



Dear Sir or Madam,

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

Before introducing you to several events, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Nigeria on its 59th Independence Anniversary. I highly appreciate Nigeria's 20 years of democracy in its 59 years of history. Unity in diversity, overcoming a number of difficulties, has been carried on since her independence. This is quite significant as a leader on the African continent. My deputy attended the Special Change of Guards Display in the morning of 1st October, where he had an opportunity to convey our appreciation to President Buhari for his visit to Japan attending TICAD7 in August. In response, the President smiled and responded that he enjoyed his stay in Japan. On the evening of the same day, I attended the gala dinner. I was impressed by Vice President Osinbajo's presentation on Nigeria's rich culture including sports, dance, and fashion. I again re-acknowledged the beauty of this country.

Next year will be the 60th anniversary of Nigeria's independence. At the same time, it marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Nigeria, and also the 60th anniversary of the opening of the Japanese Embassy in Nigeria. I'm looking forward to further strengthening our friendships.

【TICAD7】



From 28th to 30th August, the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development was held in Yokohama, Japan. We had more than 10,000 participants including 42 African leaders. Among those leaders, we had the special honor of the presence of the President of Nigeria H.E. Muhammadu Buhari. At the opening session, Prime Minister Abe announced Japan's new approaches for human resource development including ABE Initiative 3.0, aiming to train a total of 3,000 people over the next six years, and the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA).

One of the focuses of TICAD7 was business. Representatives of the private sector participated in the plenary for the first time in TICAD's history. There, President Buhari, as well as Mr. Tony Elumelu, made contributions. The number of companies that participated in TICAD7 was twice as much than in TICAD VI.



The outcome document 'Yokohama Declaration 2019' was successfully adopted, and 'Yokohama Plan of Actions 2019' was announced as an accompanying document with three pillars; (1) Acceleration of economic transformation and improving business environment through innovation and private sector engagement; (2) Deepening sustainable and resilient societies; and (3) Strengthening peace and stability.

When it comes to the Japan-Nigeria bilateral relationship, I would like to highlight that it was the first Presidential visit to Japan in 11 years. At a plenary session on Public-Private Business Dialogue, President Buhari stated the forum was coming at a time when his government was implementing homegrown and private sector-driven economic measures. Also, the President described Japan as "a strategic partner" for Nigeria's socio-economic development and invited Japanese investors to Nigeria's major sectors. During the bilateral meeting between President Buhari and Prime Minister Abe, Prime Minister Abe supported President Buhari's efforts on the economy, anti-corruption and counterterrorism. The Prime Minister also announced; (1) the establishment of a "Japan-Nigeria Business Facilitation Council" to further strengthen the two countries' trade and investment relations; (2) his intention to support the Center for Strategic Research and Studies of the National War College for the improvement of the security situation with a grant of \$300,000; and (3) his intention to provide support for the improvement of countermeasures for infectious diseases, with a grant assistance around two billion Japanese yen.



I'm sure that our relationship will further strengthen through those multi-level supports.

【Ceremonies of the Accession to the Throne】

As I mentioned in the previous edition in April, Japan entered into the new era *REIWA* as His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince acceded to the Throne on 1st May 2019 after the abdication of His Majesty the Emperor on 30th April. *REIWA* is officially translated as "Beautiful Harmony". In this regard, we will have a ceremony, called *Sokui no rei* in Japanese, on 22 October in which the enthronement is officially proclaimed

and the representatives from home and abroad express their felicitations. We are expecting to have around 200 foreign heads of state and other dignitaries for the ceremony (An ensuing “celebration” parade is re-scheduled due to the heavy damage caused by the recent typhoon.). In addition to the Enthronement Ceremony, another upcoming key ritual is the *Daijosai*, Grand Thanksgiving Rite, which is the first ceremonial offering of rice by the newly enthroned Emperor. His Majesty the Emperor carries out *Shinjosai*, a ceremonial offering to the deities by the Emperor of newly-harvested rice in which the Emperor prays for the peace and prosperity of Japan and its people, every year. *Daijosai*, however, is the very first rite, therefore a once in a lifetime event for the Emperor.

Taking this opportunity, please allow me to briefly touch upon the Japanese Emperor system. It is said that the first Emperor was the Emperor Jimmu in 660 B.C.. Since the era of the first Emperor Jimmu, miraculously, the succession to the Imperial Throne has been seamlessly carried out until today, for more than 2600 years. This is the longest monarchy in the world. Emperors had been figureheads for a long time over the course of history. The status of emperor was considered an inviolable living god in the period between the 19th century and the end of the war in 1945. After World War II, it became the symbol of Japan without any political power under the current constitution.

【Upcoming events】

Keeping up the current momentum, I will spare no effort to further strengthen our bilateral relations. Now my embassy is working toward launching a business facilitation council.

From 1st to 10th November, Lagos international trade fair will be held. I’m going to attend the first day for the opening ceremony as well as the opening of the Japan pavilion. The Japan pavilion made a great success last year and there are more Japanese companies joining this year.

I’m also excited about the cultural event called African international film festival (AFRIFF), which will take place in Lagos from 10th- 16th November. Thanks to the huge contribution of Ms. Chioma Ude, CEO of AFRIFF, Japanese animated films will be screened for the first time in its history during the event. I strongly recommend you to join the exciting festival and watch Japanese films as well as many other interesting movies from all over the world.



【In Closing】

For the next edition, I will report to you about the events in Lagos mentioned above as well as Japan’s National Day reception, celebrating His Majesty the New Emperor’s birthday, coming in February next year. As

you know, we will have big events to celebrate in 2020 such as the Tokyo Olympics & Paralympics and the 60th anniversary.

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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