

National Day of Zimbabwe

PUBLICITY

Zimbabwe — beyond the limit, in unity, peace and development

By **Stewart Nyakotyo**

Ambassador of the Republic of Zimbabwe

On this auspicious occasion of the 44th anniversary of the Republic of Zimbabwe's National Day, I would like to extend warm greetings from the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, His Excellency Dr. Emerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, and the people of Zimbabwe, to Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress, the members of the Imperial family, and the government and people of Japan.



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This year marks the 44th anniversary of Zimbabwe's independence from British colonial rule, which came after a protracted armed struggle against the settler administration. On April 18, 1980, the Union Jack was lowered, signaling the end of more than 100 years of colonial rule and the founding of Zimbabwe, a significant milestone in the achievement of majority rule and the establishment of democracy.

The 2024 Independence Celebrations are appropriately titled "Zim@44: Unity, Peace, and Development towards Vision 2030." The theme serves as a poignant reminder of Zimbabwe's route to independence, which was defined by togetherness, collaborative effort, and determination. It is a call to recognize previous sacrifices, while working togeth-

er to create a future of wealth, peace, growth and prosperity. Zimbabwe's development objectives are contained within Vision 2023, which aims to transform the country into an upper medium-income economy by 2030, with less income inequality and a strong middle class.

Zimbabwe's economy, anchored by the National Development Strategy (NDS1), a strategy for achieving Vision 2030, has recovered since the COVID-19 pandemic, and economic activity has increased despite global shocks. The World Bank recently acknowledged Zimbabwe as one of the fastest-growing economies in the 16-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 2021, 2022 and 2023. These growth patterns were driven by ongoing expansion in agricultural output, elevated commodity prices, and a rebound in mining sector production, which has seen Zimbabwe become one of the largest exporters of lithium.

The NDS1 has underpinned the economic progress of recent years. It aims to achieve sustained and inclusive economic growth, leading to increased employment opportunities and reduced poverty; to improve infrastructure, particularly in transport, energy, water and ICT; to support economic development and enhance the quality of life; to transform the agricultural sector to ensure food security, increase productivity, and enhance rural livelihoods; and to improve access to quality education, health care and social protection, leading to improved health.

Japan has continually supported



Zimbabwe's economic and social development projects since the country gained independence. I wish to express my gratitude to the Japanese government for this ongoing support. I am convinced there will be numerous opportunities for further cooperation once Japanese official development assistance (ODA) to Zimbabwe is reactivated and more Japanese private-sector enterprises participate actively in bilateral trade and investment activities.

Zimbabwe is a country with enormous natural resources, a stable business climate, well-developed infrastructure, strong mining, agricultural and tourism sectors, a competent workforce, and a plethora of other advantages that make it easy for investors to establish operations. I would like to encourage Japanese businesses to take advantage of these resources to form collaborations throughout supply and value chains.

I am pleased that Zimbabwe's relations with Japan have been characterized by strong collaboration in a variety of areas, including agriculture,

mining, education, infrastructure development, sports and culture. In the health sector, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has offered technical assistance through the 5S Kaizen TQM Approach.

In the field of road infrastructure enhancement, Japan has extended a \$17.4 million (¥2.389 billion) grant for the upgrade of the North-South Corridor, a key trunk road connecting neighboring countries to the south and north of Zimbabwe. The North-South Corridor is an important international trunk road for Zimbabwe's trade with bordering nations as well as regional trade, and the African Union predicts it will become one of the continent's busiest transport corridors by 2040. The project seeks to strengthen commerce, regional integration and connectivity while also supporting socioeconomic growth.

I am thankful for Japan's agricultural cooperation, with the country having extended support to many projects, including irrigation development. In 2023, Japan began helping turn Zimbabwe into a rice producer by introducing the New Rice for Africa (NERICA) rice type, with the support of JICA. This initiative is significant because it complements the government's efforts to promote nutrition and food security, while also facilitating rural development.

The 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo, which seeks to host 150 Bureau of International Exposition member countries and 25 international organizations under the theme "Designing Future Societies for Our Lives," and which is to be held from

April 13 to Oct. 13, 2025, will be yet another opportunity for Zimbabwe to strengthen its cooperation with Japan and to showcase to the world its achievements in priority areas chosen by the country. On March 28 this year, Zimbabwe's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Hon. Frederick M. Shava, unveiled the country's logo and theme for the Osaka-Kansai Expo, titled "Zimbabwe: Beyond the Limit Expo 2025 Osaka."

I am glad that the number of Japanese tourists visiting Zimbabwe is increasing, signaling a growth in people-to-people exchanges. Last month, Zimbabwe received a group of students from various Tokyo universities who are members of Millennium Promise Japan (MPJ), a non-profit that supports African development and seeks to raise awareness of the continent among Japa-

nese citizens. The students' familiarization tour included visits to Zimbabwe's major tourist attractions in Harare, Bulawayo and Hwange and to the iconic Victoria Falls, as well as experiences with the country's culture, music, cuisine and history.

Arigatou gozaimasu.

Tatenda!!

Siyabonga!!

Congratulations

to the People of
the Republic of Zimbabwe
on the Anniversary of
Their Independence



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