

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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African Union Commission Chairperson Champions Stronger Africa–Japan Cooperation at TICAD9

H.E. Mahamoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), concluded a successful participation and engagements at the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD9), held from August 20–22, 2025, in Yokohama, Japan. His engagement reaffirmed Africa’s strategic vision for a dynamic partnership with Japan and underscored TICAD as a cornerstone for advancing shared prosperity, peace, and sustainable development. Keynote Call for Bold, Innovative Partnerships



At the opening ceremony, Chairperson Youssouf delivered a [keynote speech highlighting the enduring partnership between Africa and Japan](#), anchored in mutual respect and shared priorities. He emphasized the need to co-create transformative solutions in line with Agenda 2063 and TICAD9’s central themes of peace, growth, and inclusivity.

He described the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as a “catalyst of energy, opportunity, and investment,” calling for the mobilization of private capital, acceleration of digital transformation, and expansion of infrastructure and innovation ecosystems.

Strategic Bilateral Engagements

The Chairperson held high-level discussions with Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru, commending Japan’s long-standing role as a trusted partner for Africa’s development. Prime Minister Ishiba reaffirmed Japan’s support for Africa’s strategic priorities, particularly following the African Union’s accession to the G20. Both leaders committed to strengthening cooperation in trade, technology, and knowledge exchange, and to advancing policy dialogues under the TICAD framework.

In talks with the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Chairperson Youssouf explored avenues for enhanced collaboration in peace and security, infrastructure, innovation, and human capital development, stressing the importance of leveraging Japan’s technical expertise for Africa’s transformation.

The AUC Chairperson also met with Muktar Diop, Managing Director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Their discussions centered on the role of

private capital in Africa's economic transformation, including investments in infrastructure development, agriculture, green transition, and digital innovation. Both leaders agreed to intensify AU–IFC collaboration to unlock financing for African entrepreneurs and scale up opportunities in priority sectors.

Throughout TICAD9, AU Commissioners and senior officials took an active role in side events, showcasing Africa's priorities in food systems transformation, climate resilience, energy access, youth empowerment, peace and security, and digital inclusion. These interventions highlighted Africa's ambition not only to transform the continent but also to contribute solutions to global challenges.

Chairperson Youssouf welcomed the [adoption of the Yokohama Declaration](#), which reaffirms Africa–Japan cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, trade, digital transformation, agriculture, peace and security, knowledge transfer, and technology. He stressed that the Declaration reflects the spirit of TICAD: mutual respect, practical collaboration, and shared responsibility for shaping a more equitable global order.

In his closing remarks, Chairperson Youssouf recalled his personal participation in every TICAD since its inception, positioning himself as a custodian of this unique partnership. He underscored that TICAD's legacy is one of trust and consistency and expressed confidence that TICAD9 has opened a new chapter of pragmatic cooperation between Africa and Japan.

Chairperson Youssouf reaffirmed the African Union's determination to advance Africa's Agenda 2063 through strengthened partnerships with Japan and international financial institutions. He called for sustained political will, innovation, and inclusive collaboration to drive Africa's prosperity, noting that the TICAD process remains a vital bridge between Africa and Asia in the pursuit of a peaceful, prosperous, and resilient future.

Note to Editors

About TICAD - This year's TICAD marks a milestone in the African Union's cooperation with Japan, coming 31 years after the inaugural TICAD, which was organized in Tokyo in 1993, with the aim of establishing a new partnership for sustainable African development, grounded in the self-reliance of African countries and the supportive role of development partners, to ensure the co-creation of a better and prosperous world for all, especially for African countries.

About [AU partnerships](#)- The Directorate manages and coordinates the African Union's partnerships with other global entities. It focuses on addressing African needs and aligning partnerships with Agenda 2063. The Directorate collaborates with other AU departments to advance priority programs and projects and identifies areas for cooperation with strategic partners.

For further information,

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