

Egypt National Day Special

Relations thrive across various fields

AYMAN KAMEL
AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT



This year marks the 69th anniversary of July 23, 1952, which reminds us of the Egyptian people's struggle for their freedom and independence. The 23 July Revolution remains one of the

most important days of Egyptian history that draws inspiration from our past to lead the way to our present and guide us into the future.

To complement the spirit of the revolution, Egypt is implementing a comprehensive strategic vision based on unique development goals in all fields and supported by large improvements in the country's economic indicators during the past three years, which was manifested by economic stability. As a matter of fact, the financial performance of the Egyptian economy during the COVID-19 pandemic exceeded expectations as international financial institutions raised their forecast for Egyptian economic growth to 3.5% during 2020-2021. It was due to the strong performance of the country's business environment that international investors' confidence in the Egyptian economy was restored, and this led them to tout Egypt as one of the most attractive foreign investment destinations among emerging markets.

Relations between Japan and Egypt are deeply rooted in history as interac-

tions between their two peoples have continued to develop since the first visits by Japanese samurai delegations to Egypt in 1862 and 1864 while on their way to Europe at the end of the Edo Period (1603-1867). The Ikeda Mission members were fascinated by what they saw in Egypt, particularly in the fields of irrigation, transportation, administration and education. These samurai left with significant memories and recommended some of the achievements they witnessed in Egypt be implemented in Japan.

Today, bilateral relations keep flourishing in all fields, and on the occasion of the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, I would like to seize this opportunity, on behalf of His Excellency Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, president of Egypt, and the Egyptian people, to express our highest appreciation and deepest gratitude to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, as well as the imperial family, for all the continuous support we have received from the government and people of Japan, thus enabling us to take friendly Egyptian-Japanese relations to wider horizons.

Since my arrival in Japan in October 2017, my objective has been to elevate the partnership to a strategic and enhanced one and to promote Egypt in Japan in all domains. The target of my mission was to increase Japanese investment flows to Egypt by introducing investment opportunities to the Japanese business community; and to present the image of contemporary Egypt to the Japanese people, in an effort to update their vast knowledge about ancient Egypt.

Japan started its overseas development assistance to Egypt in 1974. Since then, it has contributed to several large projects in Egypt, including the Cairo Opera House, the friendship bridge over the Suez Canal, Cairo University Pediatric Hospital and many other vital ventures.

We value Japan's significant contribution to Egypt's social and economic development. The long history of developmental cooperation between our two countries, demonstrated in many vital projects executed via Japanese ODA, has contributed to the reputable image the Egyptian people have about Japan and positively impacted the quality of life of Egyptian citizens. This cooperation has been extended to several major infrastructure projects in the fields of water supply, sewage, electricity, renewable

energy and transportation.

Our cultural relations have also led to great achievements, prominent among them the inauguration of the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), which became an important center for transferring Japanese technology and scientific advances to African researchers and students. Moreover, on the human development axis, the signing of the agreement between the governments of Egypt and Japan on cooperation in science and technology; and the implementation of the Egypt-Japan Education Partnership, aims at introducing Japan's basic education concept of *tokkatsu* in more than 200 Egyptian schools.

The ongoing schemes of cooperation also include Japanese support to the Grand Egyptian Museum, which is



The Sphinx stands before the pyramids in Giza. EGYPTIAN EMBASSY

planned to be the biggest archaeological museum in the world, with more than 100,000 artifacts representing a single civilization belonging to ancient Egypt. Finally, I would like to extend our best

wishes to my Egyptian compatriots in Japan on the occasion of Egypt's national day.

Long live Egypt and Japan and their everlasting friendship.

Education key to bilateral collaboration

SHINICHI KITAOKA
PRESIDENT OF THE JAPAN
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY



Japan first encountered Egypt in the 1860s, when a Japanese diplomatic mission to Europe made a stopover. A photograph of the samurai delegation in front of the Sphinx serves as a precious artifact

of this occasion. They were impressed with the great ancient Egyptian civilization and also had learned a lot from the Egyptian people who were being subjected to European imperialism.

