On August 28, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) hosted a high-level panel discussion titled “Africa, toward 2063 and beyond” at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi. The event highlighted the perspectives on the challenges that Africa faces toward achieving inclusive and sustainable development in the coming decades.

As panelists for the discussion, JICA invited Rwandan President Paul Kagame, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina, and Professor Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia University, a Nobel Prize Winner in Economics. At the beginning, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered the opening remarks, and Japanese Senior Vice-Minister of Finance Taku Otsuka gave a speech to conclude the event. The discussion was moderated by JICA President Shinichi Kitaoka.

Following a keynote speech by Mr. Obasanjo, the panelists were introduced by Mr. Kitaoka. Before inviting the panelists to make comments, however, Mr. Kitaoka raised the following key questions to facilitate the discussion:

- What are the challenges, opportunities and strategies for development as Africa moves towards 2063 and beyond? Specifically, what roles should and can youth and women play in achieving inclusive and sustainable development in Africa?
- What can Asia and Africa reciprocally learn from each other? What can and should the two regions do to boost economic, intellectual, and other interactions?
- In what ways can Africa contribute to the future of the global community, not only economically but also in terms of political, social and cultural aspects?
The year 2063, which was included in the event title, will be the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of African Unity, which was superseded in 2002 by the African Union (AU). It is also the target year of “Agenda 2063”, a long-term development vision of Africa adopted in the AU Summit in 2014.

With these questions in mind, the panelists began the discussion. They agreed that, given the heavy reliance that Africa’s economy still has on commodity exports, an economic transformation is key for making growth in Africa more inclusive and sustainable. Building on this common understanding, the panelists discussed ways in which Africa should address the socioeconomic changes occurring in Africa, and the challenges that Africa faces in achieving Agenda 2063 and long-term prosperity.

In concluding the discussion, Dr. Kitaoka summarized as follows: i) TICADVI, the very first TICAD on the soil of Africa, is even more important than the past TICADs as it is supported by stronger ownership of Africa, ii) Africa and JICA tackle together with the various challenges raised in the discussion, iii) To better address to these broad challenges, we need to create common strategies between Africa and Japan, together with powerful and intelligent leaders like those gathering together here today.

Panelists
- Adesina, Akinwumi, President, African Development Bank
- Kagame, Paul, President, Republic of Rwanda
- Obasanjo, Olusegun, former President, Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Sirleaf, Ellen Johnson, President, Republic of Liberia
- Stiglitz, Joseph, Columbia University

Moderator
- Kitaoka, Shinichi, President, JICA

Opening Speech
- Abe, Shinzo, Prime Minister, Japan

Closing Speech
- Otsuka, Taku, Senior Vice Minister of Finance of Japan

Master of Ceremony
- Kato, Hiroshi, Vice-President, JICA