

This special newspaper feature marking the 50th Anniversary of the Embassy of Japan in Kenya appeared on 'The Standard' newspaper on Monday, 30th June 2014.



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Embassy of Japan in Kenya

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THE EMBASSY OF JAPAN IN KENYA 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The Spirit of "Pamoja"

H.E. Mr. Tatsushi Terada, Ambassador of Japan to Kenya



The Embassy of Japan in Kenya marked its 50th Anniversary in June, 2014. Over the last 50 years, the Embassy has received warm cooperation from the Government of Kenya as well as the people of Kenya. As the 17th Ambassador of Japan to Kenya and on behalf of the Embassy of Japan in Kenya, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to your cooperation.

'A Friend in need is a friend indeed', this is the best proverb which shows our relations with Kenya and Africa. After the Great East Japan Earthquake in the Tohoku Region in 2011, the Embassy received strong support from both the Kenyan Government as well as the people of Kenya. The Government of Japan started the Tokyo International Conference for Africa's Development, TICAD, in 1993, when the Afro-pessimism prevailed in international discussion on development in Africa.

'Strengthening each individual, one by one' is the core philosophy behind Japan's diplomacy towards Africa. It was reiterated by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, in his speech at the Headquarter of African Union in Addis Ababa in January, 2014 during his first tour to Africa. This is echoed in the Yokohama Declaration 2013 agreed during TICAD V, whose subtitle says 'Hand in Hand with a More Dynamic Africa'. The Embassy's relations with Kenya has also been based on this core philosophy, in other term, a spirit of "pamoja", with which the Embassy shall continue its future relations with Kenya.



Leaflet 'A friend in need is a friend indeed' was made to mark the 50th anniversary of Japan-Kenya Diplomatic Relations

"Partners in Progress"

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Trade, Kenya

We recall with great appreciation the opening of the Japanese Consulate in 1932 in Mombasa, the solidarity shown through our struggles to the eventual upgrading of the consulate to a fully fledged Embassy in 1964. Since then and for the last 50 years, relations between Kenya and Japan have continually expanded into strategic partnerships in all areas.

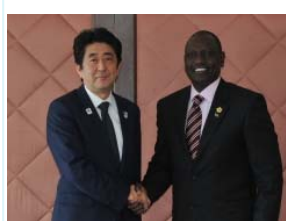
The strong bonds between the two friendly countries have seen Kenya achieve great economic development through the TICAD framework which seeks to address Africa's strength and challenges and upon which our development cooperation is currently anchored.

The history on the development of Kenya's Infrastructure, amongst many other areas of cooperation cannot be written without the mention of Japan. The Japanese Government has been very supportive of Vision 2030 flagship projects. The second container terminal under construction at the port of Mombasa and the feasibility study on the LAPSET project are, just to mention a few, projects being undertaken with the support of the government of Japan.

As you celebrate 50 years since the establishment of the Embassy, the Government and the people of Kenya wish you well and thank the Government of Japan for remaining a true partner of Kenya over the years.

People-People Relations: Political Level

Since the first visit to Kenya in 1979 by then Foreign Minister Sonoda, more than 40 high-level Japanese government officials have come to Kenya. His Majesty Akihito, the Emperor of Japan (then the Crown Prince) made his visit to Kenya in 1983 and his son His Imperial Highness Naruhito, the Crown Prince, made his visit to Kenya in 2010. In 2001 then Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori visited Kenya with then Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr. Shinzo Abe, Japanese Prime Minister today.



Japan has received even more high-level government officials from Kenya, including former President Moi and former President Kibaki. In 2013, the Deputy President William Ruto visited Japan as the head of the Kenyan delegation to TICAD V.

Bilateral Meeting between H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and H.E. Deputy President William Ruto at TICAD V (Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan)

History of the Embassy of Japan in Kenya

In February 1932, the Japanese Government opened a consulate in Mombasa. In October 1953, the Consulate was moved to Nairobi. The Consulate became General Consulate in August 1961. On December 12th, 1963, when Kenya won its independence, Japan acknowledged its independence and started its diplomatic relations with Kenya. It was June 1st, 1964, on Madaraka Day, the Consulate General was promoted to the Embassy. So this year is the 50th birthday of the Embassy of Japan in Kenya.



The Embassy of Japan in Kenya

There have been 17 Japanese Ambassadors to Kenya. The first Ambassador was H.E. Mr. Toshio Urabe who served in Kenya from October, 1964 to July, 1968. Ambassador Urabe started Japan's Economic Cooperation to Kenya.



H.E. Mr. Toshio Urabe presenting his credentials to Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Governor General of Kenya accompanied by Dr. Robert Ouko, then an Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Governor (Photo: East African Standard on November 4th, 1964)

Economic Relations and Economic Cooperation

Tokyo International Conference for African's Development, TICAD, started in 1993 when afro-pessimism was dominant in the discussion on African Development. TICAD has been an open, multilateral and inclusive international forum to discuss Africa's strengths and challenges among African heads of state and international development partners. TICAD has been held in Japan once in every five years since its start and it has contributed to raise and maintain the world's attention to Africa's development issues. In 2013, TICAD V was held in Yokohama. It was attended by more than 4,500 people including 39 heads of state from the African continent, the Chairman of African Union and heads of various international organizations.



TICAD V in Yokohama June, 2013 (Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan)

Japanese economic relations with Kenya started about 100 years ago when a Japanese cotton trading company, Nihon Menka, opened its branch office in Mombasa in 1919. A Japanese businessman, Mr. Toshiyuki Sato, moved to Kenya in 1966. He founded the Kenya Nuts Company which is known for its brand, Out of Africa. As of this year, 2014, 31 Japanese Companies have branch offices or liaison offices in Kenya. After TICAD V, which emphasized the importance of the private sector in Africa's economic development, more and more private companies have shown their interest in the Kenyan market.



Mombasa International Airport (Photo: Japan International Cooperation Agency)

Japanese Economic Cooperation to Kenya started in 1963 when Japan invited 2 Kenyan trainees to Japan. Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, JOCV, of which Japan has sent more than 1,500 to Kenya, started in 1966. Starting in 1966 to further economic development in Kenya, Japan has disbursed more than 3 billion USD as a form of yen loan. The milestone projects include the improvement of Mombasa International Airport, the construction of Olkaria Geothermal

Power Station and Mwea Irrigation Development Project. Japan's technical assistance projects have also been tremendous in Kenya. Japan's technical assistance started in 1964 with the dispatch of a metalworking expert. Since then, Japan has been assisting the capacity building of many institutions in Kenya including JKUAT, KEMRI and CEMESTEA.



Olkaria Geothermal Power Station (Photo: Japan International Cooperation Agency)

People-People Relations: Cultural and Sports Level

Japan Information and Culture Centre, JICC, the cultural and public relations department of the Embassy of Japan, officially opened in 1974. It has been introducing Japanese culture in Kenya for 40 years. In 2013, when Japan-Kenya Diplomatic Relations marked the Golden Jubilee, the Embassy of Japan held a series of cultural events including Japanese Drum Concert, Jazz Concert and Anime Festival to celebrate this important juncture.



Japanese Drum Team Concert in 2013



Special Training By Karate Expert in 2010

Japan will host the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympics Games. Sports exchange have shown significant growth from the view point of Japan-Kenya relations. The first Kenyan runner who trained in Japan was Mr. Douglas Wakihuri, who brought the first World Championship Gold medal to Kenya. Japan has a rich culture of martial arts. Karate, Judo and Aikido classes are now accessible in Kenya.