

TICAD Ministerial Meeting 2024: Plenary Session 1 (Society)
Statement by H. E. Ms. KAMIKAWA Yoko, Minister for Foreign Affairs
(tentative translation)

1. Introduction

In Session 1, I would like us to discuss the topic of "realizing a sustainable future" with an emphasis on two points.

2. Human resource development and education

The first is the development of the young people who will be responsible for Africa's future.

Japan is fostering industrial talents in Africa through the ABE Initiative, which provides students with opportunities to study in Japan and internships at Japanese companies. Graduates of the program serve as bridges between Japanese and African companies. For example, one young Kenyan who participated in the program has been collaborating with the company where he interned to develop an e-learning business since returning home. Japan remains committed to continuing such efforts.

In addition, the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology, the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, and the Pan-African University Institute for Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation are serving as hubs for the development of highly-skilled human resources and joint research with Japanese universities. For instance, the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, the Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, and the construction firm Fujita Corporation, with the cooperation of Kenyan farmers and agricultural cooperatives, are conducting demonstration research on potato cultivation and storage, leading to the introduction of new technologies and the generation of higher profits.

We hope to see a new trend of cooperation where young people from Japan and Africa learn from each other and work together to create innovative solutions to economic and social challenges.

3. Innovative solutions from Japan and Africa

The second point of emphasis is working together to come up with solutions in Japan and Africa to healthcare, climate change and other social issues.

First, Japan has long been focusing efforts on cooperation in maternal and child

healthcare. Following such basic efforts as disseminating maternal and child healthcare handbooks, training healthcare personnel and developing healthcare posts, Japan is now incorporating ICT and other advanced technologies from the private sector.

In Ghana, for example, the Ajinomoto Foundation, a public interest incorporated foundation, focused on ensuring access to food to prevent malnutrition, is playing a leading role that is participated by NEC, an ICT service provider, and Sysmex, a medical equipment manufacturer. They launched an innovative project, based on the experiences through the projects of JICA, combining health examinations and nutritional guidance for mothers and children utilizing Japanese ICT with the dissemination of anemia and malaria diagnostic equipment and nutritional supplements.

In the area of environmental issues and climate change, Japan is providing support for satellite-based forest monitoring in Kenya, Mozambique, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In addition, we are building a network in 47 African countries for sharing and learning from each other's know-how on waste management through the African Clean Cities Platform established by Japan, Africa, and international organizations. We believe that such cooperation utilizing science and technology will play an increasingly important role in the future.

Japan also boasts some brilliant technologies in use in its rural areas. A company in Rwanda was provided with a cultivar bred in Hachimantai, Iwate Prefecture, Japan's largest gentian producer, and it now exports Rwandan gentians to Europe. This export has increased more than ten-fold in four years, helping establish an export industry and create employment in Rwanda.

To expand on these best practices, "technical college open innovation" programs have been launched where students in rural technical colleges work to solve problems in Africa. There is also potential for further "Made with Japan" cooperation, in which rural areas plus young people in Japan help derive solutions to African challenges in innovative ways.

4. WPS

Yesterday, I had a working lunch with the women ministers participating in the ministerial meeting and we had an intensive discussion focusing on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). We exchanged views with the participants and reaffirmed the importance of women's participation in governance, peace

activities, and economic activities.

In particular, we shared the view to strengthen collaboration to connect the good practices of each country from small “dots” to a wider “surface,” i.e., to share them from one country to the region, continent, and the world, creating synergies. Let us not work separately in each country or region, but rather, through this TICAD forum, let us link the baton between Japan, Africa, and the world.

5. Conclusion

We hope that today's discussion will enable us to share tips on how young people can pave the way to a sustainable future and on innovative solutions being developed in Japan and Africa.