

Korea-Tanzania: Celebrating 25 Years of Friendship and Cooperation

H.E. SONG Geum-young
Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the United Republic of Tanzania

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and the United Republic of Tanzania. Korea and Tanzania established diplomatic ties on 30th April 1992. For the past quarter-century, the bilateral relationship has developed tremendously politically, economically, in development cooperation, and in people-to-people exchanges, and as a result, the bilateral relationship has transformed into a truly trustworthy partnership.

President Kikwete and Prime Minister Pinda visited Korea in 2006 and 2009 respectively, and Hon. Kang Chang-hee, Speaker of the Korean National Assembly, visited Tanzania in 2013. In December 2016, the Korea-Tanzania Foreign Ministers' Bilateral Meeting took place during the occasion of the 4th Korea-Africa Forum in Addis Ababa.

In 2016, trade between the two countries reached almost \$200 million, and will continue to grow. Economic cooperation and partnership will be strengthened as more and more Korean companies seek opportunities in Tanzania. People-to-people exchanges continue to increase with more than 3,000 visitors visiting each other's country annually.

As part of celebrating the silver anniversary between our two countries, Hon. Amb. Dr. Augustine Mahiga, Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, paid an official visit to Korea on 23rd-24th April 2017. During his visit, the two countries agreed to further strengthen our invaluable partnership in all areas, and Minister Mahiga announced that the Tanzanian Embassy in Korea will open this year at the earliest possible date. H.E. Dr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, already nominated Amb. Matilda Masuka as the new Ambassador to the Republic of Korea this February.

The Korean Embassy in Dar es Salaam plans to host a series of events to celebrate this year's 25th Anniversary. On 28th April, the Embassy co-hosted with the Tanzanian Government 'the Korea-Tanzania 25th Anniversary Cooperation Seminar,' which provided an opportunity to look back at the 25 years of bilateral cooperation and explore areas for future cooperation.

Also, there will be various cultural events hosted or sponsored by the Korean Embassy throughout the year. In May, the annual Korean Film Festival will take place in Dar es Salaam (5-6 May) and Arusha (19-20 May), and a Korean traditional dance performance team will visit Dar es Salaam and hold a performance on 16th May at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Center (JNICC) introducing Korean culture to the Tanzanian public. In October, the Embassy plans to host a Taekwondo tournament to further enhance sports exchanges between Korea and Tanzania. The annual Korean Food Festival will also be held in Dar es Salaam this year.

Under the ashes of the Korean War, the Republic of Korea, as one of the poorest countries in the world with a GDP per capita of merely \$60 in 1948, became one of the major economic powerhouses with a GDP per capita reaching \$28,313 in 2016. Together with the Korean people's hard-working attitude and 'can-do' spirit, and the assistance of the international community, Korea developed from an aid recipient to a donor country in less than half a century. The Korean Government is sharing its experience of economic development with developing countries around the world and spent a total of \$1.92 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) globally in 2016.

In particular, Korea provided more than \$600 million of assistance to Tanzania for the past decade, focusing its development cooperation efforts towards those in greater need for support. Moreover, Korea chose Tanzania as one of its ODA priority partnership countries for the years 2016 to 2020, and will continue to strengthen its development cooperation with Tanzania. The Korea Export-Import Bank has committed more than \$500 million of Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF), and has successfully completed the Malagarasi bridge construction, the vocational training center construction, Dodoma clean water supply system, and the Kilimanjaro-Arusha transmission line. Currently, the Korea Ex-Im Bank is working on the implementation of the new Selander bridge construction project in Dar es Salaam, the construction of Data Centers for the National ID system project, the MUHAS Medical Center project in Mlonganzila, and the Zanzibar irrigation infrastructure project. These projects are the result of collaborative efforts, and also symbolize the remarkable development of the close cooperative relations between our two countries.

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is also strengthening its cooperation with Tanzania in the fields of health, education, and water development. Currently there are around 50 KOICA volunteers working in different areas in Tanzania as teachers, professors, agricultural experts, Taekwondo instructors, etc. The Chanika Healthcare Center for Mothers and Newborns supported by KOICA will open this year. Together with the aforementioned MUHAS Medical Center, which will be the largest and the most state-of-the-art hospital in Tanzania, Tanzania will be able to transform itself into a medical hub in East Africa.

In addition, South Koreans serve Tanzania through voluntary activities in the private sector. There are around 20 Korean NGOs participating in various humanitarian assistance projects in Tanzania, ranging from enabling refugees in Kigoma to become economically independent to developing water wells in primary and secondary schools in rural areas.

Tanzania is the gateway to East Africa and has a population of more than 50 million. The potential for its economic growth is enormous. The Korean Government will continue to work closely with Tanzania so that this potential turns into a reality and Tanzania achieves its Development Vision 2025. Korean companies are currently participating in the Arusha highway construction project and water supply project. A Korean consortium is also participating in the consulting of the Central Standard Gauge railway project from Dar es Salaam to Mwanza. I hope that more Korean companies will come to Tanzania and work shoulder-to-shoulder with their Tanzanian partners in various fields to further enhance Tanzania's economic development.

This year's 25th Anniversary will be a milestone to contribute further to the bilateral cooperation and understanding as our two Governments work together to promote our mutual interests and achievement of our common goals.

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