

Haiti independence day

Haiti sees source of inspiration in Japan's astonishing rise

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AMBASSADOR OF HAITI

Haitian President His Excellency M. Joseph Michel Martelly, from Dec. 5 to 8, 2012, made a historic trip to Japan in order to strengthen, deepen and structure the bilateral relations that were initially established in 1931. In fact, if we look back into history, we realize eventually that President Martelly's visit to Japan is described as historic since he is the first serving Haitian president to visit this country. With an elo-



quence that only sincerity, commitment and emotion impart, he was here to talk about his vision for a new Haiti that is open to foreign investments and most especially to Japanese investors.

This visit gives credibility to the self-sacrificing nature he has always shown in accomplishing his responsibilities, and portrays his additional services to Haiti and the people of Haiti.

President Martelly and his Japanese interlocutors discussed foreign investment, sustainable development, trade-exchange opportunities with the aim of establishing partners in business enterprises and better answers to challenge globalization. He even mentioned in his speech that he

came to Japan to enforce and facilitate commercial exchanges between the two countries. He also added that he wishes to know how the Japanese expanded. In trying to know how they expanded, Haiti therefore has to look to Japan as a source of inspiration and try to understand what lies behind the success of this country.

Japan has in the past been plagued with terrible destruction such as World War II and numerous earthquakes, but despite all these, the Japanese did not give up on life. They did not just fold their hands and cry "we are finished." They took it as a responsibility to rebuild their nation, which today is one of the world's biggest powers. Above Japan's material and technological developments that leave us fascinated, one other major factor that does not cease to impress me and which greatly touches me is far from being intangible. To us what surpasses all of these is the Japanese spirit, their pride and their vision. If we are asked to describe a common Japanese quality and how it inspires us, we will say it is the resilience of the Japanese.

Resilience is the ability of a nation or a people to resist and recover from a major shock after



Amicable relations: President Joseph Michel Martelly of Haiti and his wife, Sophia, meet with Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the Imperial Palace on Dec. 7 during his visit to Japan.

EMBASSY OF HAITI

a catastrophic disaster. This quality is what we have found in the Japanese, a nation whose entire generation was destroyed by war yet they have endured and continued. It is this resilience that allowed them to create the mighty Japan that we see today, so beautiful and modern. The Japanese do not function for selfish purposes, they do it for the generations to come, and for their children and grandchildren. These are all evidences of resilience.

Many contacts with individuals and various Japanese institutions have helped us to see that the destiny of these people was

not just by chance. Men and women determined to move further, filled with the resilience spirit, wanting to shape a destiny for their nation have carried on with a proud spirit and projected it to the entire world. Because even though disasters can destroy infrastructures and material riches, a common vision, the creative spirit or dream of a people cannot be altered, on the contrary, they resisted and became even stronger. This is the lesson that Haitians have to obviously learn from the Japanese.

Japan has taught us that the primary riches of a nation are

neither natural nor material but human. Above the abundant natural resources that a nation can have, human intelligence constitutes, to me, the most important riches of a nation, meaning the inhabitants of a nation are the most valuable resource that a nation possesses. Only humans themselves, based on the kind of mentality they have or the dreams they possess, and by their civic responsibilities can produce a just society, one that will invite people to live in it.

Japan has completely cleared all our doubts that our beloved



On guard: The Citadel Laferriere, which was built in the early 19th century to keep the newly independent nation of Haiti safe from French incursions, is the largest fortress in the Americas and a UNESCO World Heritage site. EMBASSY OF HAITI

nation Haiti too can someday like a Phoenix rise again from its ashes. It is left for the living as a means to pay homage to those that were killed during the catastrophic 2010 quake and other terrible disasters to construct a viable nation that will be a fair one for generations to come. We would not cease to repeat loud and strong that Japan is much more than just a country, it should be a source of inspiration for Haiti. We have become more and more determined to help our country achieve development as Japan has done.

On Jan. 1, 1804, Haiti became

the first independent nation in Latin America, the first post-colonial independent black-led nation in the world and the only nation whose independence was gained as part of a successful slave rebellion. Under the leadership of President Martelly, as the flag bearer of a new generation and a new mind-set, may this unique and wonderful history, combined with lessons we can learn from Japan's achievements, be a better guide to the future of Haiti. And we solemnly invite Japanese firms and investors to join us in this effort.

Haiti is open for business.

Congratulations
on the 209th Anniversary of the
Independence Day of the Republic of Haiti

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