

Kenya national day

Celebrating 50 years of progress

Benson H.O. Ogotu
AMBASSADOR OF KENYA

Today marks the Golden Jubilee of Kenya's independence and the 50th anniversary of Japan-Kenya diplomatic relations. On this auspicious and historic occasion, I wish at the outset to convey warm greetings and best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the government and people of this great and friendly nation. I thank The Japan Times for once again affording us the opportunity to share with its distinguished readers our joy on this day as we reflect upon the warm and mutually beneficial cooperation that characterizes the ties between Kenya and Japan. Our special gratitude goes to Japan Post for launching a commemorative stamp in celebration of the half-century-long journey that we have traveled together with Japan as "Partners in Progress."



Indeed, since 1963, Kenya as the gateway and hub for East and Central Africa, has occupied a very special position in Japan's diplomatic relations within the region. Today, Nairobi hosts one of the largest Japanese communities in Africa and is the regional headquarters for all of Japan's major agencies such as JICA, JETRO and others. Japan's invaluable contribution to our development process is evident in such critical areas as economic infrastructure, agriculture, health, environment and human resource development.

As we celebrate this year's Golden Jubilee, under the theme "Unity, Prosperity and Kenya as a Home of the Greats," we reflect on the progress we have made in the last five decades. Kenyans now have better access to basic necessities like food, shelter, education, health and security

services, and indeed enjoy a better standard of living than was the case 50 years ago. We have a strong and growing middle class, and a well-educated workforce. In addition, our financial and ICT sectors are thriving. However, as a nation, we face various challenges. These include slow growth and underperforming manufacturing, agriculture and transport sectors — key drivers to much-needed export-led growth. Power supply also falls below demand. The levels of unemployment and poverty are unacceptably high.

Pursuant to addressing the above challenges, the government has been implementing various development strategies, the latest being Vision 2030, which aims at transforming Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country, providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030. Its first medium-term plan was implemented between 2008 and 2012. The second outlines the policies,

programs and projects that are to be carried out during the five-year period starting 2013 to 2017. They entail the delivery of accelerated and inclusive economic growth, higher living standards, better education and health care, increased job creation especially for youth, commercialized agriculture providing higher rural incomes and affordable food, improved manufacturing sector and more diversified exports.

The development of oil and other mineral resources is included among the priority sectors. This follows the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in Kenya, in addition to substantial deposits of coal, iron ore, rare earth minerals and other minerals. Mineral exports are also expected to help close the balance of trade and to raise government revenue.

In order to meet the goals of job creation, value-addition in agriculture, fisheries and livestock, and export diversification, the government is in the process of establishing special economic zones in partnership with private investors to support increased manufacturing and exports with high value added. Priority will also be accorded to programs targeting training and apprenticeships to meet the demand for human resource skills required by the transformation of the Kenya economy, which is central to this medium-term plan. In addition, more investments will be directed toward infrastructure and to the key sectors of the economy that will drive growth particularly through public-private partnership arrangements.

We, therefore, encourage potential Japanese investors to take advantage of the conducive environment created by the government. Abundant opportunities exist in sectors such as energy, infrastructure development, oil and mineral resources exploration, environmental protection, agricultural industrialization, as well as human resource de-

velopment. Other attractive opportunities are also available in the ICT sector, particularly in construction of Konza technology city — a sustainable, world-class technology hub, and a major economic driver for the nation with a vibrant mix of businesses, workers, residents and urban amenities. Needless to mention, impressive progress has been recorded evidenced by Kenya's global recognition as a leading ICT hub. Indeed, Kenya has received three global awards for facilitating the development of ICT infrastructure, use of e-applications in public services and the famous mobile money transaction technology, M-pesa.

In August 2010, Kenya promulgated a new constitution, giving us renewed optimism about our country and its future. It provided us with an avenue to renew our fight against unemployment and poverty; an opportunity to work, and become a developed people and nation. Among the key transformations of the new constitution is the devolved system of government, which established 47 county governments. Devolution will not only facilitate the delivery of services and ensure equity but will also lead to the emergence of new centers of economic development with the priorities determined at the local level, hence inculcating more ownership and sustainability.

