

Madagascar national day

A bright future lies ahead as promising Madagascar is taking off

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On June 26, Madagascar and its people are proudly celebrating the 55th Anniversary of the return of the Independence of Madagascar. On behalf of the Madagascar government and the Embassy of Madagascar in Japan, I would like first to extend my sincere greetings and best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of Imperial family, the people and government of Japan.



For this special day, I would like to congratulate all Malagasy residents in Japan, and would like to convey to them the theme of mobilization for this year's celebration: "Patriotism and Fihavanana as the foundation and cement for our development." Fihavanana might be translated as "interdependence of people, close or distant, related by family ties or not."

From this year, Madagascar has defined the Madagascar National Development Plan (NDP) as a new roadmap for the five years from 2015 to 2019. Madagascar is targeting GDP growth of 7 percent in 2016, 8.9 percent in 2017 and a double-digit growth of 10.4 percent in 2018. The pillars of this development will be based on priority areas such as governance, security, decentralization and rule of law, sustaining macroeconomic stability, inclusive growth, human capacity development and sustainable development of natural resources.

\$14.3 billion will be required for the achievement of NDP goals. The Madagascar government has committed to mobilize internal resources of \$8.1 billion. Madagascar development partners on the other hand have to date promised around 2.6 billion for financing this NDP. A gap of \$3.6 billion remains and requires funding from sources other than devel-

opment partners and the private sector. Japan, as one of Madagascar's most important economic and diplomatic partner, will be hopefully playing an important and catalytic role by mobilizing ODA-funded projects and private investment funds.

In terms of bilateral relations, through last year and the beginning of this one, many opportunities for high-level exchanges occurred. From the Madagascar side, the visit of Madagascar's minister of fishery to Japan was an important opportunity to warm up bilateral cooperation in this field. In addition, exchange visits by high-level delegates conducted by Madagascar's Minister at the Presidency in charge of Mining and Petrol to Japan in partnership with the Information Center for Petroleum Exploration and Production (ICEP) and the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC), were important occasions for sharing information about Madagascar project opportunities with Japanese public and private sectors.

Additionally, the second Africa Japan Ministerial Meeting for Natural Resource Development (JAMM2) held in May has created a new level of cooperation to incentivize private investment for Africa and Madagascar in particular. Madagascar is particularly confident that the new Japanese initiative, "Japan Africa Ministerial Partnership" (JAMP), introduced by H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa, Japan's minister of economy, trade and industry, will boost bilateral economic cooperation ties with Japan notably through the duplication of the success of Sumitomo's Ambatovy Nickel Project but also from the many potential Madagascar projects related to the exploitation of gas and petroleum that started last year for the production of its heavy oil.

From the Japanese side, the official visit of the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency Akihiko Tanaka to Madagascar in January was an important milestone in the his-

tory of bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The financing of more than \$500 million for the "Toamasina Port Development Project" on the east coast of Madagascar through a yen-loan project will be one of the biggest items in terms of cooperation with Japan.

In addition, the visit of H.E. Daishiro Yamagiwa, Japan's state minister of economy, trade and industry, to Madagascar in April, accompanied by number of Japanese corporations, allowed for the commitment of both sides to find concrete area of cooperation and investment in Madagascar. The "Madagascar Investment Forum" held at the JETRO head office on June 11 with State Minister Yamagiwa and Madagascar's Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Beatrice Atallah, was an important exchange for renewing the commitment of both sides to build partner-

ships by seizing the opportunities offered by Madagascar.

The Embassy of Madagascar in Japan would like to announce the following events to introduce opportunities and call for the participation of the Japanese private sector and Japanese government-related agencies. First, the "International Fair for Mining and Petroleum" will be held in Antananarivo from Sept. 23 to 25. Second, international bidding for Petroleum Licenses will be launched by the end of this year. And finally, there will be a "Donors Conference" in Paris from Nov. 17 to 18. We are counting on heavy participation by our Japanese partners, as a number of concrete projects in various sectors will be shared through ODA or private sector investments.

Regarding cultural exchanges and tourism, there will be several upcoming celebrations



Foreign Minister of Madagascar Beatrice Atallah speaks at the "Madagascar Investment Forum" on June 11 at the JETRO head office in Tokyo. EMBASSY OF MADAGASCAR

worth attending in different parts of Madagascar. For the first time, Madagascar will have its largest Carnaval, which will bring together all Malagasy and their traditions from all regions for three days,

from June 19 to 21, in the center of the capital, Antananarivo. The "Festival of Whales" in Sainte Marie in eastern Madagascar, from July 4 to July 12, is an internationally recognized event. And the International



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Peace Boat will visit Madagascar on Jan. 15, 2016 with 1,200 Japanese tourists.

In fact, the International Tourism Fair 2015, which ran from May 28 to 30 in Madagascar and saw the the participa-

tion of all tourism offices of the neighboring Vanilla Islands: Mauritius, Seychelles, Reunion, showed that Madagascar has a complete tourism infrastructure and is ready to welcome all visitors.


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to the People of

the Republic of Madagascar


on the 55th Anniversary

of Their Independence


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