

Speech by H.E. Mr. Ryoichi Horie,
The Ambassador of Japan to Sudan
On the Occasion of the National Day Reception
December 4, 2013 at the Ambassador's Residence

●H.E. Dr. Issa Bashari Muhammed, Minister of Science and Communication,

●H.E. Dr. Hassan Abdel-Gader Hilal, Minister of Environment, Forest and Urban Development,

●H.E. Mr. Idriss Mohammed Abdel-Gader, State Minister of the Presidency,

●H.E. Dr. Al-Juzouly Dafaallah, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Sudan

Your Excellencies Ambassadors,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Evening.

1. Beginning

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to you all for attending our national day reception, marking the 80th birthday of His Majesty the Emperor Akihito. Also, my heartfelt appreciation is due to H.E. Dr. Issa Bashari Muhammed, Minister of Science and Communication, for taking the time from his busy schedule and honoring this occasion with his presence as a representative of the Government of Sudan.

2. 12 State Visits

Since my arrival to Sudan as the Ambassador of Japan in May 2012, I have visited 12 states of this country to follow up the projects funded by the Government of Japan and Japanese NGOs and to hold a series of dialogues with the state governors and local residents on how to strengthen our relationship. My trips to the states have never stopped. I have made 3rd visits to the States of Kassala, River Nile, Gezira and 2nd visits to Northern State and Gedaref State this year.

3. Our Aid Philosophy

Japan is implementing a variety of projects all over Sudan. I must stress that there is no charity work among the Japanese projects, and all these projects are implemented in joint cooperation with Sudanese counterparts who are undertaking self-help efforts. In other words, our projects are the fruits of mutual trust and joint efforts between Japan and Sudan in the fields of agriculture, water, vocational training, education, health, environment and many other fields.

4. Strategic Importance of Sudan

Sudan plays an extremely important role in maintaining the peace and stability of Africa. I sincerely hope that Sudan contributes to Africa and the World through maintaining good relationships with its neighbors and other foreign countries and through solving various issues such as the Darfur issue, as well as successfully implementing its economic reform programmes.

5. Sudanese Traditional Culture

Sudan fascinates me with its great expanses of land, profoundly diverse peoples, cultures, and nature. Throughout this entire year, Sudan has shown me so many different faces of its culture wherever I visited. I have listened to lively music and enjoyed dancing with local people. I was especially astonished by very energetic Misseriya dances when I joined Misseriya dancers in North Kordofan State.

I have also enjoyed local Sudanese food very much. In North Kordofan State, I had delicious ram meat with hot spices or “Shatta”. In Eastern states, I tasted the intense flavor of a meal of deep-fermented fish, “Fasikh” with “Ashida”. In Northern State, I enjoyed the much more extreme scent and stronger taste of “Muluha” with “Gorassa”. Moreover, in Darfur I ate fermented leaves with a strong smell, called “Kawal”. Two days after having “Kawal”, I met the Foreign Minister Ali Karti and he asked me with concern, “Ambassador, is your stomach OK?” I answered “Yes, Minister, because I had excellent “Tabaldy” juice together with the “Kawal”.

6. Japan-Sudan Sports Exchange

I strongly believe that sports can play an important role in deepening the relationship between our countries. As a tangible reflection of my belief, a Japanese diplomat has bravely challenged Sudanese wrestles six times at the Haj Youssef Wrestling Ring. Indeed, the Japanese diplomat “Muro” had lost every single match, nonetheless, his fighting spirits impressed all the audience. MURO’s

challenges witnessed wide international press and media coverage including the Japanese mass media and the BBC in the United Kingdom.

In addition, last week, I signed a grant agreement to provide sports materials and music instruments to one of the largest youth centers in Khartoum, Saggana Youth Center. I strongly believe that Japanese-Sudanese cultural exchange will continue to accelerate through these activities and cooperation.

On another note, Japan has obtained the honor to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo. I strongly hope that Sudan will field wrestlers and other athletes to participate in the Tokyo Olympic Games and win gold medals.

7. Next project in Sudan

As I mentioned earlier, Japan has been supporting Sudan in a wide range of fields. Very recently, we have ventured into the area of waste disposal management in Sudan. Under the slogan of “Beautiful Sudan, Beautiful Khartoum”, I am determined to cooperate with my Sudanese counterparts to eventually make the city of Khartoum the most beautiful and tidiest city not only in Sudan but also on the whole African continent.

Towards that purpose, Japan has dispatched environmental experts to Sudan and is planning to provide a large number of garbage trucks to work in Khartoum State from the coming year on. I promise you all that I will exert my maximum and sincerest efforts in order to address the waste disposal management in this country together with my Sudanese counterparts.

8. End

As I close my remarks, allow me to reiterate that as a friend and an equal partner of Sudan, Japan continues working towards this country's peace, stability and development, hand in hand with the people of Sudan. Last, but not least, I would like to once again express my gratitude to you all and wish your good health and happiness.

Thank you very much. Shukran Jazeelan.

(End)