In May 2013 the government appointed Jun Karube (president of Toyota Tsusho Corp.) the first honorary consul of the Republic of Kenya in Japan. The consulate is based in Nagoya City with jurisdiction over the Chubu region. This appointment takes due cognizance of the growing and mutually beneficial relations between Kenya and Toyota Tsusho Corp. — a reflection of the company's joint strategy for Africa under its Global 2020 Vision. Consequently, the company has greatly expanded its operations in Kenya, making Nairobi the



Gateway: Jomo Kenyatta International Airport is the international transport hub of Africa. EMBASSY OF KENYA



Holiday paradise: Windsor Golf Hotel and Country Club Nairobi is one of the best 5-Star hotels and golf resorts in Kenya. EMBASSY OF KENYA

regional headquarters of Toyota in Eastern Africa. More importantly, Toyota Tsusho was the first private entity to sign an MOU with the secretariat implementing Kenya's development blueprint — Vision 2030. Thus the appointment is of great significance as it reflects our desire to enhance our bilateral relations



CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence

ITOCHU Corporation
<http://www.itochu.co.jp/>

TOKYO Headquarters 5-1, Kita-Aoyama 2-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo Tel. 03-3497-2121
OSAKA Headquarters 1-3, Umeda 3-chome, Kita-ku, Osaka Tel. 06-7638-2121

Congratulations
to the People of the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence

Specialists in New and Used Motor Vehicle
Pre-shipment Inspections
(Roadworthiness, Odometer, Radiation, Pre-Purchase and Biosecurity)

JAPAN EXPORT VEHICLE INSPECTION CENTER Co., Ltd.
15 Daikoku-Futo, Tsurumi-ku, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan 230-0054
Tel: +(81) 45-521-8527 Fax: +(81) 45-521-8510
www.jevic.com

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence

Marubeni
<http://www.marubeni.com>

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence

Mitsubishi Corporation

Congratulations
to the People of the Republic of Kenya on the
50th Anniversary of Their Independence

We Zensho have been developing fair trade projects with people of many countries. We continue to bring excellent Kenyan tea to Japanese consumers with our pleasure.

<http://www.zensho.co.jp/en/>

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence

MITSUI & CO., LTD.

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence

Sojitz Corporation
<http://www.sojitz.com/en>

Kenya national day



Seat of learning: Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology is one of the leading Japanese success stories in Africa. EMBASSY OF KENYA

Celebrating 50 years of progress, partnership

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

particularly in the economic and commercial spheres.

We are also encouraged by the fact that other major Japanese trading houses and corporations have followed this positive trend by scaling up their economic activities in the country. In addition, the trade volume between the two countries has steadily been growing, though still very heavily lopsided in favor of Japan in the ratio of 1:14. There is definitely need to bridge this gap. Accordingly, we the Republic of Kenya, led a high-powered delegation comprising several Cabinet secretaries to TICAD V. Other key visits from Kenya included that of the Cabinet secretary for education to the Science and Technology in Society (STS) Forum in Kyoto; Cabinet secretary for environment, water and natural resources to the Conference of the Plenipotentiaries on the Minamata Convention on Mercury in Kumamoto City; governor of Kisumu County; Kenya National Defense College study tour; Kenya National Rugby Sevens Team; among others.

From Japan, a large investment and trade delegation of senior government officials and top business executives, led by Hon. Toshimitsu Motegi, minister of economy, trade and industry, visited selected countries in Africa, including Kenya, in August this year. The leaders of various agencies and private-sector executives have also undertaken exchange visits.

Turning to tourism, we pride ourselves at the unparalleled range of options on offer. The diversity of landscapes, cultures, wildlife and activities provide endless opportunities. As a country, tourism is a major contributor to our economy. Under Vision 2030, several projects are lined up such as development of resort cities in Diani, Kilifi and Isiolo. Hotels, housing facilities, state-of-the-art sporting facilities, airstrips and good road networks are just part of the infrastructure that the resort cities will enjoy. The government has also put in place mechanisms to address any

insecurity in its tourist circuits across the country. Kenya being the home of the "big five" also has the highest concentration of different species of wildlife in a given square unit of land. We say "seeing is believing," we therefore extend a warm welcome to more Japanese tourists to visit Kenya and enjoy the magnificence and splendor of its wilderness.

