

# Togo National Day Special

## Progress continues in nation's development

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CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF TOGO



Tomorrow, on April 27, the Republic of Togo will celebrate the 59th Anniversary of its Independence. I am honored to take this auspicious opportunity to convey my greetings to their

Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and people of Japan.

As we are moving toward an Imperial succession, I would like to extend my heartfelt and warmest congratulations to the Emperor and Empress on the memorable Heisei Era. I would also like to express my conviction that the upcoming Reiwa Era, which will be embodied by the next emperor, Crown Prince Naruhito, will bring more peace, harmony, prosperity and happiness to the people of Japan.

This 59th anniversary of Togo gives me the opportunity to present the path my country is pursuing as a "stakeholder of a New Africa."

The government and people of Togo, under the leadership of President of the Republic His Excellency Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, always aspire to live in peace and national harmony, which is necessary for its development.

Various initiatives have therefore been put in place, to enable Togo to achieve its objective, which is to attain stronger and more inclusive economic growth. To realize this, several political, economic and

social governance structural reforms have been implemented in various sectors.

In December, a new National Assembly chair was chosen via parliamentary election, and, for the first time in the democratic history of Togo, a woman won. Chaired by Djigbodi Yawa Tsegan, the current assembly will pursue the constitutional and institutional reforms necessary to continue to consolidate and reinforce Togo's various democratic achievements.

In the economic sector, thanks to different reforms, Togo jumped 19 places in the World Bank's Doing Business 2018 report, becoming the second most attractive economy in the West Africa Economic Monetary Union zone and the fourth in West Africa. Togo is also among the top 10 economies in the world that have improved their regulatory framework last year.

These performances are consolidated by the entry into force of a new investment and land code that secures investors and provides reduction of costs and delays in obtaining land.

In the agriculture sector, the Agricultural Finance Incentive Mechanism (MIFA) has been set up. It is based on a structuring of agricultural value chains that advocate the passing of risk to the government to increase the financing of the private sector for the development of agribusiness. MIFA has been transferred to a limited company to increase its performance to better meet the wishes expressed by public-private partnership players.

The national strategy led by the Togolese Agency for Rural Electrification and Renewable Energies is based on the most economical approach of identifying tech-

nologies to be deployed on the basis of public-private partnerships by pooling network expansion and off-grid technologies such as minigrids and solar kits.

Recently, "Togo has made an appointment with its history," with the "National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2022" adopted last August and officially launched by the president.

The overall objective of this ambitious plan and innovative development project is to structurally transform the economy for strong, sustainable, inclusive growth, creating good jobs and improving social well-being. The medium-term orientation of the NDP is based on the major challenges emerging from the diagnosis of the economic, social and environmental situation.

The NDP has three strategic axes — the first being to establish a logistics hub of excellence and world-class business center in the subregion. The second focuses on job creation via development of the agricultural, manufacturing and extractive industries, while the third involves consolidating social development and strengthening inclusion mechanisms.

Japanese investors are particularly expected in the implementation of the NDP, of which approximately 65 percent of the financing estimated at \$8.3 billion will come from the private sector.

From Aug. 28 to 30, the seventh Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD VII) will be held in Yokohama. Togo's expectations are that TICAD will continue to be a framework that enables the mobilization of support necessary for Africa's socioeconomic development, industrialization, and promotion of peace and stability.



Togo President H.E. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe



Togo Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and African Integration Robert Dussey

I conclude by thanking the Japanese government for their support in the TICAD process, with the construction of quality infrastructure in Togo such as the new Fishing Port of Lome, the Kara and Koumongou bridges. I also appreciate the strengthening of the managerial abilities of Togolese executives through the African Business Education Initiative and, at the regional level, the ongoing project of the ring of growth to link Togo to neighboring countries.

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

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to the People of  
the Republic of Togo  
on the 59th Anniversary  
of their Independence

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