

13 September 2016

Dear Friends,

I hope this e-mail finds you well.

The Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) was held in Nairobi, the Republic of Kenya, on 27-28 August. TICAD was launched in 1993 by the Government of Japan, with the dual objective of promoting high-level political dialogue between Africa and its development partners, and mobilising support in favour of African development initiatives. This was the first TICAD to be held in Africa and the event attracted more than 11,000 participants. Among these were representatives of 53 African countries, partner countries, international and regional organisations, the private sector and civil society.

TICAD VI was co-chaired by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, together with Mr Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya (the host country) and Mr Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad (Chairperson of the Africa Union). Prime Minister Abe also led a business mission to the conference, made up of leaders from 77 organisations, including Japanese businesses and universities.

During the Opening Session, Prime Minister Abe made a keynote address focusing on the promotion of “quality,” “resilience” and “stability” in Africa. As explained by Prime Minister Abe, to these ends, Japan aims to invest 30 billion US dollars in Africa over the next three years, in partnership with the private sector. Key points of the speech are summarised below for your reference.

1. Agenda 2063 and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform

Agenda 2063—the African Union’s programme of action covering the next five decades—outlines the goal of achieving permanent African representation on the UNSC by 2023.

Prime Minister Abe offered his “complete support” for this aim.

2. Launch of the “Japan-Africa Public and Private Economic Forum” as a permanent forum

Members of the Japanese Cabinet, together with top executives from Japan’s major business associations and corporations, will visit Africa once every three years. They will meet with African counterparts to consider ways in which Japanese and African companies can deepen their engagement.

3. Development of Quality Infrastructure in Africa

At the G7 Summit recently held in Ise-shima, Japan, the participating countries were united in their determination to promote the development of “quality infrastructure” around the world. In this connection, Japan will appropriate 10 billion US dollars to Africa over the next three years to build infrastructure. A portion of this funding will be delivered in cooperation with the African Development Bank.

4. Strengthening of human resources and boosting productivity

Under the “ABE Initiative,” the number of future executives from Africa who have studied in Japan will soon reach one thousand. A new pillar will be introduced to the ABE Initiative, whereby education and training will be provided to 1,500 future foremen and plant managers. In addition, Japan will bring the “KOUSEN” higher education system, which specialises in cultivating engineers, to Africa.

Japan will also cooperate with New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to spread “kaizen”—which enhances productivity and decreases defective goods through the initiatives and ingenuity of people working on the production line—throughout the African continent. Japan and NEPAD will aim to increase by 30 percent the productivity of factories introducing “kaizen.”

5. Public health initiatives

At the G7 Summit, Japan set forth a contribution plan for the field of health. Based on this plan, more than 500 million US dollars will be channelled through organisations such as the Global Fund and the World Bank’s Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility (PEF) to strengthen Africa’s health systems and counter infectious diseases. This plan is anticipated to save the lives of more than 300 thousand people.

In order to promote Universal Health Coverage (UHC), Japan will select model countries and provide assistance intensively to these states. Thereafter, the model countries will support the further expansion of UHC. Through the initiative, Japan aims to connect two million people with fundamental health services over the next three years.

6. Promotion of peace and Security

Through the cooperation of the Government of Kenya, members of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are currently in the outskirts of Nairobi training military engineering personnel on how to operate earth movers. The deployed personnel are working hard, knowing that after a conflict ends, operation of heavy machinery plays a vital role in nation building.

Finally, the union of two free and open oceans and two continents, Africa and Asia, will provide stability and prosperity to the world. Japan seeks to cooperate with African countries to ensure that the seas connecting the two continents are peaceful and governed by the rule of law.

The full text of the speech is available at the below link.

http://www.mofa.go.jp/afr/af2/page4e_000496.html

In closing, I would like to congratulate the organisers of TICAD VI on a very successful event. I have every confidence that the outcomes of this conference will prove instrumental to strengthening the relations of Japan and Africa—and thereby also provide benefit to the international community as a whole—in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

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Sumio Kusaka

Ambassador of Japan to Australia