

Tunisia national day

Resolute to handle economic and social challenges

Farhad Khlif
AMBASSADOR OF TUNISIA

On behalf of the government of the Republic of Tunisia, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to all Tunisians residing in Japan on the occasion of the 59th Anniversary of the Independence of our beloved country.

I would also like to seize this occasion to renew to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as the government and the friendly people of Japan Tunisia's sentiments of deepest sympathy and solidarity on the commemoration of the fourth anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Certainly, the celebration of the Independence Day of Tunisia this year has a significant and exceptional importance. It comes after the end of the democratic transition process with the organization of the legislative elections on Oct. 26, 2014, and the presidential elections on Nov. 23 and Dec. 21, 2014, under the new Tunisian Constitution adopted on Jan. 26, 2014.

Tunisia has been able to succeed in its democratic transition thanks to its strong determination in establishing a true democratic country through dialogue and compromise.

The new constitution that has marked a historic achievement in Tunisia has consolidated human rights, freedoms and the state of law as pillars of a modern democratic system.

Following the legislative and presidential elections, H.E. Beji Caid Essebsi took office as the president of the Republic of Tunisia on Dec. 31, 2014, and a new government, headed by H.E. Habib



A marble bust of Hannibal the Punic Carthaginian military commander. EMBASSY OF TUNISIA

Essid, was formed in February, with its main mission consisting of addressing the country's security, economic and social challenges.

Established in June 1956, diplomatic relations between Tunisia and Japan are based on mutual respect and trust. Tunisia will never forget the Japanese support, mainly after the revolution of freedom and dignity, and is deeply proud of the fruitful cooperation between the two countries in many areas, especially in financial and technical assistance, higher education, investment, trade and culture.

In this regard, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the government of Japan for its precious support to Tunisia through the conclusion last year of two Japanese ODA loan agreements for a total amount of up to ¥48.47 billion, one for the Medjerda River Flood Control Project and the other for the Rades combined Cycle Power Plant

mercial relations and enhance Japanese investments in Tunisia. I highly salute the efforts made by JETRO in this context.

Moreover, I would like to highlight our close cooperation with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, especially on the occasion of its agreement last October to provide a guarantee for new samurai bonds issued by the Central Bank of Tunisia.

In the field of higher education and scientific research, to which Tunisia attaches great importance, I must point out the excellent level of cooperation between the two friendly countries, mainly with the University of Tsukuba and the Alliance for Research on North Africa. Both parties have always expressed their willingness to work together to consolidate their cooperation in this regard.

Regarding the tourism sector, we will continue our efforts to encourage more Japanese people to visit Tunisia and discover its long history, cultural heritage and its beautiful and diverse nature. Our partnership with JICA and JTB in the framework of the project of strengthening the capacity for tourism promotion in Tunisia represents a good example of bilateral cooperation in this field.

Furthermore, we are looking to deepen friendly relations with Japanese cities, such as Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, where we organized a common cultural event last October, and Seto, Aichi Prefecture, where we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the 2004 twinning agreement with the Tunisian city of Nabeul.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and my warmest thanks to The Japan Times and the sponsors for their kind cooperation and support, wishing the readers of this prestigious newspaper and all the friendly people of Japan more happiness, prosperity and peace.

Long live the Tunisia-Japan friendship.



A delegation of Japanese observers led by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Kazuyuki Nakane (second from left), oversees Tunisian elections on Oct. 26. EMBASSY OF TUNISIA

Relationship sees cultural, people-to-people exchanges flourish

Yasuaki Ono
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-TUNISIA
ASSOCIATION

On the occasion of the 59th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Tunisia, it gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the people and government of Tunisia.

Since the revolution in January 2011, Tunisian people have been making the utmost effort to cope with the tremendous challenges of the democratic transition, and realizing with

their determination a new constitution, which has led to the first democratic and free election in Tunisian history. The new Tunisia, led by President Beji Caid Essebsi, has only recently started. I have no doubt that the Tunisian people must be proud of these concrete developments as the first fruits of the Arab Spring.

As the president of the Japan Tunisia Association and on behalf of its all members, I would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation and respect for Tunisian people's profound fervor and continuous efforts for democracy and freedom. We do believe that this successful process of democratic

transformation will further bear fruit in the years to come.

Regarding the more than 50-year history of friendship between our two peoples, we are very much appreciative that our bonds and interactions have been steadily developing and deepening in a variety of areas such as student exchanges, Japanese and Arabic language programs, sports exchanges (in particular judo and soccer), music (classical, jazz and folk), excavation, tourism and children's programs. There has also been cultural exhibitions (painting, movie, china and porcelain, ikebana and more) and even soroban (abacus) exchanges. Additionally, there have been

many official visits and continuous official economic and technological cooperation. In view of the numerous people-to-people interactions, the association is ready and delighted to make any possible contributions to strengthen and further deepen our mutual understanding and civil cooperation in order to consolidate, together with the Tunisia-Japan Friendship Association in Tunis, the above-mentioned efforts of Tunisian people.

I would like to express, once again, my sincere congratulations on this occasion while wishing for a long life for Japanese-Tunisian friendship and cooperation.

Continuing to enjoy long and friendly relationship with Tunisia

Kinya Masuoka
MAYOR OF SETO



On behalf of the citizens of Seto, I would like to extend my deepest congratulations on the occasion of the 59th National Day of the Republic of Tunisia.

Our relationship with the Republic of Tunisia dates back to 1997, when the city of Seto dispatched delegations to Nabeul to seek support for our candidacy for the host city of the 2005 World Exposition.

Both cities, having a long history as ceramic centers, Seto and Nabeul have since enhanced bilateral relations and signed a twinning agreement in 2004.

On Nov. 8, 2014, Seto held a commemorative event to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the twinning with Nabeul in collaboration with the Embassy of Tunisia in Tokyo. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my sincere gratitude to H.E. Farhad Khlif, ambassador of Tunisia, and the staff of the Tunisian embassy, as well as all the people concerned, for their active contributions to make the anniversary a memorable event in the history of our friendly relationship. The event provided us with the opportunity to participate in a tourism seminar, dance performance, mosaic workshop, Arabic calligraphy, traditional clothing, as well as an authentic Tunisian cuisine buffet, through which more than five hundred Seto citizens, including myself, could experience the elegant and attractive Tunisian culture as if we had actually visited the country.

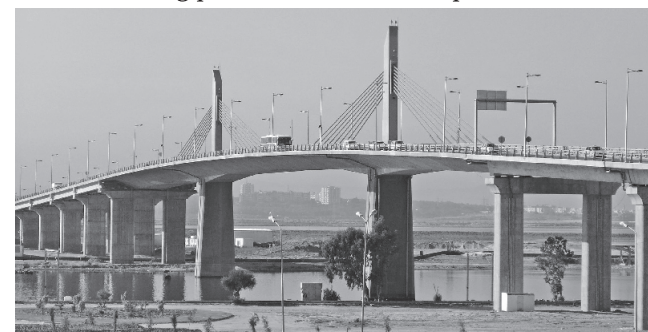
I am convinced that our relationship with the city of Nabeul and the Republic of Tunisia has promoted friendship and mutual understanding between the people of our countries. I would like to extend my sincere wishes for the further reinforcement of the friendly relations and the prosperity of the people of Tunisia.



Located in Tozeur in the south of Tunisia, Chebika is a mountain oasis that houses a picturesque fountain and waterfall with palm trees below an old Berber village. EMBASSY OF TUNISIA

In the wake of the tragic events of
March 18, 2015,
we offer our support to
the People of the Republic of Tunisia
on the 59th Anniversary
of Their Independence
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