

# Kingdom of Morocco throne day

## Japan plays major role in development

Samir Arrour  
AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM  
OF MOROCCO

July 30 marks the 15th anniversary of the enthronement of His Majesty King Mohammed VI. On this auspicious occasion and as ambassador of the king to Japan, I would like to convey my respectful greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and the friendly people of Japan.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to The Japan Times for giving me the opportunity to share with its distinguished readers a few aspects regarding the major achievements realized by Morocco domestically as far as the political and economic areas are concerned and internationally with respect to the positive evolution of Morocco's relations with its international partners.

For many years, Japan has played a major role in the socio-economic development of our region in general and Morocco in particular.

**Political achievements**  
Since the accession of the king to the throne, Morocco has embarked on a large and comprehensive democratic process of reforms in the political, economic and social fields. This process aims at strengthening the rule of law, broadening the scope of fundamental freedoms and preserving human rights, taking into account the Moroccan specificities linked to historical and socio-cultural heritage and Moroccan values such as solidarity, peace and

tolerance.

Following the adoption of a new constitution in 2011, the organization of elections in November the same year and the subsequent formation of a coalition government, Morocco has since gone through the implementation of constitutional reforms at various levels.

### Economic overview

The significant economic progress achieved by Morocco is the result of a transformation process launched under the guidance of the king, to ensure fair growth with great potential and a larger spectrum that guarantees the inclusion of all Moroccan citizens and the strengthening of social cohesion.

The national economy has achieved satisfactory results in 2013 despite the continuing effects of the global financial and economic crisis. During the last 10 years, the Moroccan economy witnessed an average growth of 5 percent. Also, there was a high level of foreign direct investment seen, and, during the past year, the inflation rate was contained at 1.9 percent.

To promote the international activities of Moroccan economic institutions and corporations, Casablanca Finance City (CFC) was established by the Moroccan government as a financial gateway for investors looking to access the fast-growing markets in the area, including the Maghreb and Africa, and serve as an interface between the African continent and other parts of the world to reinforce the positioning of Morocco in the international economic arena. The CFC provides an attractive environment to bring together various national and international institutions who will



H.M. King Mohammed VI

contribute to the effective functioning of its business and financial activities. It is worth mentioning that several international financial institutions have already settled in CFC with the hope that Japanese financial institutions will follow suit.

### The TICAD V Process

Triangular cooperation continues to be the cornerstone of Morocco's policy in its partnership in Africa. In this perspective, the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding between the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI), during the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) in 2013, has further consolidated a partnership for promoting triangular cooperation as an efficient means for capacity-building and human resource training in areas of interest for both Morocco and Japan.

It is worth mentioning that the TICAD Summit, which has known unprecedented success and for which we congratulate the government of Japan, confirms the uniqueness and inclusiveness of a process that posi-

tively evolved over the last 20 years and underlines the commitment of Japan to African countries and their fast growing economies and imminent development.

We, therefore, look forward to the implementation of the Yokohama declaration and the action plan of Yokohama and continue to cherish the longstanding and fruitful cooperation with Japan, especially the Abe initiative, which will offer over five years of undergraduate and graduate education in Japan to 1,000 African nationals as well as opportunities to work as interns at Japanese companies.

### Strategic projects

In recent years, Morocco has launched several sector-specific national development strategies:

**Energy:** The "Solar Energy Generation Project" aims at establishing five power generation plants by 2020 to expand generation capacity to 2000 MW and materialize generated output to 4,500GWh; the "Wind Power Generation Program" aims to expand from current 280MW to 2000MW by 2020

**Tourism:** "Vision 2020" is aiming for a twofold increase in the number of foreign tourists, targeting 20 million by 2020

**Agriculture and fisheries:** "Plan Maroc Vert" aims at modernizing the agricultural sector; "Plan Halieutis" aims at improving the competitiveness of the fishing industry

**Industry:** "Plan Emergence" covers promotional projects to develop the traditional sector of

handicrafts and the growing automobile parts sector and promotes aerospace-related industries and services

**Commerce:** "Plan Rawaj" is aiming at increasing current GDP threefold by 2020

**IT:** "Maroc Numeric" aims at expanding Internet access and computerizing administrative procedures

**Commodity distribution:** "Strategic Logistic" aims at establishing various distribution platforms

### Foreign relations

The king outlined a clear and ambitious roadmap for Moroccan diplomacy in line with the values and principles of the kingdom, but also with the regional and the international environment marked by the emergence of new challenges and new opportunities.

