bridges, schools, universities and bring the major bank branches to the remote areas, with the principle of having in mind the improvement of the life standard of the populations. The latest parliamentary and presidential elections passed peacefully Aug. 31 this year. In the regional integration sphere, Angola is playing an



Potential: Angola is the third largest producer of diamonds in Africa and about 60 percent of the diamond-rich territory within the country remains unexplored. EMBASSY OF ANGOLA

rehabilitation of Namibe Port, reconstruction of the Hospital Josina Machel and the Professional Training Center of Viana, among other projects.

There is room and willingness to strengthen the cooperation between Angola and Japan. In fact, the policy of the Angolan authorities is to establish diversified and mutually rewarding relationships, which can add value to — and render more competitive — our economy, in order to achieve sustainable development, and bring prosperity to the Angolan people.

Measures such as the stabilization of the principal macro-economic indicators created a predictable financial and economic environment, conducive to investment and economic and social development.

The ambitious and ongoing process of rehabilitation, expansion and modernization of basic infrastructure led by the Angolan government, is open to the private sector and the different public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements. This process has had positive and multiplier effects for the economy as a whole.

Moreover, there is the legal and institutional framework in place based on the best international practices, which includes the new investment bill recently approved and the bilateral agreements on investment protection and double taxation, signed with many countries. Furthermore, through its National Agency for the Private Investment, Angola attracted trade and received a high volume of investments in different areas, as

a result causing a surge in 2,251 new jobs, which contributed to lower the unemployment rate in the country.

In a short, all sound measures that played the positive role in creating the sound investment environment. In 2010 and 2011, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) investment reports placed Angola in the first group of the most successful African countries in attracting private investment.

Notwithstanding the good results achieved, the challenges ahead are huge. Angola needs to diversify its economy and the structure of the GDP in order to boost employment and make the Angolan economy less vulnerable to external shocks.

Angola also needs to add val-



Surviving: The giant sable antelope, known in Angola's official language of Portuguese as the "planca negra gigante," is the nation's symbol and an endangered species. EMBASSY OF ANGOLA

ue to its raw materials, expand the exports and reduce or substitute its imports. Angola also needs to deepen its industrialization process in order to make its growth sustainable and its economy more competitive. We also need to reduce poverty and illiteracy, and improve our social indicators.

We Angolans welcome all those who are interested and believe in the future of our nation, among them foreign entrepreneurs, who are willing to form meaningful and win-win partnerships with Angolans, bringing capital, technical and technological expertise and knowhow. Therefore, I encourage all Japanese companies to come and invest in Angola, taking advantage of the vast opportunities just outlined.



Westernized: A French-style park in a geometric pattern is in the city of Lubango, southwestern Angola. EMBASSY OF ANGOLA

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the 37th Anniversary of
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