

# Togo National Day Special

## Bonds of friendship, cooperation remain robust despite pandemic

**A. KOUAKOU SEDAMINOU**  
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A. I.



On the occasion of the 61st anniversary of the accession of the Republic of Togo to international sovereignty, I would like, on behalf of the government and people of

Togo, to express my warm congratulations to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, members of the imperial family, the government and the Japanese people.

This celebration gives me, despite the current difficult health context, the opportunity to salute the quality of the bonds of friendship, fraternity and cooperation that exist between Togo and Japan and praise the wisdom and commitment of the highest authorities of our two countries for the consolidation of these relations.

Togo has made significant progress not only in the process of development and promotion of good governance, but also in the consolidation of democracy with the organization, in peace and serenity, of the presidential election of Feb. 22, 2020, won by His Excellency Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe.

Togo has not escaped the negative effects of the global health crisis. But very early on, the head of state took the lead in the fight to lessen the socioeconomic consequences of the crisis. From April 1, 2020, he declared a health emergency, created the Anti-COVID-19 Special Force and set up a national solidarity fund and economic recovery plan worth over ¥80 billion.

This fund has made it possible to grant tax exemptions, subsidies for water and electricity bills in low-income brackets,



**H.E. President of the Republic of Togo Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe**

reduce transportation tariffs and the prices of oil and other basic necessities to support and assist vulnerable populations whose activities are affected by the pandemic.

Today, Togo is delighted with the results it has achieved. Despite this reason for satisfaction, my country is pursuing a policy of prudence and vigilance, with the maintenance of social distancing measures, increased PCR testing and vaccinations.

In terms of business climate, Togo, despite the pandemic, has been able to rise to the top among reforming countries in Africa and to third in the world, according to the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report, thanks to the necessary incentive reforms intended to guarantee implementation of the National Development Plan 2018-2022.

In her general policy statement of Oct. 3, 2020, to the National Assembly, Her Excellency Prime Minister Victoire Tomegah-Dogbe announced the govern-

ment's decision to focus its efforts on three main axes: strengthening inclusion and social harmony and consolidating peace; boosting job creation by relying on the strengths of the national economy; and modernizing Togo and strengthening its structures.

These axes will result in operational projects and ambitious reforms during the five-year term through 2025.

Thanks to this paradigm shift in governance and despite the health crisis, Togo had a positive growth rate in 2020, which is an illustration of an agile, pugnacious and resilient economy.

To implement the NDP 2018-2022, the head of state set a course for new reforms to improve the business climate to make Togo a preferred destination for international investors, as well as a land of development for the private sector. To do this, a ministry specially dedicated to investment promotion, an investment promotion agency and a free zone called the API-ZF were created to support investors in all stages of their projects.

Therefore, I invite Japanese investors to come and explore Togo's business opportunities.

I express to the highest Japanese authorities the gratitude of the Togolese government for their multifaceted support in the permanent quest for the well-being of Togolese thanks to the various development projects initiated.

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games will soon open under the theme "Sport has the power to change the world and our future." They will be an opportunity to build an international partnership taking into account the challenges and current issues.

It will also be a question, for the whole world, of whether the games can prove their capacity for resilience, unity and hope for a better world during the coronavirus pandemic. Despite the constraints of the moment, the Japanese government

is working to organize an Olympics that will be secure and carry a message of international solidarity and cooperation.

I would therefore like to reassure Japan of our commitment to participate in the success of this great and important event.

To conclude, I would like to renew the wishes of the Togolese government to see the bonds of friendship and fraternity between the Togolese and Japanese peoples strengthen.

Long live the cooperation between Togo and Japan.

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



**H.E. Prime Minister of Togo Victoire Tomegah-Dogbe**



**H.E. Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Togolese Abroad Robert Dussey**

**Congratulations to the people of the Republic of Togo on the Anniversary of their Independence**

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