For instance, the Al Quds Committee held its 20th session under the chairmanship of the king, in the presence of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, on Jan. 17 and 18 in Marrakech.

The king delivered a speech on this occasion and stressed "the need for unity of ranks, effective action and the highest degree of solidarity and commitment."

"As chairman of the Al-Quds Committee, I promise to pursue my efforts to support the steadfast struggle of the Palestinian people and to push forward the peace process, whose key element is a fair settlement of the issue of Al Quds al-Sharif," he added.

### Bilateral relations

We are very pleased to note that during this year, relations between our two countries have continued to develop harmoniously and diversify to cover large spheres of activities.

In this perspective, the remarkable development of trade relations and the significant Japanese investments made in recent years in our country helped in positioning Morocco as a favorite destination for Japanese businesses. Nearly 40 Japa-

## Expanding cooperation in all areas of mutual interest

Kenji Kosaka  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-MOROCCO PARLIAMENTARY  
LEAGUE



On behalf of all members of the Japan Morocco Parliamentary League I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Moulay Al Hassan, Her Royal Highness Lalla Khadija, Her Royal Highness Lalla Salma, the Royal Family, the people and the government of Morocco on the auspicious occasion of the 15th anniversary of the accession to the throne of His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

Since the beginning of the decade, under the guidance of the king, Morocco has engaged in a profound and accelerated transformation across all domains, notably political, economic, social and cultural. This has been done with the ambition to create a modern and democratic country that is open to the world and fulfills the expectations and aspiration of the Moroccan people.

In recent years, I had the opportunity to meet, either in Japan or in Morocco, with a number of important Moroccan policy makers such as the head of the government and the president of the House of Representatives, which presented me with a chance to touch

upon the progressive development of the relations between Morocco and Japan in all fields.

The third Japan-Arab Economic Forum, held in Japan in December, was another opportunity to hold discussions with H.E. Mbaraka Bouaida, minister delegate to the minister of foreign affairs and cooperation and H.E. Mamoun Bouhdoud, minister delegate to the minister of industry, trade, investment and digital economy, in charge of small enterprises and informal sector integration.

I am also looking forward to meeting H.E. Mohamed Cheikh Biadiallah, president of the House of Councillors, during his upcoming official visit to Japan; a trip that will surely give fresh impetus to the longstanding and privileged friendship between the two entities.

Additionally, I would greatly be honored to visit Morocco very soon in order to enhance and consolidate this relationship based on shared values of democracy, pluralism and mutual interest in expanding our cooperation in all fields.

The Japan-Morocco Parliamentary League is very eager to expand its acquaintances with its counterparts in the parliament of Morocco to further strengthen our cooperation, particularly in the field of business.

We in the Japan-Morocco Parliamentary League are very proud of this evolution and are very keen on continuing to accompany Morocco in its development process.

nese companies invested in and are operating in a very stable and harmonious environment in Morocco, employing more than 37,000 Moroccan citizens. These companies include Mitsui Co., Mitsubishi Co., Marubeni, Yazaki, Sumitomo, Fujitsu, Takata, Denso, YKK, Hino Motors and others.

The future inauguration of a JETRO bureau and the assignment by JICA alongside of the Moroccan Agency for Investment Development (AMDI) of a senior expert for promoting Japanese investment in Morocco are strong signals of the willingness of the Japanese government to support and encourage Japanese companies to settle in Morocco and is a recognition of the conducive business environment enjoyed by Morocco and its strategic and

geographic location as a gateway to Africa.

### • The fifth Morocco-Japan Political Consultations

The Kingdom of Morocco and Japan held on March 7, 2014, in Rabat, the fifth session of political consultations, co-chaired by H.E. Mbaraka Bouaida, minister delegate of foreign affairs and cooperation, and H.E. Nobuo Kishi, vice-minister of foreign affairs of Japan.

During this session, the two ministers welcomed the excellence of the relations of friendship and cooperation that exist between the two countries at the political, economic, financial, cultural, and technical levels, while reaffirming their willingness to further consolidate them.

