

Provisional translation

The Africa that Joins in Partnership with Japan is Brighter Still

Address by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, at the Opening Session of the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V)

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I would like to begin my remarks today with my most heartfelt welcome to the African heads of state and government here today. I have been eagerly awaiting this opportunity to talk together with you about African development over these next three days.

On behalf of the TICAD Co-organizers--the African Union Commission, the United Nations, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme--I hereby call this Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development to order.

1. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the OAU/AU

My distinguished colleagues, this year marks the 20th anniversary of the launch of the TICAD process as well as the golden jubilee since the

founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU). While the journey has not been smooth, you all have done an admirable job in having come this far.

It was 1963 that African countries becoming independent one after the other founded the OAU, harbouring great expectations.

The following year, Japan hosted the Olympic Games. Ethiopian runner Abebe Bikila accomplished the outstanding achievement of winning two Olympic marathons in succession, enlightening the public about Africa's power.

Then, in perfect concurrence with the day of the closing ceremony, Northern Rhodesia became independent as Zambia.

My friends, the first time the flag of newly founded Zambia was

brandished to the world was at the closing ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics.

Fifty years have passed since that time. Africa had numerous hardships to overcome, including setbacks in development projects, accumulated debt, poverty, conflicts, and apartheid.

However, Japan has maintained its faith in the future of Africa. In the 1990's when the international community had almost forgotten Africa amidst the post-Cold War circumstances, Japan alone believed in the development of Africa, and thereby launched the TICAD process.

Through TICAD, Japan has consistently promoted the importance of self-help and self-reliance. The TICAD concept also places an unwavering emphasis on growth.

The idea that poverty can be overcome through growth is something that has been axiomatic for Japanese right from the start. It is also because we never doubted Africa's potential.

Ardent calls for self-help and self-reliance and for an emphasis on

growth are now surging up from Africa, whose vigorous progress is ongoing even now. Seeing this, I am proud to state that TICAD has been correct in the way it has progressed, and that the future that TICAD envisioned is now about to be realized.

Let us take this opportunity to extend once more our congratulations on the path the OAU and later the AU walked down these 50 years, as well as on TICAD's journey over the last 20 years. I would like to request, if I may, that we all rise and give a round of applause together in recognition of them.

In addition, I would like to ask for your support towards the holding in 2020 of another Tokyo Olympics, which had once been the stage on which the rise of Africa was made known to the world. I warmly welcome your applause for this as well.

2. A 3.2 trillion yen assistance package

What Africa needs now is private-sector investment. "PPP," or

“public-private partnership,” leverages that investment.

If we recognize this as a new reality, then it will be necessary to revolutionize the way of providing assistance to Africa. How shall we revolutionize it? I will offer an answer to that, but first, I shall start with the total amount.

Over the next five years, Japan will support African growth through public and private means of 3.2 trillion yen (approximately 32 billion USD), including ODA of around 1.4 trillion yen and other public and private resources of around 16 billion dollars. Also, we will underwrite a maximum of 2 billion dollars of trade insurance.

Through the preparatory process for this Conference, we asked the countries of Africa what areas should receive the greatest emphasis at present.

The responses were the same as always--further development of infrastructure, business-savvy human capacities, health, and agriculture. The key to all of these invariably lies in capacity development. This is an area in which Japan wishes to bring its assistance resoundingly into play.

3. 650 billion yen of infrastructure investment

First, with regard to infrastructure development, Japan will provide 650 billion yen (approximately 6.5 billion USD), over the next five years.

This will be allocated to developing the infrastructure that Africa itself deems necessary and plans itself. We will rocket forward in further developing first of all “international corridors” that link inland areas with the coasts, and also power grids.

4. Fostering 30 thousand “business-savvy individuals”

Next, regarding human resource development, the important point is that haphazardly enhancing vocational training does not lead to jobs.

It is necessary to cultivate human resources that truly match labour market demand. I would like to advocate for “education with an exit.” We will aim to foster the human resources needed by companies in

the local areas, particularly Japanese companies.

Let us move one step further.

I have faith that Africa's promising young people will soon play the leading roles in businesses that connect Japan and Africa. In light of this, at this juncture today I would like to announce "The ABE Initiative: The Africa Business Education Initiative for the youth."

Under this initiative, we will offer undergraduate and graduate education to young people from Africa who come to study in Japan, and in addition we will simultaneously provide opportunities to work as interns at Japanese companies. This will be at a scale of 1,000 students over five years.

Together with the ABE Initiative, over the next five years, we will set about cultivating "business and industry savvy human capacities" that will lead to employment for 30 thousand individuals, making use of the human resources development already being implemented by JICA and by HIDA--The Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Association--while also utilizing the Japanese

Government Scholarship program and so on.

Japan will also construct "hubs for human resource development" at 10 locations in the field in Africa, including in Ethiopia and Senegal. We will send experts in vocational training to these hubs.

A superb precedent already exists at the "Toyota Kenya Academy."

Toyota Motor Corporation has built a school in Kenya with an expansive campus. At these facilities, through a cooperative arrangement with JICA, the school trains technicians not only in automobile mechanics but also construction machinery and farm machinery. This is a school for developing professional human resources operating truly at Japanese standards.

We will also invite administrative officials from Africa to Japan in order to create essential systems for advancing public-private partnerships. In this way we will enjoy an interactive relationship between Japan and Africa at all times.

5. Making universal health coverage part of the “Japan Brand”

Next is the area of health. In Japan we have built up a system in which anyone can readily visit a hospital even for minor health concerns. I would like to utilize Japan’s system and experiences in Africa. We will promote health care that everyone can access--in other words, “universal health coverage,” or “UHC.”

