

(provisional translation)

TICAD9: Public-Private Business Dialogue

Speech by H.E. Mr. ISHIBA Shigeru, Prime Minister of Japan

“From Aid to Investment” no other words better capture the transformation of relations between Japan and Africa through more than three decades of the TICAD process. In the tariff negotiations with the United States, the keyword was “investment over tariffs,” so I was worried about making a mistake at the beginning of my speech, but in our relations with Africa, the keyword is “from aid to investment.”

At this TICAD 9, under the theme “Co-create innovative solutions with Africa,” Japan and Africa aim to work together to solve issues facing Africa and the international community, while learning from one another.

A ceremony for the presentation of signed documents was held this morning, at which more than 300 cooperation documents, more than triple the number at the previous TICAD 8, were formally presented. This demonstrates that such a large number of Japanese companies are committed to cooperating in building Africa’s future.

As Africa’s trusted partner, Japan will continue to accelerate this momentum. As I mentioned yesterday, Japan will work hand-in-hand with the people of Africa, laughing, crying, and working hard together, to tackle each and every one of the challenges facing Africa. We will get to know our partners, stand by their side, and work together to create solutions. Japan will continue to pursue this careful approach with unwavering dedication.

In this Public-Private Business Dialogue, representatives from the public and

private sectors of Japan and Africa will focus on the following three themes and discuss solutions to help pioneer a shared future.

The first theme is economic diversification through the strengthening of sustainable industrial ecosystems. The dynamism of Africa's young people is driving the creation of innovation-led new industries one after another. Likewise, Japan's young people are developing new services in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, and finance in response to Africa's needs.

This morning, I visited the Musashi Seimitsu Industry booth at the exhibition. I heard that this company is working with local startups in Kenya and Ethiopia on electric motorcycles and battery exchange station businesses, striving to realize carbon-neutral transportation.

Human resource development in emerging sectors, including digital industries, such as AI, and creative industries will serve as a foundation for accelerating future economic growth. It is important to nurture startups and industries such as these, while also fostering manufacturing industries that create more jobs. Professor Matsuo of the University of Tokyo, who attended the signing ceremony earlier, is also promoting efforts to nurture AI talent in Africa and support local employment.

As was the case in Japan and other East Asian countries, increasing employment in the manufacturing sector is essential for the prosperity of the entire country. Japan will support African countries by training 300,000 people over the next three years, thereby helping promote economic diversification. Japanese manufacturers are also making efforts to develop human resources.

The second theme is promoting intra-African connectivity and regional integration, and reinforcing connectivity between Africa and the wider

world. I commend the African Union for its leadership in advancing the African Continental Free Trade Area initiative toward the realization of a vast single market.

Japan will also cooperate in strengthening intra-African connectivity. For example, through the region-wide Co-creation for common agenda initiative for Nacala Corridor Development, we will enhance cross-border logistics and promote industrial development in the surrounding regions.

Since yesterday, I have already held talks with 20 African leaders. During the talks, the leaders of southern African countries expressed their enthusiasm for the development of the Nacala Corridor. I accepted their enthusiasm, and I believe that many Japanese government and private sector officials here feel the same.

Furthermore, we will join efforts to enhance connectivity between Africa and other regions. Our initiatives include establishing a study committee on strengthening the Japan–Africa economic partnership via industry–academia–government collaboration, and launching the Economic Region Initiative of Indian Ocean – Africa. Through these efforts, Japan aims to serve as a solid bridge connecting Africa and the wider world.

The third theme is strengthening finance to drive sustainable economic growth through private sector leadership. Japan will work with development finance institutions, export credit agencies, and private financial institutions to pursue the optimum blend of public and private financing to help address social challenges, including the promotion of industrial development in Africa.

International society is currently facing multiple, interconnected crises. One example is global warming. Today is no exception, but Japan has been extremely hot recently. However, a certain leader pointed out that Africa is even hotter. The rise in temperature caused by global warming is having a serious impact on agriculture and fisheries. In this era of complex crises, what should the partnership between Japan and Africa be like?

Japan and Africa both have their own strengths, namely, the technology and expertise of Japanese companies in areas such as AI, DX, and GX, the indigenous wisdom and internal initiatives and innovations of Africa that have not always been properly evaluated, and the vitality and creativity of Africa's young people. By bringing together the strengths of both Japan and Africa and working to solve social issues, let's create a growing future.

With the support of all those gathered here today, I hope this Public-Private Business Dialogue will serve as a valuable opportunity to discuss the pathway toward that goal.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.