

SOUTH AFRICAN FREEDOM DAY

S. Africa celebrating 14 years of freedom

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Our economic relations continue to go from strength to strength. Japan was South Africa's top export partner in 2007. South Africa exports primary products, including base metals and agricultural products, as well as manufactured goods, such as automobiles, to Japan while importing technology-intensive goods from Japan. A significant percentage of South Africa's fresh agricultural produce and processed products such as citrus, canned deciduous fruits, fruit juices and health teas, such as rooibos, are exported to this market. An important change in the nature of exports to Japan can be discerned with a large increase in motor vehicles being exported from South Africa to Japan. Japanese investments into South Africa are mostly in the automotive, metal and chemical sectors. Two of the major Japanese automotive makers assemble selected models in South Africa for world supply. An increase in production of vehicle exports from our country has encouraged further opportunities for investment in the automotive component sector.

Masaki Miyaji, who is corporate advisor to Mitsubishi Corp. and visiting senior adviser at the Japan International Cooperation Agency's Institute for International Cooperation and Japan's representative on South African President Thabo Mbeki's International Investment Council, was inaugurated as South Africa's honorary consul for Hokkaido in October 2007. Katsuhito Nakagawa, vice chairman of the board of Toyota Motor Corp. and South Africa's honorary consul in Nagoya, continues to play a crucial role in expanding our economic interactions with the Chubu region.

Intl ties and Africa agenda

South Africa started its inaugural term of duty as a nonpermanent member of the U.N. Security Council in January 2007. This month, it holds the revolving presidency of the Security Council. One of South Africa's main Security Council priorities is to strengthen cooperation between the UNSC and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

On the occasion of the UNSC High-Level Debate on Peace and Security, held at the United Nations on April 16, President Mbeki stated: "The African Union has shown commitment to resolve African conflicts. The operationalization of the AU Peace and Security Council and the continental early warning systems, postconflict reconstruction and development, the Panel of the Wise and the African standby force are clear indications of this commitment and the basic architecture for addressing peace and security issues on the con-

continent." He also remarked that the availability of necessary and predictable resources remained the most important constraint that limits Africa's capacity to give effect to these commitments and help resolve its own conflicts. He further stated that the issue of funding regional peacekeeping operations is central to defining and streamlining the relationship between the United Nations and the African Union. President Mbeki welcomed the proposal of the U.N. secretary general to establish an AU-U.N. panel of distinguished people to consider in depth how to finance and support peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organizations. He emphasized that Africa's challenges are multidimensional and cannot be addressed in isolation. Matters of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacekeeping are inextricably linked to the achievement of sustainable social and economic development.

South Africa has made a number of political interventions that have generally contributed to peace, stability and security in several countries on the African continent and beyond. South African peacekeepers are involved in missions in African countries, such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sudan. South Africa will continue to work with its regional partners in the DRC, as well as Burundi, the Comoros and Sudan in particular, to ensure that the peace and stability thus far attained, translates without pause into concerted action for economic reconstruction and social development.

South Africa is a strong supporter of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Africa Union's socioeconomic development program, which aims to achieve sustainable development and the eradication of poverty from the African continent. We will continue to work with the rest of our continent and our development partners to speed up the implementation of the NEPAD programs, notably for infrastructure development on the continent. We will continue to work with African countries toward promoting good political and economic governance and strengthening institutions such as the Pan African Parliament and the regional economic communities, of which the Southern African Development Community coordinates our particular region. The Development Bank of Southern Africa coordinates regional development programs.

TICAD IV and G-8

The TICAD initiative was launched by the Japanese government in 1993 at a time when the interests of the world's major powers were shifting away from Africa toward Eastern Europe and elsewhere. Since 1993, Africa has be-

come one of Japan's major focuses in foreign policy, together with Asia and the Middle East. Since that time, steady progress has been made in terms of the solidarity between Japan and Africa. As G-8 host in 2000, Japan was the first G-8 country to invite African leaders to participate in a G-8 summit meeting.

In 2001, former Prime Minister Yoshino Mori became the first serving Japanese prime minister to visit Africa, and in his policy speech delivered in South Africa, he declared, "There will be no stability and prosperity in the world in the 21st century unless the problems of Africa are resolved." TICAD is premised on African ownership, through the African Union, NEPAD, and a global partnership.

The priorities of TICAD IV are: Boosting economic growth in Africa; strengthening support in order to make the currently strong African economic growth self-sustaining in areas including trade and investment, infrastructure development, and agriculture; ensuring "human security" assistance to help achieve the MDGs and consolidation of peace, as well as enhanced support for democratization; addressing environmental issues and climate change; supporting efforts to address environmental issues and assist adaptation efforts, in light of the fact that Africa is the most vulnerable continent to climate change; mobilizing knowledge and resources of the international community and endogenous knowledge institutions in Africa.

