

The History and Significance of TICAD



The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) was initiated by Japan in 1993, right after the end of the Cold War. The conference meets for the fifth time this year, marking the twentieth anniversary of the TICAD process. TICAD V this year welcomes the African Union as one of the co-organizers of the conference for the first time.

Africa is blessed with abundant reserves of oil, natural gas, rare metals, and other natural resources. The continent's population is expected to grow by 50 % over the next 20 years, to 1.56 billion. Since 2000, Africa's economies have been growing at an average annual rate of 5%. The working-age population is projected to reach 1.4 billion by 2050, surpassing China and India. With resource development progressing, some are predicting the beginning of an "African century" within the next few decades.

Japan was one of the key players in supporting this African economic development. The first conference, TICAD I, was held in Tokyo in October 1993. This was when the focus of the developed coun-

tries had shifted to former republics of the Soviet Union, coupled with "donor fatigue," when the international community was showing signs of losing interest in Africa and African development. Organized through the cooperation of the United Nations and Global Coalition for Africa, an NGO, the first TICAD attracted participants from 48 African countries, including five heads of state.

The Tokyo Declaration on African Development, adopted at TICAD I, put aid and development in Africa back on the international agenda. At a time of growing Afro-pessimism, when many people were starting to suspect that African countries would never develop no matter how much assistance was provided, Japan's initiative as one of the largest donor countries was a vital part in the efforts to keep the assistance flowing.

A Focus on Human Security (2003)

TICAD II followed in 1998. At this second meeting, the Tokyo Agenda for Action was adopted. The conference agreed on policies and priorities, including concrete

quantitative targets, in three areas: (1) Social development, (2) Economic development, and (3) Good governance, conflict prevention, and post-conflict recovery.

TICAD III, held in 2003, adopted the TICAD Tenth Anniversary Declaration. This set out three development pillars: (1) Consolidating peace, (2) Reducing poverty through economic growth, and (3) Achieving development through grass-roots participation.

For TICAD IV, held in 2008, the venue moved to Yokohama. This meeting took place against a backdrop of a newly vibrant Africa experiencing soaring growth rates of 6%-7%. With development projects buoyant, the gathering was the biggest international conference of its kind ever held in Japan, with more than 3,000 participants including 41 African presidents and prime ministers.

The Yokohama Declaration articulated three main priority areas for international development cooperation: (1) Boosting economic growth, (2) Ensuring human security, and (3) Addressing environmental issues and climate change. At the same

time, the Yokohama Action Plan was adopted to provide a roadmap of specific measures to be implemented. Japan doubled its official development assistance to support the realization of the targets of the action plan.

The TICAD process has played an important part in supporting Africa's transition from a continent mired in stagnation to a place brimming with hope and opportunity. The fact that this international conference has continued to fulfill this important role for 20 years is in itself a remarkable achievement, made possible by the follow-up mechanism, in which ministers from African states meet each year to monitor the pledges made during the TICAD process.

The Target for TICAD V: Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

Many contributing factors have helped to support growth in Africa. These include

high prices for natural resources and commodities, increasing private investment, and political stability following resolution of conflicts. But challenges remain. Efforts must now be made to ensure that recent growth turns into spontaneous and ongoing development. This is the thinking reflected in the basic message of TICAD V, to be held June 1-3 in Yokohama this year: "Hand in hand with a more dynamic Africa: transformation for inclusive and sustainable growth."

The conference has three major aims: establishing structures for a robust and sustainable economy to lessen reliance on primary products, building an inclusive and resilient society with fewer inequalities, and achieving the peace and stability that provide an indispensable foundation for growth.

Ownership is an essential part of the TICAD philosophy. We are convinced that people in Africa are the best qualified to

find solutions for the issues facing Africa. Reflecting this belief, the African Union Commission will join as one of the co-organizers of the conference for the first time this year. This brings the list of organizers to five: the government of Japan, the UN, the UN Development Programme, the World Bank, and the AUC. The aim for this year's conference is to respect African ownership and to work together on plans proposed by partners from African countries.

TICAD I
October 1993

African development reaffirmed as a key task on the international agenda.

TICAD II
October 1998

Agreement reached on key policies and priority actions.

TICAD III
September 2003

A new focus on human security.

TICAD IV
May 2008

Agreement reached on a roadmap of measures to achieve a vibrant Africa.

TICAD V
June 2013

This year's key theme: "Hand in hand with a more dynamic Africa: transformation for quality growth."

Message from JICA President Akihiko Tanaka

Approaches to Inclusive and Sustainable Growth—Encouraging Synnovation—

African economies have steadily achieved average annual growth rates of 5% since the beginning of this century. This growth is expected to continue in the coming years. The current economic growth is, however, largely attributed to the thriving mining sector. The percentage of GDP held by the industrial sector has been declining since the 1980s. As the population grows, youth unemployment will become a serious issue for sustainable growth as well as political stability. Furthermore, recently such threats as terrorism and armed conflict are growing, especially in the Sahel region of West Africa. These threats could hamper economic growth. To make the current growth sustainable and more inclusive, the keys are human security, agriculture and infrastructure.

The concept of human security encompasses efforts to make all segments of society secure and free from want and fear. Many of the vulnerabilities facing Africa, such as poverty, unemployment and conflicts, are in fact threats to human security. JICA pursues the enhancement of human security through its operations. This will bring to the region peace and stability, which are preconditions to sustainable economic growth.

Agriculture is a potential driver of African growth. While 60% of the labor in Africa is in the agricultural sector, Africa is a net importer of foods. Improvements in agricultural productivity are crucial for food security as well as employ-

ment. JICA is engaged in an initiative of doubling rice production in 10 years in 23 countries, as well as efforts to increase smallholdings' income.

Development of infrastructure, broadly defined, is crucial for sustainable development in Africa. "Hard" infrastructure includes such things as roads, ports and power stations. In addition to hard infrastructure, "soft" infrastructure is also important. Cooperation in soft infrastructure includes developing human resource capacity for business, enhancing the rule of law, and promoting foreign direct investment.

Because the world and Africa are changing rapidly, past developmental models and experience alone will not be adequate for inclusive and sustainable development. The experiences of Asia as well as the West are useful for Africa. But we need to find out, together with our partners and other stakeholders in Africa, solutions most appropriate to Africa. I call this approach "synnovation." Synnovation means innovating new approaches and solutions in concert with global partners. I strongly believe that TICAD V will be a milestone on the path to ensuring Africa's sustainable and inclusive economic growth in cooperation with all development partners.



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