

Ugandan president's visit

Museveni: From modest beginnings to president

Today Japan welcomes President of the Republic of Uganda Yoweri Kaguta Museveni on his official working visit through Sept. 12.

Museveni came to power after a successful five-year guerrilla struggle. He has now been president of Uganda for 29 years. He has stood for democratic elections, winning four times and he is still going strong.

Museveni was born in Ntungamo in southwestern Uganda in 1944 to Amos Kaguta, a cattle rancher. According to his own testimony in his book "Sowing the Mustard Seed," he was given the name Museveni in honor of the Seventh Regiment of the King's African Rifles, the British colonial army in which many Ugandans served during World War II. At the time of his birth, many



President of the Republic of Uganda Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

Ugandan soldiers were returning home from the war.

Museveni began pre-primary school in 1952 and in 1953 he entered the first grade at Kyamate Boys School, finishing in 1958. He joined Mbarara High School in 1959 and

finished his junior secondary education in 1960.

He joined Ntare Senior Secondary School in 1961 and finished advanced-level secondary school in 1966.

Museveni joined University College in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, a branch of the University of East Africa, in 1967, finishing with a bachelor of arts degree in political science and economics in 1970.

While in high school and university, Museveni led student clubs such as the debate club, scripture union and, most importantly, he founded the University Students African Revolutionary Front (USARF) at University College, leading that group for the three years he was in university.

USARF organized a trip to the liberated areas of Mozam-

bique in 1968, where the Mozambicans were fighting for liberation against the Portuguese colonialists.

Museveni started working as a research officer in the Ugandan President's Office in 1970.

When Idi Amin staged a military coup on Jan. 25, 1971, Museveni, immediately, together with his former student colleagues and other Ugandans formed and led the Front National Salvation (FRONASA) throughout the years of resistance against the pro-imperialist regime of Idi Amin (1971 to 1979).

When Amin was defeated, Museveni was appointed minister of defence in the provisional government from 1979 to 1980. He also became minister of regional cooperation and vice-chairman of the Military

Commission.

When elections were re-introduced in Uganda, after a dictatorship lasting from 1966 to 1980, Museveni, together with others, formed the Uganda Patriotic Movement, because they refused to join what they regarded as the old sectarian parties of the Uganda Peoples Congress, Democratic Party and Kabaka Yeka.

Uganda has since had four presidential elections, in 1996,

2001, 2006 and 2011, as well as an equal number of parliamentary and local elections with Museveni emerging victorious in all.

Museveni inherited an economy that was completely devastated. However, he enjoyed the support of the international community to revitalize it. He initiated economic policies designed to combat key problems such as hyperinflation and the balance of payments. Abandoning his earlier ideas, Museveni embraced the neo-liberal structural adjustments advocated by the World Bank and the International Monetary

Fund. Uganda remains a capitalist economy today.

The nation's infrastructure is far better than he found it; new schools and universities have been constructed, communication has improved 100 fold, too, as have the banking and industrial sectors. In this respect, Uganda pays tribute to the Japan government through Japan International Cooperation Agency for supporting the infrastructure development in Uganda, including roads, bridges and power infrastructure, as well as human resource development through education and training.

Uganda has also intervened in the Sudan, fighting against the Lord's Resistance Army, as well as fighting other rebel groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Additionally, Uganda is currently helping to bring peace to Somalia, under the African Union Mission in Somalia, providing the vanguard of peacekeepers. Museveni says this is all for the sake of Pan-Africanism.

Museveni has been married to Janet Kataha since 1973 and they have four children. During his free time, he likes herding cattle at both his Kisozi and Rwakitura farms.

Cooperation in multiple areas ensures strong, bilateral relationship

Betty Grace Akech-Okullo
AMBASSADOR OF UGANDA



The President of the Republic of Uganda, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni is on an official working visit to Japan at the invitation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

During their meeting, they will discuss bilateral and multilateral issues affecting their respective countries.

Japan and Uganda enjoy warm and strong bilateral relations, which were established immediately after Uganda's Independence in 1962. They have also continued to cooperate on a multilateral level in peacekeeping in the Horn of Africa and their work with the U.N.

Although the embassy was temporarily closed in 1987, for logistical reasons,

it re-opened in 1997.

The bilateral relations between Uganda and Japan continue to grow strong with many high-level official visits exchanged between the two countries exemplified by the recent visits to Japan by parliament Speaker of Uganda, Rebecca Kadaga, the visit of current President of the U.N. General Assembly, Sam K. Kuteesa, other ministers and now the official working visit of President Museveni. The president himself has visited Japan four times for Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) summits, attesting to the great importance he attaches to Japan-Africa relations.

Prince Akishino and Princess Kiko visited Uganda in 2012 and the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Akihiko Tanaka also visited Uganda in 2014. Japan's vice minister

of defense visited Uganda this year.

A number of Japanese NPOs are operating in Uganda, including Ashinaga, Millennium Promise Japan and others.

Uganda and Japan continue to cooperate in various sectors such as education, health, agriculture, trade, tourism and cultural exchanges, as well as under TICAD arrangements.

Japan has supported Uganda with loans, grants and technical assistance cooperation through JICA over the years, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, education and human resource development.

Trade and tourism between Uganda and Japan continues to grow with companies such as Saraya, Far East, Saka No Tochu, Smiley Earth and Crystal Coffee doing business in Uganda.

I will continue to promote Uganda-Japan bilateral relations to even greater heights.

Heartiest Welcome

to His Excellency

Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,

President of the Republic of Uganda

on His Official Working Visit to Japan

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