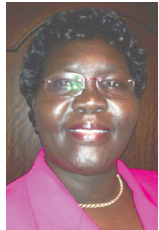


Uganda independence day

Economic transformation shows promising signs

Betty Grace Akech-Okullo
AMBASSADOR OF UGANDA

On the occasion of the 51st independence anniversary of the Republic of Uganda, it gives me great pleasure to extend heartfelt greetings and warmest regards to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, and the government and people of Japan.



I would also like to take this opportunity to extend on behalf of the government and people of Uganda our profound gratitude to the people of Japan for their warm friendship and cooperation over the years. The development assistance, in particular in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, health and education, has gone a long way in improving the country's overall development indexes within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and fostering economic growth within the region.

Bilateral relations

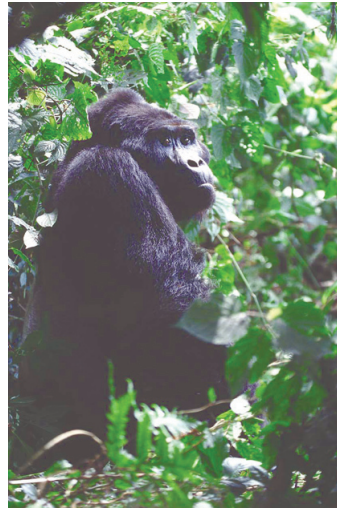
Uganda enjoys warm and cordial relations with Japan and the oth-

er countries under the embassy's area of accreditation, i.e., South Korea, Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines.

The partnership between Japan and Uganda grows stronger by the day marked by high-level political exchanges to and from each country, notably the visit of Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino to Uganda and President Yoweri Museveni's visit to Japan in June 2013 where he held bilateral talks with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the sidelines of the TICAD V (fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development) summit in Yokohama. A group of Japanese Parliamentarians visited Uganda in September and will eventually host the speaker of Uganda's Parliament, who will visit Japan in October. The minister of health visited in September and that of the presidency will also visit in November.

Transformation

The Uganda government, under the able leadership of President Museveni, has made economic transformation a national priority, being spearheaded by the National Development Program that is geared toward gross domestic product growth and making Uganda a more attractive



Natural blessings: Uganda is home to half of the world's remaining mountain gorillas, who number in the 600s. The country is also home to a diverse range of fauna and flora. Grown in the high mountains, coffee remains Uganda's top-earning export crop. Organically grown specialty coffee is exported to Japan and available at selected stores and online. EMBASSY OF UGANDA

destination for foreign direct investment. These measures have seen Uganda exhibiting promising macroeconomic signs and consistent overall growth of its economy over the last 20 years. This GDP growth performance contributed significantly to reduction in poverty levels. The country is thus committed to addressing the great challenges of economic and social development like poverty eradication, job creation and developing local economies.

The government's approach



to economic success has centered on good public-private partnerships.

It is worth noting that investment opportunities still exist in agriculture and value addition, infrastructure development, energy, information and communications technology (ICT) and transport infrastructure, human resources development and health. We encourage Japanese public and private investors to take advantage of this.

On the political scene, Uganda

celebrates this national day as a more stable, peaceful, united and democratic country that is moving forward in its quest for transformation into a modern and prosperous country. Uganda continues to enjoy excellent relations at the regional and international scene, and has participated in various peacekeeping missions in the region.

Tourism

Lying astride the equator in East Africa, Uganda is known as "the

Pearl of Africa" a name given by a former British prime minister during his African journey. Uganda has magnificent natural beauty, good all-year-round climate, rich flora and fauna, warm and hospitable people, and is home to half of the world's mountain gorilla population, an attraction that draws tourists from across the globe.

Uganda has also been named one of the "Best of the World: 20 must-see places for 2013" by the National Geographic Traveler and this was preceded by Uganda being named "Best Tourist Destination" by Lonely Planet in 2012. Uganda is also home to marathon runner Stephen Kiprotich, winner of the 2012 London Olympics title and the world title at Moscow 2013. The country is indeed "gifted by nature."

Coupled with that, on Nov. 3, Uganda will experience a total eclipse of the sun, which will best be viewed in the country's northwestern districts that cover part of the famous Murchison Falls National Park. In this regard, I strongly encourage tourists to visit Uganda in large numbers and experience the country's unique tourist potential, which this time around will be special, entailing experiencing an authentic African savanna safari coupled with an exciting part of astrological history because the country lies on the path of a hybrid solar eclipse.

On this occasion, therefore, I am further pleased to extend warm and sincere greetings to the friends of Uganda in Japan as well as hearty congratula-

tions to the community of Ugandans living and working in Japan.

I wish you a happy Oct. 9 Uganda National Day celebration.

**Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Uganda
on the 51st Anniversary
of Their Independence**

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