### • Official visit to Morocco of

### the President of JICA

In the context of the traditional consultations between the government of Morocco and JICA, H.E. Akihito Tanaka paid a visit to Morocco earlier this month. For this, we would like to express our deep gratitude to the Japanese government and people for their support through the activities of JICA for promoting Moroccan economic and social development projects.

### • The 28th fisheries consultations between Morocco and Japan

The Regular Fishing Consultations were conducted in Tokyo in June. Morocco and Japan reiterated their satisfaction as to the level, so far reached, in the area of fishing between our two nations. They also emphasized the

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# Kingdom of Morocco throne day

## Ongoing friendship, understanding

Haruko Hirose  
PRESIDENT OF THE JAPAN-MOROCCO  
ASSOCIATION

On the occasion of Morocco's Throne Day, I would like to extend my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty King Mohammed VI on behalf of all members of the Japan-Morocco Association.



On this auspicious occasion, I would also like to express my sincere greetings to Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Salma, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Moulay Al Hassan, Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Khadija and other members of the Royal Family, as well as to the people and government of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Under the leadership of the king, Morocco continues its steady economic growth, maintains security and warmly welcomes foreigners as investors and tourists.

The relationship between Japan and Morocco has always been excellent and I am very happy to note that many more private Japanese companies are interested in investing in Morocco. There were many

lively discussions on doing business in Morocco at the Japan Arab Economic Forum held in Tokyo in December, as well as at the Japan-Africa Business Forum that took place in June this year.

I have noticed a significant increase in the number of Japanese TV programs and magazine articles featuring Morocco, and that Japanese people are becoming familiar with a variety of Moroccan products such as argan oil, olive oil, tajine cooking and babouche slippers. Morocco is now a very popular tourist destination for Japanese.

I understand that many more exchanges of key people are scheduled for the latter half of this year.

To promote friendship and improve mutual understanding, the Japan-Morocco Association will continue to organize various events with the cooperation of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Japan, including monthly lectures related to Morocco, seminars on economic relations and the annual Moroccan Evening at the Hotel Chinzan-so Tokyo, to take place this year on Nov. 4. We welcome new participants to these events and details can be found on our website.

## Strengthening relationships

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

harmonious and positive cooperation in regional and international forums.

### • The 10th edition of the Science and Technology in Society Forum

The Science and Technology in Society (STS) Forum, which aims to provide a new mechanism for open discussions on an informal basis and to build a human network that would, in time, resolve the new types of problems stemming from the application of science and technology, has witnessed the participation on Oct. 5, 2013, in Kyoto of H.E. Lahcen Daoudi, minister of higher education, scientific research and training.

### Multilateral forums

#### • The Japan Arab Economic Forum

During the third Japan-Arab Economic Forum held last December in Tokyo, H.E. Mbarka Bouaida, minister delegate for foreign affairs and cooperation and H.E. Mamoun Bouhdoud, minister delegate in charge of small businesses and the integration of the informal sector took part in this important forum, which was established as a framework for ministerial level dialogue by uniting efforts of the government of Japan and Japan's business community in cooperation with the League of Arab States (LAS) and its members.

#### • The third Summit of the Presidents of Japan-North African Universities

The various participants in this summit, which was held in Rabat in October focused mainly on seeking ways to strengthen the scientific, technical and academic cooperation between Japanese

universities and their counterparts in North Africa to promote further exchanges of scholars and students.

### Upcoming visits

In the coming months, Moroccan-Japanese relations will be further strengthened through numerous high-level visits and important events.

### Tourist attractions

As a tourist destination, there is certainly no shortage of great attractions in Morocco. The country enjoys a strong sense of culture and a long and ancient history with as many as eight UNESCO World Heritage sites in Morocco.

Morocco is performing well to keep up with the increasing interest in activities and sports holidays, offering impressive athletic facilities. The 2014 edition of the Toyota Cup, also called the FIFA Club World Cup, will be held in Morocco between the champion clubs from each of the six continental confederations as well as the league winner from the host nation.

Against this background, I would like to commend the valuable efforts of Japan in promoting stronger ties with Morocco and widening their scope to promote economic growth, cultural ties and further understanding of the rich cultural heritage of both countries.

I would like to conclude my message by reiterating the keen interest of the government of the Kingdom of Morocco to further develop and consolidate the existing excellent relations with Japan within the framework of the win-win spirit that accommodates the interests of each of our countries and fully responds to the needs and aspirations of our people.

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