

JICA's Approach to Industrial Development in Africa



Mekonnen Manyazewal, Minister of Industry, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) held an official side event focusing on “Approach to Industrial Development in Africa” in a conference room at InterContinental Yokohama Grand at 17:30 on June 2. The panelists from Africa included Mekonnen Manyazewal, Minister of Industry, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; and Remigious Makumbe, Director of Infrastructure & Services, the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Secretariat. The panel was also joined by Tomoharu Otake, Deputy Director of African Department, JICA, who made a presentation on the three pillars of JICA’s approach to support for industrial development in Africa; industrial policy dialogues, infrastructure development and human resource development.

Earlier in the afternoon of the same day, there was another side event focusing on academic research of industrial policies and employment of young people and policy proposals. Following what had been discussed at the event, this side event discussed the purposes and characteristics of JICA’s approach which would contribute to diversified industrial structure and job creation through industrial development in Africa, pointing to specific examples of JICA’s projects.

Otake, Deputy Director of African Department, JICA, made a presentation on industrial policy dialogues, wide-area infrastructure development in southern Africa and the One Stop Border Post (OSBP) program based on Japan’s experiences in the “Kaizen” program in Ethiopia, as well as the industrial human resource development initiative announced at TICAD V. In response to his presentation, Ethiopian Minister of Industry Manyazewal emphasized the significance of the government’s ownership in policy-making. He also mentioned JICA’s flexible support tailored to a situation and needs in each country and a pilot project conducted at thirty companies as an example of the Kaizen program. Furthermore, Makumbe, Director of Infrastructure & Services, the SADC Secretariat, stated that all the JICA’s three pillars were critical in providing support for industrial development in Africa, and they shared a common ground with SADC’s policies. He also expressed his expectations for JICA’s efforts including OSBP, which would make great contributions to promotion of the COMESA-ECA-SADC-Tripartite arrangements.

In Africa, the industrial sector has been reducing its share in GDP since the 1980s. An increasing number of people have again paid attention to the significance of industrial development in Africa, in the hope that it would help Africa get away from its economy focusing too much on energy and resource development, and shift to sustainable and inclusive growth through job creation. In order to attract investment and technology transfers from Japanese and other foreign companies, it is necessary to develop the foundation of infrastructure and human resources. The Government of Japan disclosed its policies of support for development of infrastructure and industrial human resources in Africa at TICAD V. JICA will continue to provide support to specific projects, which allow Africa to change its economic structure, based on these policies.

Event Speakers:

- Mekonnen Manyazewal, Minister of Industry, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- Remigious Makumbe, Director of Infrastructure & Services, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat
- Tomoharu Otake, Deputy Director of African Department, JICA