

Djibouti national day

As crossroad of three continents, nation is key partner for Japan

Ahmed Arita Ali
AMBASSADOR OF DJIBOUTI

It is a great pleasure and honor of 36th anniversary for our national days to convey on behalf of the government as well as the people of Djibouti and the entire staff of the Embassy of Djibouti my sincere and deepest respect to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and to the distinguished members of the Imperial family, and wish them good health and happiness. As the commemoration of the second anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake is still in our memories, I would like to use this occasion to reiterate the continued support of the Djiboutian people in remembering and praying for the victims and all those who suffered, and wish them a full recovery.

Japan's image in Djibouti
Djibouti has a long-standing and strong relationship with Japan, covering key aspects of our development and mutual friendship. Over the years, Djibouti has benefited substantially from financial and technical support provided by the Japanese government and its people. Through this invaluable support, Japan has made notable contributions to our national development agenda, which has enabled Djibouti to attain substantial achievements in terms of economic growth and in improving the welfare

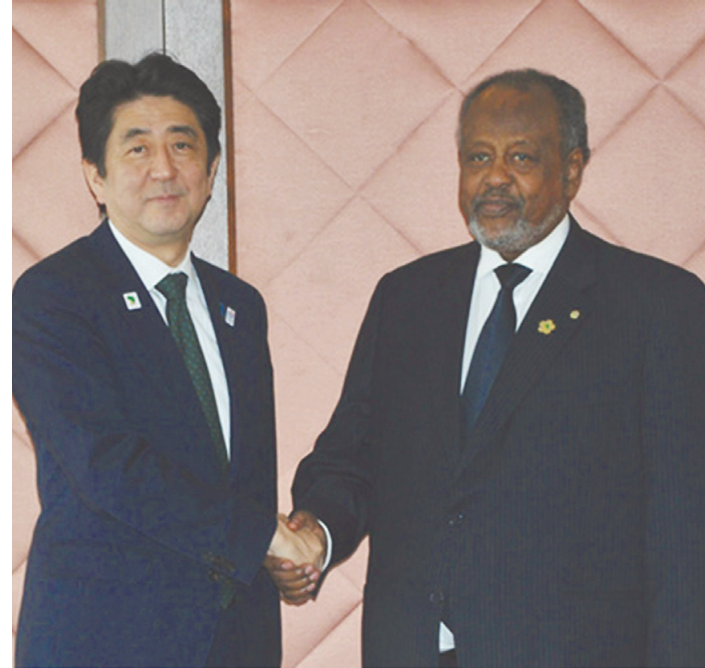


Strengthening ties: (Right) President of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meet on June 1 in Yokohama on the sidelines of the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V). (Above) President Guelleh bestows the Commander of the National Order of June 27 on former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori (front row third from left) on June 1 at a ceremony held in Yokohama attended by Djiboutian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssouf (front row second from left), Arab ambassadors to Japan and friends of Djibouti. CABINET PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE, EMBASSY OF DJIBOUTI

of our people. As a result, the people of Djibouti have a very positive image of Japan because of the support given in the past. Djiboutians are interested in knowing more about Japan through increased cultural and educational exchanges.

In recent years, the bilateral relationship has become much closer. A good example is the Japanese government's decision to establish a military presence of the Japan Self-Defense Forces in Djibouti in 2011. Being a gateway to Africa, with its location in the Horn of Africa, where the Red Sea meets the Gulf of Aden, Djibouti has one of the world's busiest maritime routes off its coast, with roughly 20,000 vessels, many transporting shipments from Japan, passing by each year. In that context,

the Djibouti-Japan joint security initiative to deal with problems, such as peace and stability in the East Africa region, in particular the anti-piracy operation in Somalia, has shown a great deal of trust and mutual benefits between both countries.



President at TICAD V

To illustrate this rich and vibrant cooperation between our two countries, President Ismail Omar Guelleh attended the TICAD V conference held in Yokohama while heading a high-level delegation. During this event, Presi-

dent Omar Guelleh gave an important speech on the challenge of creating robust and sustainable economies. His statement focused on building regional infrastructure in Djibouti, namely through railway and port services, while explaining that Africa

loses 2 percent of its growth every year due to the lack of adequate infrastructure. He mentioned the efforts made by Djibouti to enhance intraregional trade and economy with its neighboring countries through the building of proper infrastructure. Indeed, the TICAD V conference was a resounding success for which we congratulated the Japanese government and people.

During the visit, H.E. President Guelleh has elevated former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, a longtime friend of Africa and Djibouti, to the rank of Commander of the National Order of June 27 of the Republic of Djibouti.

Common values

Moreover, Djibouti and Japan share the same values in terms of developing their green economies. We need to develop geothermal and other forms of power generation as well as to improve infrastructure in the area of transport, traffic, finance and trade for its own development. Djibouti is going to invest \$4.4 billion, according to Aboubaker Omar Hadi, chairman of

the Ports & Free Zones Authority. We expect the participation of Japanese investors in our country in order to assist us in the field mentioned above.

Japan's involvement

Before the TICAD V conference, our president attended the first Japan-Somalia Summit meeting ever held to discuss support to Somalia. The Tokyo Conference followed the London Conference while another conference on Somali is set for September. That's a good sign of progress being made

to resolve a complex situation.

A key theme of the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development is expanding trade and investment, tourism and technology transfer, and assist the development of small and medium-size local companies and the Abe initiative for the youth in Africa. Japan has shown again its commitment and leadership as a key partner in the development of Africa and its support to our people. This relationship is based on trust and mutual benefits.


Congratulations

to the People of

the Republic of Djibouti

on the 36th Anniversary

of Their Independence



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