

October in Kampala is the rainy season. This year, it seems that there are relatively many days when the weather is clear from morning to early afternoon, and rain comes with thunder in the afternoon. It is just the right weather for plant growth.

1. Osaka-Kansai Expo Uganda National Day

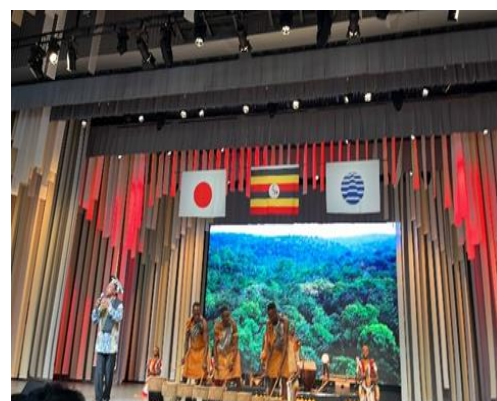
The Osaka-Kansai Expo has closed. Uganda held its National Day on October 8, the final stage of the Expo. Since Uganda's Independence Day is October 9, the day before, the 8th, was chosen. Prime Minister Nabbanja from Uganda, attended. The author also accompanied the Prime Minister and returned to Japan.

It is said that the number of visitors at the end of the Expo was twice that of the opening. The venue was crowded with many visitors.

The National Day ceremony was held at the EXPO National Day Hall from 11:00, and from the Japanese side, Minister of Expo Affairs Yoshitaka Ito attended and gave a congratulatory speech. After Prime Minister Nabbanja's address, a dance group from Kampala performed dances from various regions of Uganda. The venue was full and overflowing with enthusiasm.



Prime Minister Nabbanja's address



Ugandan dance performance

A commemorative luncheon followed. From the Japanese side, Minister Ito, government officials, Expo Association members, local Osaka Prefecture people, and those with deep ties to Uganda from all over Japan attended.



Luncheon

After the luncheon, Prime Minister Nabbanja visited Commons A Hall, where Uganda's exhibits were located. There was also a scene where Prime Minister Nabbanja and Ambassador Kaahwa in Tokyo started dancing together.



Uganda exhibit gorilla



Prime Minister promoting Uganda

In the evening, a return reception hosted by the Ugandan government was held at the Expo venue.

The Osaka-Kansai Expo lasted for six months. The author has vague memories of being taken by his parents to the previous Expo in 1970. This time, I was able to visit by accompanying the Prime Minister of Uganda, my assigned country and it was indeed a valuable opportunity. Although it coincided with the end of the Expo, it was the busiest period and also an

opportunity to introduce Uganda to many people. It can be said that it was a very good Expo for Uganda.

In 2027, the International Horticultural Expo is scheduled to be held in Yokohama. Uganda has already officially announced its participation. It will be a good opportunity for the Japanese people to once again get in touch with Uganda.

2. Prime Minister Nabbanja's visit to JICA, Keidanren, and meeting with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi

The day after the Expo National Day, Prime Minister Nabbanja moved to Tokyo by Shinkansen. At JICA, he met with President Akihiko Tanaka, at Keidanren with Chairman of the Africa Regional Committee Tetsuji Ohashi (Komatsu Special Advisor), Chairman Jun Karube (Toyota Tsusho Senior Executive Advisor), and other related companies, and held talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi (at the time) at the Prime Minister's Office.



Meeting with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi at the Prime Minister's Office



Visit to Keidanren



Visit to JICA

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi visited Uganda as Foreign Minister in August 2023. He expressed his desire to further deepen cooperation with Uganda, which plays an important role in the peace and stability of the East African region, and to continue supporting Uganda's efforts as the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa. Prime Minister Nabbanja expressed gratitude for Japan's support so far and expressed hope for further expansion of investment from Japan. During the visit to Keidanren prior to the meeting with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi, Japanese companies interested in Uganda provided specific explanations about their efforts in Uganda. I believe that Prime Minister Nabbanja's remarks were also encouraged by the statements from the Japanese business community. With JICA President Akihiko Tanaka, specific discussions were held on future cooperation, including ongoing infrastructure development projects.

After completing these three meetings, Prime Minister Nabbanja left Japan on a flight departing from Narita that night. It was a hectic visit, but I think it was a well-balanced and fulfilling visit in terms of politics, economy, and aid.

3. Uganda Business Seminar at UNIDO Tokyo Office

The day after Prime Minister Nabbanja returned home, on October 10, a Uganda Business Seminar was held, hosted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Ugandan Embassy in Tokyo, with Ugandan government officials and business people who accompanied the Ugandan Prime Minister's delegation. The author also had the opportunity to give a presentation on the current situation in Uganda. Prior to the seminar, individual business matching was conducted, and Japanese companies interested in Uganda participated. The seminar had over 60 participants.

At the networking event following the seminar, the author had the opportunity to greet many business people, some of who have already arranged to meet in Kampala, Uganda. Combined with the visit to Keidanren the day before the seminar, I felt that Japanese companies' interest in the East African region and Uganda is definitely increasing.



State of the seminar

(End)