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# Cameroon national day

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## Consolidating the democratic process

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AMBASSADOR OF CAMEROON

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On May 20, 1972, Cameroon underwent a peaceful revolution. After living as two separate political entities for over 50 years — first under different colonial masters and later as federated states — Cameroonians in their overwhelming majority chose on this day to be reunited into one, indivisible nation.



It is always with immeasurable pleasure and joy that we celebrate this special day in the life of our nation. The joy stems from the knowledge that as a nation we have made great strides. The successes we have achieved as a nation are principally due to the efforts of the Cameroonian people, our leadership and the support of our foreign friends and partners.

On behalf of the people and government of the Republic of Cameroon, the entire staff of the Cameroon Embassy and myself, I would like to extend hearty and sincere wishes to Their Imperial

Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko as well as to the friendly people of Japan.

In the same vein I would like to congratulate Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the Liberal Democratic Party on their victory in the parliamentary elections of Dec. 12, 2012.

Finally, as the people and government of Japan continue to grapple with the issues of reconstruction and decontamination following the Great East Japan Earthquake, I assure them of the continued support and encouragement of the people and government of Cameroon.

Since the establishment of bilateral cooperation ties between Japan and Cameroon some 63 years ago in 1960, relations between the two have witnessed tremendous growth in many areas.

The government of Japan has been one of our most reliable and supportive friends and partners in our development efforts. The people and government of Cameroon will always be grateful for this support and it is my cherished hope that it will continue to expand both at the bilateral and at the multilateral level through the Tokyo International

Conference on African Development (TICAD).

This development platform, initiated 20 years ago by the government of Japan, has evolved into a multi-stakeholder process with the aim to promoting the continent's development based on the principle of African ownership and international partnership.

The government of Cameroon appreciates the efforts of the Japanese government to fulfill its commitments. As preparations for TICAD V, to be held in Yokohama next month, are progressing, Cameroon looks forward with anticipation and it is committed to participating fully in the conference, which, we hope, will shape a new vision for Japan-African relations.

Since his re-election in 2011, President Paul Biya has launched an ambitious development program geared to turning Cameroon into an emerging economy in 2035. This transformation is to be seen both in the political and economic landscape of the country. For the first time ever and in conformity with the 1996 constitution, senatorial elections were held in Cameroon on April 14. The introduction of this Upper

House consolidates the democratic progress in Cameroon and improves the powers of the legislature to oversee and control government action. The expected creation of the Constitutional Court will complete this process.

On the economic front, the government has embarked on a massive infrastructure building program in the transport and energy sectors. For 2013 the government has identified 21 projects in the sectors of transport, urban development, energy and the agro-food industry.

For potential investors, these projects could be operated under the build-operate-transfer mechanism. For this purpose there exists in Cameroon a framework set up in 2006 to encourage and facilitate public-private sector cooperation in the execution of investment projects. In addition, the government has enacted a new investment charter that offers considerable financial and fiscal incentives to potential investors.

As I have always done on previous occasions, let me renew my invitation to Japanese investors to take advantage of the favorable and competitive investment environment Cameroon offers.