Among non-Western countries, Japan has modernized without losing its traditions and identity. One of the starting points for Japan's modernization was the visit of the

delegation to Egypt. Ever since then, Japan has taken a strong interest in Egypt. Japan's involvement in the expansion of the Suez Canal in the 1970s marked a deepening of bilateral relations between our nations. Joint projects between the Egyptian government and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the education sector and the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) are similarly symbolic today.

Some Egyptian schools, for example, are introducing Japanese-style education, which is characterized by classroom discussions, cleaning duties and special group activities oriented around music, sports and art. These facets, common in Japanese elementary schools, aim to foster "socio-emotional" skills, a cooperative mindset and discipline.

Another flagship project is the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST). E-JUST, which has adopted Japanese methods of science and technol-

ogy education, is now recognized as a leading university within Egypt. Furthermore, by accepting international students from other Middle Eastern and African countries, E-JUST continues to evolve into an anchor institution for the broader region.

In addition to such cooperation in the education sector, GEM is an impressive manifestation of Japan's enduring friendship with the Egypt. Since 2012, JICA has extended a concessional yen loan for the construction of GEM, which is located near the pyramids and the Sphinx of Giza. JICA is also engaging in technical cooperation to conserve our ancient cultural heritage, as well as developing the human resources necessary for the museum's operations.

Egypt plays a vital role for regional peace and stability in the Middle East. JICA is committed to deepening the laudable partnership between Japan and Egypt over the coming years, with trust at the core of our work.

Ties based on interactive cooperation

TARO ASO
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-EGYPT
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP
ASSOCIATION



On the occasion of the national day of Egypt, I would like to extend, on behalf of the Japan-Egypt Parliamentary Friendship Association, my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the

parliamentarians, government officials and people of Egypt.

Egypt and Japan have been long-standing and close friends and we enjoyed successful mutual visits of dignitaries in recent years, including President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi's visits to Japan in 2019. It is how-

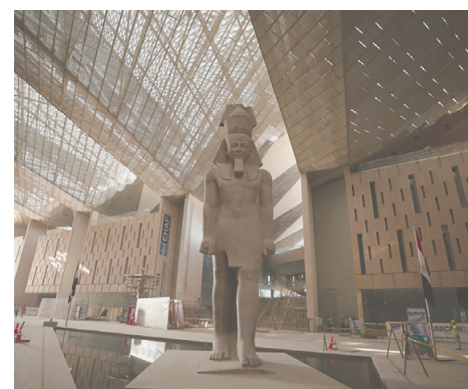
ever regrettable that people-to-people exchanges, including those involving our parliamentarians, have been strictly restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic. I sincerely await the resumption of our bilateral exchanges as soon as possible.

Egypt is a political, intellectual and cultural epicenter of the Arab world, and I find bilateral cooperation in these fields very promising. An exemplary case would be the dispatch of 11 Japanese senior experts, including former principals of elementary schools, at the initiative of the Egyptian side to Egypt-Japan schools established with Japan's assistance. I believe that this kind of interactive cooperation illustrates how mature our partnership is. In terms of Japan's cooperation in the field of Egyptian history and culture, I am truly pleased to note that the Grand Egyptian Museum project is about to be completed.

As to the recent situation in the Middle

East, Japan highly appreciates the mediation efforts by Egypt in the midst of clashes between Israeli and Palestinian militants, which finally bore fruit in the form of a ceasefire agreement by the two sides. Japan is also determined to spare no effort to achieve the Middle East peace, including through our unique "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative. I would also like to reiterate that Japan has been and will be committed to contributing to the peace and stability of the Middle East in close cooperation with Egypt, and our dispatch of Self-Defense Forces personnel to the Multilateral Force and Observers highlights such cooperation.

Last but certainly not least, I have no doubt that Japan and Egypt can hand in hand overcome this unprecedented adversity from COVID-19 with a fervent hope for a prosperous and long-lasting partnership between our countries.



A statue of Ramses the Great awaits visitors in the atrium of Giza's Grand Egyptian Museum. EGYPTIAN EMBASSY

Congratulations
to the People of the Arab Republic of Egypt
on the Occasion of the Anniversary of
Their National Day

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