



New Year message from Mr SHIBATA Hironori
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of Japan to Federal Democratic Republic of
Ethiopia

On Ethiopian New Year's Day, I would like to send my best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous Addis Ababa for all the people in Ethiopia, on behalf of the Government and people of Japan.

As the Ambassador of Japan to Ethiopia, I always keep in mind my two primary missions. One is to further expand and deepen the longtime cordial relationship, in a wide range of areas such as political, economic, cultural and people to people exchanges etc., between our two countries. The other is to support the peace and prosperity of Ethiopia. I have done some works since the presentation of my credentials to H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, President of Ethiopia, in March, and I will intensify my efforts in this new year to address these missions. I would like to work closely together, for a brighter and more prosperous future, with the Government, private companies and people of Ethiopia, as well as with the international community.

Regarding the enhancement of our bilateral relations, let me underline two crucial elements here: high level officials' exchanges and private business, in particular Japan's investment in this country. I hope that we can see much progress and more achievements in this new year.

First, the exchange of visits by high-ranking officials are extremely important for widening and deepening our bilateral ties and understanding. From the Japanese side, in August of last year, former Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa visited Addis Ababa, had a working lunch with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and held a meeting with former Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen. In July of this year, two groups of Japanese Members of Parliament visited Ethiopia and had discussions regarding our cooperation in the fields of education and health.

From the Ethiopian side, Ambassador Mesganu Arga, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, has already visited Japan twice this year. Ambassador Mesganu held policy dialogues with our State Minister Tsuji Kiyoto to widen and deepen our relations, in addition to having significant discussions with several private Japanese companies in April. He also took part in the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting this August. Also, in April, Prof. Burhanu Nega, the Ethiopian Minister of Education, visited Japan, and exchanged views with top-level universities' officials, as well as Japanese Government and JICA representatives, in the educational cooperation field.

I hope that these meaningful exchanges will evolve into many more higher level mutual visits among ministers, which will then eventually lead to summit-level visits, in particular towards the TICAD9 summit meeting, which Japan will host in August 2025.

Secondly, concerning investment, many private Japanese companies are strongly interested in making new investments in this country. Ethiopia has huge potential with a population of 120 million, the largest economic scale in East Africa, constant economic growth, etc. I would like to encourage Japanese companies to invest in Ethiopia, believing that Japanese investment is beneficial to both Japan and Ethiopia. At the same time, I would like to point out that cooperation by both the Ethiopian government and private sector are also necessary in order to achieve this goal. It is important that ongoing existing large-scale investments by some large Japanese companies are appropriately and properly treated. Many other Japanese companies are carefully observing the experiences and treatment of these companies. This is also the case with Japanese SMEs and start-ups.

In addition, I strongly expect that the new Macroeconomic Reforms by the Ethiopian Government will lead to a further drastic improvement of the business environment for foreign companies in this country, and hope the reform programs move forward smoothly in the new year.

With regard to our support for the peace and prosperity of Ethiopia, Japan has been helping to address humanitarian and development challenges throughout the country over the past decades. Japan will continue and enhance its support for the peace and prosperity of Ethiopia.

In recent years, we have also engaged in supporting DDR, National Dialogue, Transitional Justice, and the recovery and rehabilitation of the northern part of the country. Japan has provided approximately USD 17 million for DDR, National Dialogue and related humanitarian assistance.

In closing, I hope again that our two countries relations become deeper and tighter in this new year. As well, let me take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the people of Ethiopia for kindly welcoming the Japanese community in Ethiopia. Melkam Addis Amet.

SHIBATA Hironori

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to Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia