



Dear Sir or Madam,

I have the honor to present my compliments and am delighted to deliver the latest edition of *Japanese Ambassador's Newsletter* to you. As always, I would like to thank you for your responses after the last one issued in April.

In this edition, please allow me to begin with a personal touch on a book about Nigeria which I recently read. The book is written in Japanese and published in May under the title, if I may take the liberty to put it in English, "Narrative History of Nigeria –the true aspect the Giant of Africa-" written by Dr. Shuhei SHIMADA, the emeritus professor of Kyoto University with the expertise in regional issues in Nigeria. To the best of my knowledge, the book is the first comprehensive work of its kind about the history of Nigeria written by a Japanese savant. I see this publication as a display of the rate of momentum at which Nigeria is garnering attention in Japan. I expect it will provide the Japanese people with better understanding about Nigeria, thus further promote our relationship.

【Importance of Democracy in Nigeria】

As it is the well-known fact, Nigeria's democracy day has been shifted from May 29th to June 12th, as the recognition of Chief Moshood Abiola's contribution to democracy in Nigeria as demonstrated in 1993 presidential election. At the Eagle Square in Abuja on 12th June, I heard President Buhari's announcement in his speech to rename the National Stadium, Abuja to the Moshood Abiola National Stadium, with thunderous applause from the audience. On the weekend right after the renaming, I had an opportunity by chance to go to the newly renamed stadium, to attend a Yoga event hosted by H.E. Mr. Abhay Thakur, High Commissioner of India to Nigeria. During the Yoga practice, I was deeply moved to be at the stadium in person after such a historic change.

On the occasion of Democracy Day celebration, the Government of Japan dispatched Mr. Shunsuke Takei, a Member of the House of Representatives of Japan and the secretary of Japan-Nigeria Parliamentary Friendship League, as Special Envoy of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Nigeria. Special Envoy Mr. Takei handed a personal letter from the Prime Minister of Japan to President Buhari, offering Japan's congratulations for the progress of democracy as well as the re-election of President Buhari and inviting President to TICAD7.



In addition to Nigeria's democracy in last twenty years, I also highly appreciate the generous contributions and efforts made by Nigeria's leadership in such regional bodies like ECOWAS and AU towards stability of other African countries. Much worthy of note is the role played by

the Nigerian government in bringing stability during the crisis in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, and the Gambia in the early 1990's. Furthermore, the government of Nigeria gave unflinching supports for liberation of southern Africa including South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola, during the period between 1960's to 1990's. These Nigeria's contribution to regional stability in Africa proves how Nigeria has been playing a leadership role in Africa.

【Japan's Contribution to Security】

Among three pillars of President Buhari, namely; security, economy and anti-corruption, of course Japan can do and is doing a lot for economic development of Nigeria. That said, let me touch upon some of contributions in the field of security in Nigeria made by the government of Japan.



In May of this year, Japan started an additional capacity building program with UNDP for a PKO center, the Martin Luther Agwai International Leadership and Peacekeeping Center based in Kaduna. This program will further enhance the protection of civilians, counter-terrorism, and prevention of irregular migration.

Also, in the same month, the National Defense College dispatched a study tour to Japan, to interact with Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and to study their expertise on how to tackle natural disasters. On June 6, I attended a reporting session by participants of the study tour, held at the National Defense College in Abuja, and made remarks of JSDF's expanding contributions to peace and security domestically and overseas.

Japan has also supported that regional and international efforts to combat illicit activities at sea, including acts of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea, through the International Maritime Organization, G7 and the United Nations. I believe anybody can agree on the importance of freedom of navigation based on the rule of law, irrespective of place.

In addition, we have also been providing assistance to the North East humanitarian effort and other support ranging from IDP support, social stabilization, women and children support, to food security, in collaboration with international organizations. We are doing so with a firm belief that such measures will have an effect on the stability and security of the region. The total amount of the support we have provided in this field since 2013, has added up to over 60 million US dollars.

【Strengthening business relationship through TICAD7】

Japan has been strongly committed to supporting Africa as declared at the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) held in Nairobi, Kenya. As the summit level event in TICAD process, TICAD 7 will be held on 28th to 30th August in Yokohama, Japan. I have a high hope that H.E. President Buhari would attend the TICAD 7. If it turns out to be so, he will be the first Nigerian President visiting Japan in a decade. Our bilateral relationship would further strengthen through his visit to Japan.



During TICAD7 meeting, the following agenda on African development will be discussed: 1) Economic transformation and improvements in business environment and institution through private investment and innovation; 2) Promotion of resilient and sustainable society for human security; 3) Peace and stability (support for Africa's own proactive efforts).

By taking this important and unique occasion as a momentum, especially for economy and business sectors, I believe our bilateral relationship will be further strengthened. For instance, we are expecting to have several business events as follows: 1) Public-Private Business dialogue at plenary session; 2) the Japan-Africa Business Forum & Expo as the TICAD7 official side events organized by JETRO; 3) other TICAD7 official side events such as Africa/Japan Startups Pitch. I am quite excited to have H.E. Mr. Tony O. Elumelu, a founder of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, for opening speech at the Japan-Africa Business Forum & EXPO. In addition, the representatives of 39 Japanese companies have been appointed as Special Envoys for TICAD public and private partnership promotion in June 2019. They are expected to take a leadership role in building a strong business relationship among African countries.

【In Closing】

For the next edition, I'm thrilled to report you about the outcome of TICAD7 in Yokohama and the Enthronement Ceremony which will be held in October.

Last but not least, I would like to express my appreciation for your continuous support and understanding for the Embassy's activities.

Yours sincerely,



Yutaka KIKUTA

Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to the Federal Republic of Nigeria

*For further information on the Embassy of Japan's activities in Nigeria, please visit our Website and Facebook page.

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