

Address by Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, at the Public-Private Business Dialogue Session of the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7), August 29, 2019, Pacifico Yokohama [Provisional translation]

Thank you very much for coming together at this session.

The greatest advance of the last three years since TICAD VI in Nairobi has been the launch of the Japan-Africa Business Forum.

TICAD is reborn.

Our New TICAD will lift to new heights the double E's-double I's of "entrepreneurship" and "enterprise," "investment" and "innovation."

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Households lacking electricity in Tanzania are now enjoying lights at night-time.

When you go to kiosks that number in the thousands in Tanzania, you can rent solar lanterns. The light of the LEDs

that shine using electricity stored up during the daytime is bright and these lanterns are entirely different from the kerosene lamps that give off smoke.

One company has pioneered in renting out solar lanterns at more than 1100 kiosks around Tanzania, with tens of thousands of people coming to borrow them each and every day. That is WASSHA, a Tokyo-based company.

Let me introduce to you the founder-CEO of the company, Mr. Satoshi Akita!

And then KEPCO, or Kansai Electric Power Company, one of Japan's leading utilities, took notice of Mr. Akita. The giant power generator that provides the grid for Kyoto and Osaka has now chosen to team up with WASSHA.

KEPCO will provide WASSHA with a large number of lanterns. WASSHA will distribute them among the Tanzanian kiosks, the number of which will reach 10,000. Under this model, a portion of the rental fees will flow back to KEPCO.

Think of the children beaming with delight as the night gets bright and they can now read books.

And users numbering in the hundreds of thousands and ten thousand outlets will generate Big Data, giving rise to businesses not yet dreamt of.

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So, what should the government do to enable entrepreneurs like Mr. Akita to make the most of their abilities?

The questions the Government of Japan should ask all boil down to that single point.

One thing is to foster human resources, while another to provide quality infrastructure.

And yet another is making it easy to access capital.

JOGMEC, the trade insurance company NEXI, and JICA all make use of local resources to provide you with finance that's user-friendly.

A country that is deeply indebted is a country difficult for you to penetrate into.

We will choose ten priority countries each year for the next three years, for a total of thirty countries, and provide their officials with training in sovereign debt and risk management.

To Ghana and Zambia, we will send advisers on debt management and macroeconomic management.

The Government of Japan also has a role to play in enhancing agricultural competitiveness, an important area for Africa.

Japan has a great many agricultural specialists who have been instrumental in assisting

our own local governments. They will jump at the opportunity to put their skills to work in order to help Africa. Those are the kinds of people who will be heading to local communities from now.

By 2030, through cooperation with various countries, we hope to double the current production of rice in the whole of Africa to 56 million tons.

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This is my third TICAD. I now see that you sit behind the wheel, which is most encouraging.

In Africa, some countries have joined top nations in the rankings on the ease of doing business. The scale of the market continues expanding. We can envision a day when the entire continent becomes an enormous economic zone.

The AU has a highly ambitious long-term plan, with its target year set in 2063.

For anyone now in your 20s, that's a future realizable within your own goals.

As you turn your eyes to Africa -- to the land of potential -- I wholeheartedly wish that you make the greatest leap in the continent.

Thank you very much.