



FOSTERING GROWTH in AFRICA

COURTESY OF SARAVA

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) is a global platform that brings together stakeholders with an interest in African development, not only from Japan and Africa but from around the world, as well as international organizations, donor countries, private sectors, NGOs, and others, to engage in dialogue on issues relating to Africa, such as economic development, poverty, and conflict. The 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) will be held from June 1-3, 2013 in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, jointly sponsored by the Japanese government, African Union Commission, the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank. This month's Cover Story introduces some of the activities being undertaken by Japan to assist in Africa's growth.





Held once every five years, 2013 marks the twentieth year since the first Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993. Makoto Ito, the ambassador for TICAD V, looks back at the international situation when the first Conference was held.

“In the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, the attention of the international community was drawn to the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which were democratizing, so interest in Africa had faded. Japan held TICAD to stem this trend, with the aim of raising international attention to Africa, having the global community join with the African nations to think about the issues facing Africa, and take concrete action to resolve these issues. As well as holding TICAD, for many years Japan has provided official development assistance (ODA) and private investment to support the economic and social development of Africa. This area is

wide-ranging, and includes infrastructure, education, public health, and agriculture.”

The international reputation of TICAD grows each time the event is held.

TICAD IV, held in 2008, was attended by some 3,000 participants from 51 African countries (including 41 heads of state and top-level dignitaries), 62 international organizations, over 30 private corporations and civil society organizations, and 23 donor countries, making it one of the largest international meetings ever held in Japan.

Africa has witnessed enormous growth in recent years, averaging 5.8% per year. An abundance of natural resources, including oil, natural gas, and rare metals, and an increase in population that is expected to overtake that of China in the mid-2020s indicate that Africa is set to grow even further. However, it continues to be burdened with the severe challenges of poverty, infectious disease, and conflict.

“The diverse challenges confronting Africa, such as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals or the eradication of terrorism, are the concern not only of Africa but of the entire world,” says Ambassador Ito. “TICAD’s role is to create a global link between knowledge, funds, and technology to surmount Africa’s negative aspects and further develop its positive aspects.”

African Ownership, International Partnership

TICAD’s basic philosophy is African “ownership” and international “partnership,” including Japan. “Ownership” is the notion that African development is not something that is undertaken by donor coun-



Ambassador for TICAD V Makoto Ito

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tries or international organizations, but rather something that is carried out by Africa itself through its own efforts. International partnership supports such self-reliant efforts.

As such, based on the follow-up mechanism introduced at TICAD IV to monitor the state of implementation of specific initiatives, the TICAD Ministerial Follow-up Meeting has been held each year, to ascertain the progress made in respect of the goals adopted at TICAD. At TICAD IV, Japan pledged to double its ODA and private investment for Africa by 2012, and has fulfilled this pledge. It has also achieved results from initiatives in development sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, education, and public health, indicated in the Action Plan announced at the meeting.

“Follow-up is vital to ensure that we stick firmly to the pledges we made at TICAD,” says Ambassador Ito. “Referred to as the ‘TICAD Process,’ the ongoing TICAD process includes this kind of follow-up and is highly appreciated by the African nations too.”

Under the theme of “Hand in Hand with a More Dynamic Africa” debates at TICAD V will be held on the themes of “Robust and Sustainable Economy,” “Inclusive and Resilient Society,” and “Peace and Stability.” In addition, the Action Plan involving Japan, Africa, the international organizations, and all TICAD V participants will be prepared. The aim is to further strengthen ownership by Africa, such as having it set its own goals.

“Private investment must play a central role accelerating growth of the African economy,” says Ambassador Ito. “One important theme to be discussed at TICAD V therefore will be how Africa should go about building an investment environment that can attract private investment, in terms of infrastructure, human resources, legislature and so on. Discussion will be aimed at building a society in which more people can share the benefits of economic growth.”

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