We are happy to note that the number of the Japanese visitors to Kenya has been increasing commendably over the years, registering an almost 50 percent rise in arrivals, from 10,866 in 2010 to 17,000 in 2012. The number is expected to go even higher this year. This increase notwithstanding, the Japanese market is relatively small compared to other Asian markets. The major airlines such as Emirates, Etihad, Qatar and Turkish now ply the routes between Nairobi and Narita/Haneda/Osaka via their respective capitals. Kenya Airways has also concluded a code-share arrangement with Korean Air to facilitate travel to Kenya. This is an encouraging development that we impress upon tourism stakeholders to capitalize on.

At a regional level, the government of Kenya is committed to work closely with member states to hasten regional integration. During the last few months the East African Community region has held three successful regional infrastructures summits, deliberating on various issues pertaining to regional infrastructure, energy, trade facilitation and other areas aimed at strengthening cooperation, and speeding up socio-economic development in the region. Member countries have also come together and formed a united platform to market East Africa as a single tourist destination with a single tourist visa.

Regional integration will, in no doubt, expand the market for investors, enhance intraregional trade, and facilitate the growth of the East African economies for the benefit of the people and its partners. With a population of about 136 million people and a combined GDP of \$84.7 billion, EAC also boasts of an average



Capital: Nairobi, the green city in the sun EMBASSY OF KENYA

\$732 per capita and the respective governments have moved to engage the private sectors in the member countries to help drive economic growth. At the end of last month, EAC heads of state signed a protocol laying the groundwork for a monetary union within 10 years. This will put the region into an irreversible journey toward a single currency, thus ushering in an era of full financial integration and expanded regional trade. We count on Japan's support toward deepening the EAC integration process by way of exploiting the numerous investment opportunities available in the region.

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) held in Yokohama this June was a major milestone event, marking the 20th anniversary of the TICAD process as well as the African Union's Golden Jubilee. Through TICAD, Japan has continued to encourage growth in Africa by promoting the importance of self-help and self-reliance. During the conference, Japan announced its contribution of \$32 billion in support of the African development agenda over the coming five years.

Kenya and other African countries have identified priority areas for the implementation of the Yokohama Action Plan and utilization of the financial package offered. These focus on: promotion of private-sector led growth; acceleration of infrastructure development; empowering farmers as mainstream economic actors; promoting sustainable and resilient growth; creating an inclusive society for growth; consolidation

of peace, stability and good governance; and making Africa's voice heard in the post-2015 development agenda. We hope to build on those noble endeavors in the years to come.

Finally, I wish to congratulate all Kenyan residents in Japan on this auspicious occasion and applaud them for their continuous positive contributions in advancement of the interests of our beloved country, through investments, knowledge transfers, remittances and of course sporting excellence. Kenyans in Japan have truly demonstrated their desire for a better Kenya. We have a couple of investors in the country courtesy of your deep acts of patriotism. Kenya has many investment opportunities available in all sectors of the economy, among them the Vision 2030 flagship projects. We urge Kenyans in the diaspora to take advantage of these opportunities and help in building our country. You are the most critical component of Team Kenya and I urge you to keep flying high the flag of our motherland.

I once again thank the government and people of Japan for their vital support and cooperation in our development endeavors. I also would like to thank all those who have sent us messages of goodwill. We are particularly grateful to the management of The Japan Times for this space, and we wish them and all their readers a happy and enjoyable festive season. For more information about Kenya, kindly visit our mission's website at <http://www.kenyarep-jp.com>.

Congratulations

*to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence*

 **Sumitomo Corporation**

<http://www.sumitomocorp.co.jp/english>

Congratulations

**to the People of
the Republic of Kenya
on the 50th Anniversary of
Their Independence**

 **TOYOTA TSUSHO CORPORATION**
Metals/ Global Production Parts & Logistics/ Automotive/ Machinery, Energy & Project/ Chemicals & Electronics/ Food & Agribusiness/ Consumer Products & Services

Head Office : 4-9-8, Meieki, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya 81-52-584-5013
Tokyo Head Office : 2-3-13, Konan, Minato-ku, Tokyo 81-3-4306-5000
www.toyota-tsusho.com

Toyota Kenya Ltd.

(Official Authorized Toyota Distributor in Kenya)
Uhuru Highway/Lusaka Road, P.O. Box 3391-00506, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel. +254-20-6967000/651444 Fax. +254-20-651458/534651
Web site: <http://www.toyotakenya.com/>