

Malawi national day

Malawi at 51: Greater relations and business opportunities

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AMBASSADOR OF MALAWI

Today, July 6 marks 51 years since Malawi attained its independence. It is my greatest joy to convey sincere greetings from the President of the Republic of Malawi, H.E. Arthur Peter Mutharika, to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the people of Japan. As Malawi celebrates this great day, it is also time to cherish the achievements and opportunities that lay ahead.



Greater bilateral relations

Malawi, which is one of the most peaceful countries in Africa, is grateful to its cooperating partners, particularly Japan, for increasing development assistance in various sectors. For instance, Malawi remains the country with the largest number of Japanese volunteers — working in areas such as education and health, among others. This year also saw the highest amount of Japanese official development aid and technical assistance to Malawi since formal relations were established in 1964. Currently, the government of Japan is assisting Malawi in the construction of modern roads, electricity expansion, construction of sec-



H.E. President Arthur Peter Mutharika of the Republic of Malawi

ondary schools, clean water projects and many more too numerous to mention.

It is also pleasing that this year there were several high-

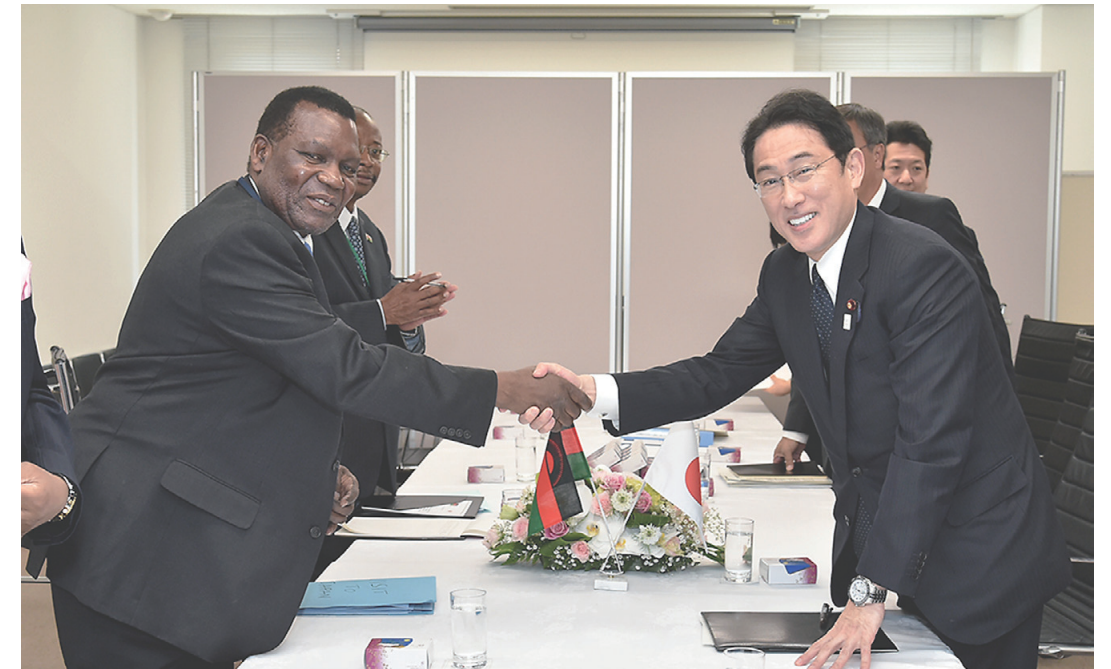
level visits. The Malawi Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Honorable George Chaponda, visited Japan from March 13 to 19. This visit greatly strengthened bilateral relations as he had a successful meeting with his counterpart, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Fumio Kishida, as well as Diet members and senior business executives. The year also saw a visit to Japan by the Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, the Hon. Bright Msaka, to the Japan-Africa Mining & Resources Business Seminar (J-Sumit2). He also held key meetings with Japanese investors and business-

people, where they discussed many business opportunities and the positive investment environment.

Positive reforms

To make doing business easier, Malawi decided to implement a number of priority reforms. One major change is the establishment of a One Stop Service Centre at the Malawi Investment and Trade Centre (MITC). This is aimed at the quick processing and provision of business permits and licenses, reducing the average time from 36 days to just five days, as all relevant stakeholders are in the center. Malawi has also developed a compendium of various bankable projects, which is readily available at the Embassy in Tokyo or the MITC in Malawi. Malawi also held a Malawi Investment Forum in the capital of Lilongwe on June 29 and 30, where projects, including those in energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, transportation, infrastructure and ICT were presented. Several Japanese companies attended this seminar.

Malawi has also discovered a number of rare earths and other materials such as uranium, titanium, niobium, phosphate deposits, bauxite, graphite ore, carbon deposits, gold deposits, iron deposits,



Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Malawi George Chaponda (left) meets with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on March 15 in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, at the U.N. World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. EMBASSY OF MALAWI

gemstones, coal, oil and natural gases. This presents an opportunity for investors to invest in the newly developing mining industry. What is more encouraging is that investors are free to engage in any form of businesses without political interference. Investors are also at liberty to externalize their profits or continue to expand their business in Malawi. Malawi also recognizes the need for a symbiotic relationship between investors and local communities to support

each other and maximize the win-win benefits.

Multilateral connectivity

On multilateral businesses, Malawi is a member of the Southern Africa Development Community; the International Common Market for Eastern and Southern; Africa and the African Union (AU) that boasts a huge market of over 500 million people. In June, Malawi signed a free trade agreement as part of the AU, giving it access to the huge continental

market. With this great connectivity and the discovery of various resources, Malawi is geared to achieve its projected 6.6 percent annual growth, despite the floods and cyclone disasters that affected the country earlier this year. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Japanese government and all other friends and organizations that assisted Malawi during these tragic times.

Be assured that Malawi is the best country for your prosperous business.

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



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Left: Malawi is home to elephants. Right: Mount Mulanje is a large monadnock in southern Malawi. EMBASSY OF MALAWI