

Opening Speech by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan,
at the Special Conference on Peace and Stability
in the Horn of Africa and the Neighboring Region
Thursday, 29 August 2019, Yokohama, Japan

Your Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this Special Conference to discuss on peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and the neighboring region.

In the Horn of Africa region that has been so-called the “melting pot of conflicts” for a long time, we have seen developments of peace building by Africa itself since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea last year. We highly appreciate such efforts and also would like to express my deepest respect to the contribution that the international community has been making for a long time.

The Horn of Africa has been a hub connecting Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe since ancient times. Today, as international logistics has become more vigorous, the importance of this region is growing further.

At TICAD VI, I called on to make the “stretch from Asia to Africa a main artery for growth and prosperity”.

If this region becomes truly stable and economic integration progresses, Africa’s growth and prosperity will be more secure, along with the Agreement on African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that entered into force this May. With these aspects in mind, I decided to hold this conference.

Japan’s assistance policy in this region is represented in the following 3 aspects. The first is assistance for human resource development. In order to gain demographic dividend of this region for its stability and prosperity, youth and women must acquire skills to make a living by themselves and play a major role in economic activities.

In view of realizing “human security”, Japan for many years, has been providing assistance on individual human protection in addition to human empowerment. Japan will firmly continue such assistance.

Second is assistance for peace building by Africa itself. Peace is vulnerable especially

in its early stage. We must make this irreversible. Japan will support and commit to assist Africa's own initiatives.

Dr. Abiy, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, I sincerely pay tribute to your courageous endeavor for peace. Although your efforts for peace have been fiercely opposed and your life was endangered twice, you did not give up your pursuit for peace. Japan, with its utmost efforts, will continue to support your reforms in the country.

In South Sudan, the peace agreement process led by IGAD is entering a crucial stage. Japan is the only donor country which provides financial support to the implementation of this agreement. We call upon the international community to support this Africa's own effort towards peace.

Furthermore, we received good news that the documents for the establishment of a transitional administrative authority have been signed. This signing is a significant progress toward stabilization in Sudan. Japan expresses its respect to the mediation efforts by the African Union and Ethiopia.

The third is assistance for strengthening connectivity. The fruit of economic growth can be delivered to the whole region through connection from ports to surrounding inland areas beyond countries. For example, this applies to Ethiopia and Eritrea, which re-established their diplomatic relations last year. Japan will continue to vigorously advance its assistance to bring regional development through quality infrastructure.

In addition, Japan will continue implementing assistance for construction projects of the Nile river bridge in South Sudan and improvement of road connecting Djibouti and Ethiopia.

I would like to conclude my remarks by expressing my hope that this conference would be an important trigger to consolidate peace and stability for significant growth and prosperity in the Horn of Africa and the neighboring region.

Thank you very much for your attention.