

Angola National Day

Active player in promoting African stability

JOAO MIGUEL VAHEKENI
AMBASSADOR OF ANGOLA



On the auspicious occasion of the 42nd Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Angola, I avail myself of this opportunity to, on behalf of His Excellency President

Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco, the government and the people of the Republic of Angola, convey our heartfelt greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, His Excellency Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and people of Japan.

Following a hard-fought struggle for independence from Portugal, on Nov. 11, 1975, Angola's first President Dr. Antonio Agostinho Neto proclaimed solemnly, before Africa and the world, the independence of Angola and the national flag was

raised to the top of the flagpole for the first time. Today, as we celebrate our national day, Angolans look back in pride at this glorious achievement for nationhood that was unfortunately followed by a civil war that went on until 2002.

Angola has maintained political and social stability and has made great strides since the end of the civil war. The country's gross domestic product grew from \$12.49 billion in 2002 to \$89.63 billion in 2016. Life expectancy went from 49 years in 2002 to 61 years in 2016. Housing and education have become more accessible to most Angolans. New railways, roads and other key pieces of infrastructure have been built across the country.

Angolans went to the polls on Aug. 23, for the country's fourth general election since it became a multiparty democracy in 1992. Under the slogan "Improve what is right and correct what is wrong," the president and H.E. Vice President Bornito de Sousa Baltazar Diogo were elected as representatives of the republic. A new cabinet was appointed on Sept. 28, on which the



President of the Republic of Angola H.E. Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco

people pin their hopes for a better future.

At the international level, Angola has been playing a key role in promoting peace and stability in Africa, particularly in southern Africa, the Gulf of Guinea and the

Great Lakes region. Angola currently chairs the Southern African Development Community Organ for Politics, Defense and Security. Angola is also a founding member of the Gulf of Guinea Commission and hosts its secretariat in Luanda. Additionally, Angola took up the rotating chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes region, serving two consecutive mandates from 2014 to 2017.

As this year marks the 41st anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Angola and Japan, I am confident that the bilateral ties will continue to strengthen and grow in the years to come. Japan is among Angola's strategic partners within the framework of implementation of the country's economic diversification program that aims to reduce Angola's dependence on the oil sector.

To conclude, I take this opportunity to convey my hope of a continued enhancing of the friendship and cooperation between our two countries and express my most sincere wishes of continued prosperity to the friendly people of Angola and Japan.



Kalandula Falls in Malanje province EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA



Serra da Leba Pass in Huila province EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Angola
on the Occasion of
the 42nd Anniversary of
Their Independence

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