

South African President's Visit Special

Ties firm as G20 summit kicks off

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AMBASSADOR OF SOUTH AFRICA



First of all, I wish to state that it is my heartfelt honor and privilege to serve my country in Japan. I therefore wish to express my profound appreciation to President Cyril Ramaphosa and

the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Grace Pandor for entrusting me with this responsibility of representing South Africa in Japan. This is an enormous responsibility, one that I have accepted with great humility.

I would like to thank The Japan Times for publishing this article on the first day of the G20 summit in Osaka. As you are aware, South Africa is one of the countries

participating in the G20.

Please allow me to therefore pay special tribute to the president who is currently in Japan, the land of the rising sun, as he participates in the G20 summit. The president is leading a South African high-level delegation comprising of ministers and senior government officials.

In 2015, the president, then-deputy president of the Republic of South Africa, visited Japan along with a high-level government and business delegation. That visit was premised on cooperative partnership between the two countries.

The year 2019 is of great importance for South Africa-Japan bilateral relations as it marks 109 years since the commencement of formal ties. The countries have entered into a number of bilateral agreements, culminating with Japan becoming South Africa's fourth economic and trade partner in the world. This year, Japan will host several international events in which South

Africa will participate; these events include, among others, the G20 summit, TICAD VII and the 2019 Rugby World Cup. These events will play a meaningful role in terms of deepening the relationship between our countries and our people.

Currently, South Africa is the only African country that is an official member of the G20. There is hope that in the future many other African countries will be invited to form part of the G20 because Africa is a huge continent with a myriad of challenges.

South Africa's participation in this august body of the G20 is guided by her national interest as well as her desire to enhance Agenda 2063, Africa's blueprint for transformation. At his state of the nation address on June 20, the president reiterated the long-standing position of South Africa of contributing toward a better Africa and a better world.

South Africa has placed inequality, eradi-

cation of poverty, inclusive growth and job creation at the center of its national agenda. In responding to these challenges, the president has committed his administration to a goal of attracting \$100 billion of foreign direct investment over the next five years. While in Osaka, the president will hold a roundtable discussion with Japan's

business community.

In conclusion, on behalf of the government and people of the Republic of South Africa, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the government and the friendly people of Japan for the excellent bilateral relations that exist between our countries.

We also wish to express our highest

appreciation to the government of Japan for the manner in which they have organized the G20. Simultaneously, we congratulate Japan for winning the bid to host the 2025 World Expo and we wish Japan great success for the upcoming events, TICAD VII, the 2019 Rugby World Cup and the Tokyo Olympics in 2020, respectively.



Johannesburg's skyline EMBASSY OF SOUTH AFRICA



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

Heartiest Welcome

to His Excellency

Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa,

President of South Africa,

on His Visit to Japan

for the G20 Summit

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