

Botswana independence day

Developing for the betterment of lives in all parts of the country

Jacob Dickie Nkate
AMBASSADOR OF BOTSWANA

On the occasion of the 47th independence celebrations of the Republic of Botswana, President H.E. Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, the government and the people of Botswana hereby send their greetings and wishes of good health, prosperity and peace to His Imperial Majesty Emperor Akihito and Her Imperial Majesty Empress Michiko,



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the government and people of Japan.

The people of Botswana are grateful for the warm friendship that have existed between our countries since the attainment of our independence in 1966 and as consolidated and solidified by the establishment of the diplomatic offices in 1997 and 2008 in Gaborone and Tokyo, respectively.

The friendship between our two countries is based on the mutual benefit for our two countries and peoples. Several development projects have been realized to date. Recently,

we have taken our cooperation to a higher level with major economically critical projects such as the Kazungula Bridge Project and the Remote Sensing Centre set-up by JOGMEC (Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corp.) in Lobatse, Botswana, to give just two examples. There are of course several other very important projects currently being explored and which we expect to reach fruition soon.

Botswana has also recently adopted the Japanese Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting (IS-DB-T). This will further deepen the strong bonds of friendship and cooperation between the

two countries.

Shortly after our attainment of independence, we discovered rich diamond deposits. These have provided a very important lifeline for Botswana. But as everyone knows, natural resources alone do not develop a nation. It is the vision of the leadership of our country over decades that have ensured that the wealth from this resource is used for the betterment of the lives of our people through the provision of infrastructure and social amenities to all parts of the country without discrimination. Our culture and disposition of consultation, modesty and accountabil-

ity have ensured that we remain united and concentrate all our resources and energies upon our development. With the help of friends such as Japan, we are determined to stay on this course.

One of our greatest challenges remains the diversification of our economy. We are cognizant of the fact that as we mine the diamonds and other resources, they are slowly depleting. This is why we continue to put in place a favorable climate for investment and doing business in Botswana. We have a peaceful and democratic country, having had no civil conflict since we attained nationhood. Our multiparty democracy has endured with a vibrant opposition, press and civil society as well as free and fair elections every five years since 1965.

We have a liberal economic dispensation without foreign exchange controls and over-regulation. Our tax rates are among the lowest in the world at 15 percent for manufacturers and 25 percent for the rest, including personal income tax. Investors are free to repatriate dividends and we have a favorable labour relations climate with a highly

trained and trainable workforce. With a literacy rate of 86 percent, our population can communicate very easily in English. Botswana has been recognized as the least corrupt country in Africa and we continue to improve our efforts to fight the ugly wrath of economic crime whenever and wherever it rears its ugly head.

Finally, we are a tourist destination of choice in Southern Africa. Our peacefulness over four decades means that we have no hesitation in inviting international tourists to our beautiful country. We boast attractions such as the Okavango Delta, Tsodilo Hills, Chobe Game Reserve, and Central Kalahari Game Reserve, to name just a few major ones. Air connectivity for the international traveller is fluid via Johannesburg, South Africa, from where several flights access these destinations daily.

On the occasion of our 47th independence celebrations, it is my honor to invite our development collaborators, investors, and visitors from Japan to come in large number to explore Botswana and all its opportunities.

Pula!



Tradition: There is a wide range of dance styles that have strong linkages to Botswana's culture. EMBASSY OF BOTSWANA



Nature: Giraffes at Mombo Camp in the Moremi Game Reserve on the eastern side of the Okavango Delta. EMBASSY OF BOTSWANA

Congratulations

to the People of
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on the 47th Anniversary of
Their Independence

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