

Ethiopia National Day Special

Strong growth continues for African success story

CHAM UGALA URIAT
AMBASSADOR OF ETHIOPIA



On behalf of the people and government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and myself, I would like to extend my humble wishes for the good health and happiness, as well

as the continued success and prosperity, of Japan and its people.

Ethiopia celebrates its National Day on May 28. This day marks the overthrow of a military dictatorship and the end of a 17-year-long internal war in Ethiopia. On May 28, 1991, rebel groups that formed the incumbent ruling party won over the Derg regime and took over the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia's national day, however, is not only the celebration of an end of a regime. The fall of the oppressive regime through a bitter struggle of Ethiopians heralded a new dawn of hope that ushered in a new era of peace, democracy and development. We also celebrate our national day in remembrance of the Ethiopian heroes and heroines who we have lost as they struggled to bring about democracy, peace and justice for all nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. Their struggle has come to fruition.

Various transformative changes have been introduced following the fall of the dictatorial regime. A democratic constitu-

tion was put into place that provided a federal system of government that recognized the rights of all nations, nationalities and peoples of the country. The government of Ethiopia followed an inward-looking policy of identifying our internal vulnerabilities and embarked upon the task of lifting its citizens out of abject poverty and introducing reforms that were aimed toward that end.

We have been living a success story ever since. In fact, Ethiopia has been named one of the African "economic miracles" for registering one of the fastest rates of economic growth for the past decade-and-a-half. Our economy has been growing at an average of 11 percent for the past 15 years, the poverty rate fell from 44 percent in 2000 to around 21 percent in 2017, the life expectancy of Ethiopians increased from 47 to 64 years and per capita income is almost eight times greater than it was 27 years ago. Ethiopia is one of the most equal countries in the world and has remained so during these periods of rapid economic development due to the pro-poor policy implemented by the government.

Indeed, any observer who has visited the country over the years would attest to the fact that the country has transformed tremendously.

Moreover, with the vision of becoming a lower-middle-income country and developing into a regional hub of manufacturing by 2025, our country is building massive industrial zones, attracting many investors from around the world. It has also invested massively in power generation and connectivity, building vital infrastructure,

roads and railway networks to facilitate business and trade within the country, as well as with its neighbors.

Ethiopia treasures the long-standing relations it has with the people and government of Japan. Japan has been a friend and a development partner to Ethiopia throughout their diplomatic history. It has been consistent and reliable in providing support for our developmental endeavors in line with our policy priorities.

Japan has also been working together with Ethiopia and countries in our region to tackle regional, continental and international issues of peace and security.

The people-to-people interactions between our two countries have also grown from time to time. Many Japanese are now aware that Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee, the origin of humanity and a melting pot of culture that has more than 80 ethnic groups with fascinating cultures and ways of life, among many other things. As a result, we are witnessing that the number of Japanese tourists and journalists visiting Ethiopia is significantly increasing. Furthermore, thanks to the government of Japan, the number of Ethiopian students who are doing their master's and Ph.D. studies in Japan is also increasing. Our students, apart from their academic studies, are using this great opportunity to learn the language, culture and values of Japan.

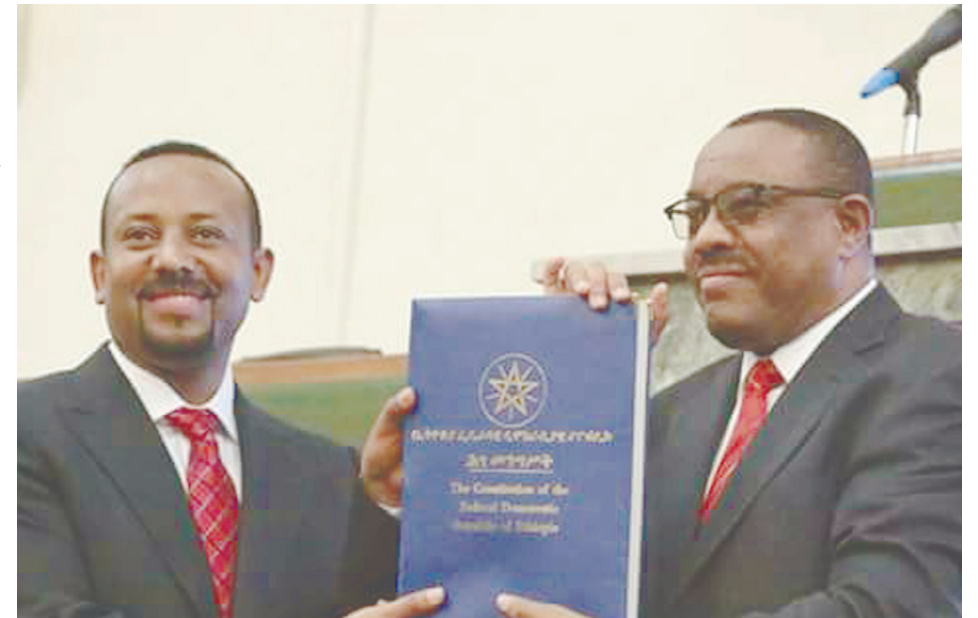
In addition, we are very grateful that many investors, including Japanese companies, are choosing Ethiopia as their investment destination, and we are committed to doing our very best to provide incentives to those who have chosen to

invest in our country.

In this connection, I would like to use this opportunity to extend my thanks and appreciation to the friendly people and government of Japan for being partners and friends to Ethiopia throughout the years.

Finally, on this happy occasion, I wish to reiterate my government's readiness to further bolster our bilateral cooperation with Japan for the benefit of our two countries.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen shakes hands with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on June 12, 2017. EMBASSY OF ETHIOPIA

Top: Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (left), who was sworn into parliament in April, stands with former Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. Above: Ahmed visits the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on May 1. EMBASSY OF ETHIOPIA



Rock-hewn churches of Lalibela. EMBASSY OF ETHIOPIA

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to the People of
the Federal Democratic
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on the 27th Anniversary of
Their National Day

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Tel: 03-5643-1717 Fax: 03-5643-1718 E-mail: zebra.1210@eagleshipjapan.com