I would like to introduce a good example that is underway in Ghana. It is a story about nutrition, which are necessary for the life of mothers and children.

The story itself goes back some ten years, when Japan started cooperation to construct small maternity centres in Ghana. Behind the examination room there is a small living space where a publicly qualified midwife is in residence. This is to enable the midwife to protect the health of the mother while also being able to respond in a timely way during childbirth.

We also started classes for expecting mothers. These are a type of awareness raising activity in which we bring pregnant women together to explain to them various things

they should be aware of. Female experts dispatched as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, or JOCV, and Japanese NGOs have kept these efforts going, all through their hard work.

It captured the attention of a company: Ajinomoto, which is one of Japan’s major food-related corporations. When it celebrated its 100th anniversary in operation, it conducted an open search within the company for some sort of project that would open new markets while also positively contributing to society. The project selected was to make supplements in Ghana for weaning babies.

I have right here some of that baby food supplement. It is called “KOKO Plus.” This is a sample of it.

“KOKO” is a traditional Ghanaian food for weaning babies. By adding nutrients to it, this supplement helps babies’ weights to increase while bringing smiles to the faces of Ghana’s mothers and fathers.

What is truly commendable about this is that it was developed together with a local university. To broaden the reach of this project, not only JICA but also USAID became involved.

I would like to advance universal health coverage as part of Japan's diplomatic strategy through a true public-private partnership between private sector entities and the government. In the future I intend to make UHC part of the "Japan Brand."

6. Expanding "Aikawa"

Finally, I would like to take up the area of agriculture. For Africa, food scarcity and nutritional issues are long-standing challenges. While each country has been making efforts to boost food production, our goal lies one step beyond that. We would like to transition away from agriculture "that enables the farmer to eat" to agriculture "that enables the farmer to earn money."

At this juncture I would like to introduce a guest to you. Mr Aikawa, please stand up. This is Mr Jiro Aikawa.

When Aikawa-san was young he worked in Tanzania as an agricultural instructor volunteer with the JOCV. Since that time, he has been continuously involved in African agriculture.

The person who succeeded in doubling the incomes of 2,500 farmers in Kenya was none other than this Aikawa-san.

Africa's agriculture will not become strong unless Africa's women are first made strong, and unless Africa's agriculture is made robust, Africa itself will not become robust. This is Mr Aikawa's conviction.

What Aikawa-san did was to get African women engaged in agriculture to take an approach of confirming with their own eyes what the consumer market is calling for, while thinking always of what they can make that can be sold successfully.

The worry of "making something only to find it is unsalable" can be cancelled out by "making something that is saleable." Under this method, the women go to small village markets to confirm for themselves what is selling well, and then efficiently make agricultural products with high added-value.

This method of having the farmers themselves think about such matters is currently known as the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment Project, or "SHEP," and it has been arranged in a model

that Japan will in the future promote in 10 countries.

While I think the name “SHEP” is a good one, I would like to propose that we instead call it “Aikawa.”

Aikawa-san, I know. I know that you may think that it was not your effort alone that made it. You may well think that you have done that only because Kenyan people and their government were supportive throughout. I wanted you to rise nonetheless to represent thousands of Japanese who rejoice themselves in working in Africa. Thank you very much. Please take your seat again.

7. Peace and stability forming the foundation for development

While this certainly goes without saying at this time, it is the peace and stability of Africa that comprise all the foundations for Africa’s development.

Japan will in the future focus even more intently on peacebuilding in Africa.

The Japan Self-Defence Forces are already making strenuous efforts at

this very moment in Djibouti to assist with anti-piracy efforts and in South Sudan to assist with nation-building. In addition, we will cultivate the soil to bring forth peace by strengthening our assistance for the consolidation of peace and our development and humanitarian assistance.

Needless to say, in the future as well, Japan will not let up on its efforts to foster “human security,” which Japan has taken the lead in promoting.

8. Closing remarks: A true partnership

As a final point, I would like to state that Japan has aimed to create a “true partnership” with Africa over the entire course of our relations.

This has meant “thinking together and working together.”

Whether businessmen and women, or young volunteers with the JOCV, Japanese in Africa have been pleased to go into the field where poverty or other challenges are present, just as if they are going in to apply machine oil on a factory shop floor in Japan.

The industry, integrity, discipline, and manners that they embody have led to them winning the unshakable trust of African people over time.

I would like to extend my thanks and also my encouragement to the 734 volunteers with the JOCV currently active in Africa, a number that includes 399 female volunteers, and also to the NGOs active there. It is these people who are the jewels in the crown of Japan's diplomacy.

Japan and Africa have now gone beyond being "good partners" to being more like "co-managers."

We are colleagues and at the same time coworkers. We grow together through our mutual interactions, and through this we have become partners that will bring growth to the world.

In closing I would like to say that I have heard that there have been calls for holding the next TICAD five years from now in Africa, with a view to further strengthening our partnership. However, I find it simply impossible to wait five years.

I would like to state here in front of you, my distinguished colleagues,

that I plan to set foot on African soil at the earliest possible time.

Let us dash forward together, hand in hand, towards a more dynamic Africa. The future of Africa is bright indeed. And yet the Africa that joins in partnership with Japan is brighter still.

I will end my remarks this morning by reconfirming that with all of you. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

And now, I would like to introduce His Excellency Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, Chairperson of the African Union Assembly and Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, who is serving together with me as joint chair of this Conference. Your Excellency Mr. Hailemariam, we look forward to your keynote address.

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