

Investment strategies in Africa:

Mitigating risk and maximizing opportunities

by entering the market through Egypt, South Africa and Morocco



Panel discussion moderated by Ms. Ito

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) held an official side event focusing on “Investment strategies in Africa: Mitigating risk and maximizing opportunities” at JICA Yokohama “Kamome” at 10:00 on Saturday, June 1, in collaboration with Baker & McKenzie. Subsequent to a presentation by Ms. Mina Arai-Ito, there was a panel discussion on

investment strategies in Africa by Baker & McKenzie's local representatives in Egypt, South Africa and Morocco.

While recent Africa’s economic growth has attracted more Japanese companies to new business opportunities in Africa, it is true that there has been growing concern over a variety of risks there. This side event was meant to encourage Japanese companies to enter the African market by providing information on the current situation and risks of business opportunities in Africa, in order to review practical investment strategies in doing business in Africa.

In her presentation, Ms. Ito talked about investment strategies, which would minimize risks by establishing regional headquarters in a country with a relatively good business environment and managing business operations on a regional basis, as well as risks and potentials in Africa. Furthermore, the local representatives explained about the situation of their own country including each country’s benefits as a business hub and its investment risks (political situation, local workforce, bribery, etc.). The discussion pointed to the changes in Latin America as an example for comparison in thinking about investment in Africa. Latin America, which used to have higher investment risks, has now been enjoying dynamic business development. The panelists showed their prospects for greater changes in Africa, saying that investment risks had been on the decline in some of the African countries.

It is expected that the discussion at this event will contribute to improving the

management of business risks in Africa by private companies including Japanese ones, and also promoting future business development in Africa. JICA will continue to provide full support in areas where both Africa and Japanese companies share mutual interests.

■ Speakers for this event (The following speakers all belong to Baker & McKenzie.)

- Mina Arai-Ito, Head of the Middle East & Africa Focus Group, Tokyo office
- Mohamed Ghannam, Partner, M&A and Banking & Finance Practices, Cairo office
- Morné van der Merwe, Head of the Corporate and M&A Practices, Johannesburg office
- Wildu du Plessis, Head of the Banking & Finance Practice and Capital Markets Practice, Johannesburg office
- Kamal Nasrollah, Head of the Casablanca office