In boosting economic growth in Africa, Japan is handing over to African countries lessons learned from Asian development. It has been recognized that agriculture is the backbone of African economies, and thus support is being given to raise agricultural productivity so that Africa can cut its reliance on imported food. Infrastructure development is proceeding, with funding for regional projects going through the African Development Bank and NEPAD. Facilitation of investments by Japanese companies in Africa is being provided through JBIC. Japan is dedicated to helping African countries achieve the MDGs. All Africans are truly appreciative of the Japanese government and the country's institutions that have created a unique institutional framework for partnering African nations in the continent's development. Africa and South Africa are thus in a distinctively fortunate position with regard to TICAD IV.

We have much to celebrate at home and with our friends and supporters in Japan. As I am nearing the end of my term in Japan, I wish success to our ever-expanding relationship and thank you all for walking with us on the road toward a brighter future.

Business playing key role in country's steady growth

By Masaki Miyaji

South African Honorary Consul in Hokkaido

It is my pleasure to congratulate the government and people of South Africa on the occasion of their 14th Freedom Day. I lived in South Africa for 12 years and always have fond memories of the people and the country.

Mitsubishi Corp. has many diverse business interests in South Africa, and we have over a long period of time been engaged in profitable business in the country. Since the country became a democracy in 1994, the leaders of the new democratic South Africa have strived to expand economic growth and have maintained investor-friendly policies.

The record of the South African government in alleviating poverty while keeping prudent financial policies is widely respected by the international community. I have worked closely with President Mbeki and his Cabinet in creating a conducive environment for investment.

During this "Year of Africa" in Japan, Africa's development agenda will be emphasized with the hosting of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in

Miyaji is a member of the International Investment Council of President Thabo Mbeki and corporate adviser to Mitsubishi Corp.

Japanese keen to see S. Africa

By Bradley Brouwer

Country Manager
South African Tourism, Japan

The outbound travel market from Japan has shrunk worldwide since May last year and yet South Africa managed to attract 32,000 Japanese visitors in 2007. South Africa is a prime holiday destination for people from all over the world—there were 9.2 million visitors to the country from abroad in 2007.

As South Africa will host soccer's Con-

federations Cup in 2009 and the World Cup in 2010, all eyes are on the country and the tourist numbers are continuing to grow year on year.

South African Tourism is running a competition for all Japanese travelers who have visited South Africa to upload their pictures to the www.pictureperfect.jp Web site for a chance to win many prizes, including two business class tickets to South Africa. This competition started on April 1 and will end on Oct. 31. Winners will be announced in February 2009 at a media function.

Yokohama on May 28-30 and at the Group of Eight Toyako summit in July.

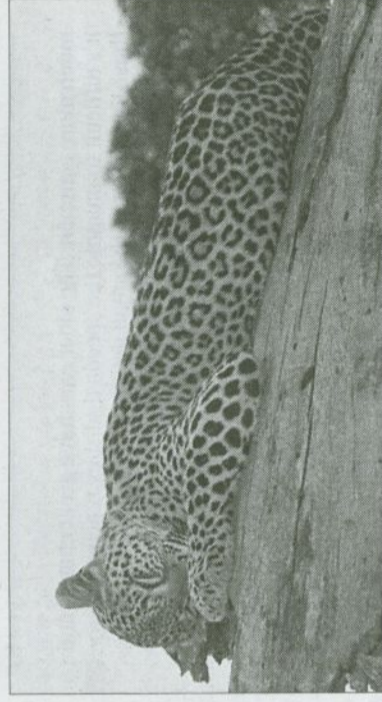
President Mbeki has made an important contribution to conflict resolution in the region and in the development and implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. President Mbeki recently chaired the U.N. Security Council High-level Debate on Peace and Security that discussed measures to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations and regional organiza-

tions, in particular the African Union, in New York.

The government and people of South Africa are striving to make their country a success. South African Ambassador to Japan Ben Ngubane has been making a concerted effort to strengthen economic, political, cultural and people-to-people relations between the two countries. I, therefore, encourage Japanese business to further explore opportunities to expand their business ties with South Africa.

Links

The Embassy of the Republic of South Africa: <http://www.rsatk.com/>
South African Tourism: <http://www.southafrica.net/satourism/>



Courtesy of South African tourism

A leopard at one of South Africa's game reserves

Congratulations
on South African
Freedom Day

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