

Djibouti National Day

Unified nation embraces peace, diversity

Ahmed Arait Ali
AMBASSADOR OF DJIBOUTI

June 27, 1977, marked the National Day of the Republic of Djibouti. Celebrating our close relationship with Japan, based on common values and beliefs, I have the distinct pleasure, on behalf of the government and people of Djibouti, to express my best wishes for happiness, peace and prosperity to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, and my gratitude to the government and the people of Japan.

The government and the people of Djibouti patiently built and consolidated together a modern nation based on "The common will to live in togetherness," to quote the beautiful formula coined by H.E. President Ismail Omar Guelleh.

The leadership and personal commitment of President Guelleh has been recognized internationally in making our country a land of peace, cultural diversity and social cohesion. This is reflected in our

diplomacy.

Presidential election

On April 9, President Guelleh won a landslide victory in an election with a commanding 87 percent of ballots giving him another five-year term in office. In the process, there has been a complete reshuffle of the cabinet, including a newly created position of Minister at the Presidency that is tasked with investment issues.

The new minister is tasked with facilitating foreign investment in Djibouti by supporting initiatives to improve the environment and investment opportunities such as advocating a policy of flexibility in investment operations and modern regulatory framework and procedures.

Upcoming summit

Earlier this year, on March 14 and 15, Djibouti was delighted to have the opportunity to host the Preparatory Senior Officials' Meeting for the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI). We are grateful for Japan's leadership role and determination to play a major role in Africa through the respect of principles underlying TICAD. Already, we

can testify that real progress and extensive benefits have been brought to the entire African continent through TICAD.

Appointing a minister in charge of investment is a timely decision for Djibouti in the context of TICAD VI, which is scheduled for Aug. 27 and 28 in Nairobi. The agenda will include trade and investment opportunities for the

private sector, and large Japanese companies, African heads of state and business leaders are expected to be in attendance.

Djibouti-Japan relations

The friendly and close relations between Djibouti and Japan are based on common values and efforts to promote peace and stability. Both countries are playing a lead-

ing role as partners in fighting international piracy in the East Africa region. These efforts have produced significant and positive results and, since 2011, Djibouti is in the

only country to host a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force facilities.

A vision for the future
Djibouti, with its "Vision

2035" development program, has decided to take advantage of its geostrategic location. On one hand it intends to become the gateway of choice to Africa and the Mid-

dle East for businesses, while on the other it seeks to be the powerhouse of East Africa's economic growth through servicing its neighboring countries' trade.



Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh (left) greets Norio Maruyama, director-general of African affairs at the Japanese Foreign Ministry, who visited the country to attend the TICAD VI Preparatory Senior Officials' Meeting in March. EMBASSY OF DJIBOUTI

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