

【Side event of TICAD7】

Sports for Africa

On Aug. 27, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) held a symposium on the role of sports. The event was co-sponsored by the World Bank and the French Development Agency (AFD), with over 150 people in attendance.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Daichi Suzuki, the Commissioner of the Japan Sports Agency, expressed how the power of sports can change peoples' lives, change society, connect the world, and improve people's lives. He also introduced the project, "Sports for Tomorrow" which teaches people the important values that sports bring to more than 100 countries and 10 million individuals through international cooperation and exchange.

Later, Mr. Kpui, the Minister of State from Liberia, discussed the value that sports bring to enable youth in Liberia to succeed in their futures. He also explained that the government has included the promotion of sports into their national development plan.

Mr. Kpui's remarks were followed by Ambassador Dr. Loroupe, a female marathon medalist, who then spoke from her experience from serving as a representative of women from Africa and the leader of the Refugees Team at the Rio Olympic Games. Here, she shared that she strongly believes that the promotion of sports opens the door for women and refugees to the chances for their lives.

Succeeding Ambassador Loroupe, Ms. Takahashi, a women's marathon Olympic gold medalist, spoke about her own experience donating shoes through a project called "Smile Africa" has helped her realize that sports can contribute to better education and improving societies. She emphasized that playing sports encourage children to dream big, while also encouraging adults to create suitable environments for their children to achieve their dreams.

Following the powerful messages made by the two distinguished athletes, Ms.

Habachi from the French Agency for Development, shared how the French Agency has created a platform to promote and initiate the use of sports within development cooperation. She expressed the French Agency is looking into this nexus through collaborations between both the public and private sectors, along with civil society organizations.

For his part, Mr. Kato, the Senior Vice President of JICA, expressed that sports help achieve JICA's objectives of promoting social cohesion; encouraging the inclusion of marginalized groups, including women and persons with disabilities; and supporting physical education, which JICA values as equally important to promoting academic growth and moral education.

In closing, Dr. Ghanem, stated that he is convinced that sports contribute to developing human capital, promoting gender equality and promoting social cohesion.

■ Participants

[Opening Remarks]

Daichi Suzuki, Commissioner of Japan Sports Agency

[Panelists]

Tegla Loroupe, President, Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation (female marathon medalist)

Naoko Takahashi, JICA Official Supporter (female marathon gold medalists at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games)

Trokon T. Kpui, Minister, Ministry of States for Presidential Affairs, Liberia

Laetitia Habchi, Sport and Development Adviser, AFD

Hiroshi Kato, Senior Vice President, JICA

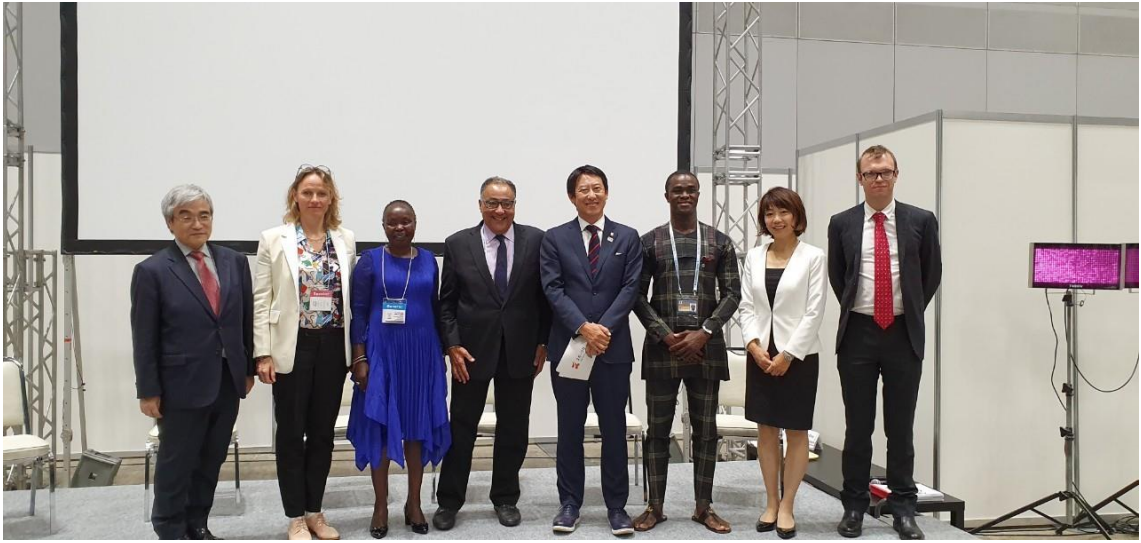
[Moderator]

Robin Harding, Tokyo Bureau Chief, Financial Times

[Closing Remarks]

Hafez Ghanem, Vice President for Africa, World Bank

■ Photos





■ Related SDGs

