



Support for business operations in South Africa with a new branch office in Johannesburg

Located at the southern end of Africa, and rich in nature and resources, is South Africa. With a population of nearly 50 million people, it is the largest power in the region, and also the FIFA World Cup host nation in 2010. South Africa has seen remarkable economic growth in recent years, and is a large market where further infrastructure-centered development can be expected in the future. A branch office was established in the economic heartland of Johannesburg in June, 2009, staffed by one manager from Japan and two local employees.

The branch manager of the Johannesburg Branch Office, Isao Deki, shared his insight on contemporary South Africa and business activities.



The modern and beautiful town of Johannesburg, the heartland of economic activity in South Africa.

Q. What kind of development is South Africa witnessing now?

A. As one of the leading producers of gold and platinum, South Africa's economic base is in its mineral resources. The economy of South Africa more than doubled in scale in the past ten years. The country's GDP constitutes over 20% of the economic value of the entire African continent and about 40% of the sub-Saharan economies. The country has advancing infrastructure and expectations are that there is still much room for development, so it really is at a midway point in enormous growth.

Q. What activities is the Johannesburg Branch Office involved in?

A. It handles consulting and support for the full range of MHI business, including things like nuclear power and power generation systems in the energy and environment-related business, and motor graders and forklift trucks in the mass and medium-lot manufactured machinery business. In addition, we are also devoting energy to information gathering to give further momentum to future overseas developments and order intake.

Q. Have you had any struggles with cultural differences?

A. Something I find I am often telling myself since moving here is the phrase "Be patient." Things over here move at a different pace than they do in Japan, which I often find perplexing. But we manage to get our work done by keeping the lines of communication open.

Q. Having lived here now, what do you feel the charm of South Africa is?

A. On my days off, I go to see the animals living in the National Parks: lions, elephants and rhinoceroses and the like, and I also enjoy visiting the wine-producing areas. I believe it's like a lot of the people who move here say — this is one of the most livable countries in the world, provided you take care with respect to personal safety. The South Africa's market has a promising future — one that our office hopes to make a contribution to.



Staff at the Johannesburg Branch Office. From the left: branch manager Deki, and the local employees (driver and director for administration)



Sign boards promoting the FIFA World Cup can be seen here and there around the town. The competition has great significance for all Africa in the face of new progress.



A gumbboot dance was performed at the opening ceremony. The dance is one that originated among South African mine workers, and provided a bright start for the office.

