

(Association of African Economy and Development)
Japanese ECA Committee
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Announcement

Seminar on The Road Infrastructure and the Natural Environment in Africa

On the significant occasion of TICAD IV AFRECO is happy to organize a seminar under the title of “The Road Infrastructure and the Natural Environment in Africa” . The seminar will be carried out as a panel discussion inviting experts as panelists. The discussion will be open to the audience comprising the TICAD IV delegates and selected Japanese participants. The seminar will be followed by a reception where the participants can communicate each other. The date and the programme of the seminar are described below.

Those who carry the TICAD IDs can participate freely in the seminar.

Those who would like to participate in the seminar other than ID holders should register with AFRECO secretariat in advance.

Date Thursday 29 2008, 9:00-13:15
Venue Yokohama Grand Intercontinental Hotel, 1st floor Silk Room
1-1-1 Minato-mirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama Tel. 045-223-2222

Programme

MoC Mr. Hironori Yasuhiro, Director, AFRECO
9:00 **Opening remarks**
Mr. Tetsuro Yano
Member, The House of Counselors
President, AFRECO
9:20 **Keynote speech**
H.E. Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete
President of the United Republic of Tanzania
Chairman, African Union
9:50 **Panel discussion**
Panelists

Mr. Tsukasa Akimoto,
Member, The House of Counselors, Director, AFRECO

Mr. Hideo Matsui
Director, Japan Bank for International Cooperation

Mr. Takashi Ishida
Chairman, West Nippon Expressway Company Ltd.(NEXCO West)

Mr. Yoichi Saitoh
Japan Highway Landscape Association

Participants from African countries and a private funding institution
will join above gentlemen.

Moderator
Mr. Hajime Ikeda
Vice President AFRECO

11:30 Discussions

12:00 **Reception**

The Road Infrastructure and the Natural Environment in Africa (A Side-seminar at TICAD IV, May 2008, Yokohama, Japan)

The Background

The strong need for road development in Africa has been pointed out since long time ago. However the present states of the road network development is quite poor not meeting with the needs of local, regional and inter-regional level. Natural conditions widely from regions to regions in the vast continent. To build and operate all-weather road networks in the different natural conditions such as meteorological, geographical and geological ones encounters great difficulties. In addition to the difficult natural conditions human and social barriers to make it more difficult are also big. There are many group of different ethnicity and culture. This also affects human and physical mobility among the regions. It is important to enhance mobility among different regions, as it will promote the economical development improving the quality of life and ultimately confirming the social stability.

The matter was discussed early in 1950s. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and related organizations proposed the development of 50 thousand km road network in the African continent. The World Bank, African Development Bank and other official lending institutions started studies for the road projects in line with the proposal, but the progress is not satisfactory so far.

The Japanese government has a plan of enlarging its official development aid (ODA) to Africa. The government plans to double the ODA budget to Africa during the three years period starting in 2005. This target will be reached at the end of fiscal 2008. Regarding the development aid for transport infrastructures such as ports and roads the government envisages to offer 2.5 billion US dollars during 2008 through 2013. The development of the road networks in Africa is one of the main themes to be discussed in TICAD IV scheduled in May 2008, in Yokohama, Japan.

The Contents

The seminar deals with the problems related to the development of road infrastructure in Africa. It will also discuss the environment conservation issues in connection with the road development. There is a vast variety of natural conditions in Africa. The climate changes from that of rain forest with extremely high humidity and precipitation to the very dry ones in savannas or deserts. The geographical varieties also large from the rugged mountains to the flat alluvial plains. The roads should adjust themselves to those natural conditions.

The roads in the tropical rain forests should protect themselves from the invading vegetation. In

the dry area roads should have road-side green belts to protect themselves from drifting silts and sands. To grow plants on the road-sides will generate absorption of the gas emission of the vehicles. The possibility of producing bio-fuel from the road-side plants will also be considered. The bio-fuel production may cover the cost of curing plants, and further, the maintenance cost of the road itself. This operation will create job opportunities of the local people increasing their cash income.

In addition to the ODA financing financial support utilizing carbon credit sales based on the CDM can be introduced in the road development. The private institution finance and their co-financing will also be discussed in the seminar.