

(provisional translation)

TICAD 9: Closing remarks by H.E. Mr. Ishiba Shigeru, Prime Minister of
Japan

Your Excellencies, Presidents, Prime Ministers, distinguished Cabinet Ministers, distinguished heads of international organizations, ladies and gentlemen,

This year marks the 32nd anniversary of the launch of TICAD in 1993. Over the past 30 years, the world has undergone dramatic changes. In the 1990s, Japan accounted for around 17% of global GDP, whereas now it accounts for just over 4%. The 1990s were a difficult period for Africa, immediately following the end of the Cold War, marked by declining interest in the continent and plagued by conflicts and infectious diseases. However, thanks to its young population and abundant resources, Africa's influence in the international community has grown. This is evident from the fact that the African Union (AU) has become a formal member of the G20.

With the pace of change accelerating in Africa and around the world, what kind of world will we see in 30 years' time? It is estimated that by 2050, one in four people worldwide will be of African origin. Africa will become the center of global growth, leading the way for the rest of the world.

Under the theme of “Co-create innovative solutions with Africa,” at TICAD 9, representatives of Japan, African countries, international organizations, companies in the private sector and of civil society proactively discussed from their respective standpoints how to make mutual use of Japan's technologies and expertise and solutions locally developed in Africa for the co-creation of new solutions to the issues faced by Africa and the international community.

As the chair of the Conference, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude

to all participants in the discussions, in particular to H.E. Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, who co-chaired the Conference, H.E. Mr. Kishida Fumio, representative of the Government of Japan, and TICAD co-organizers. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone for their long-standing efforts in making TICAD 9 a reality.

The results of fulfilling discussions held over these three days have been compiled into TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration, which has been distributed to all of you.

(With the Yokohama Declaration in hand,) I would like to adopt this declaration together with all of you. Is that acceptable?

Thank you. TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration has hereby been adopted.

More than 30 years have passed since the launch of TICAD in 1993. During the period, in line with the growth and change of Africa, the scope of discussions at TICAD has been expanded from the development of Africa to include investment in Africa, and then the co-creation of innovative solutions by Japan and Africa.

Against this backdrop, at TICAD 9, the youth and women were focused as one of the cross-disciplinary priority discussion themes, as I had mentioned on the first day of the Conference.

Participants in the Plenary Session and thematic meetings proactively discussed what should the youth of Japan and Africa do now to realize an ideal vision for the future of 30 years from now.

Going forward, young people thriving in Japan and Africa will work together to forge a future, which will surely be a prosperous future for both Japan and

Africa.

To this Closing Session, we have invited representatives of Youth TICAD 2025. Please welcome Mr. Kpondedhou and Ms. Yasumiba with applause.

In TICAD 9, through proactive discussions, participants shared lots of ideas for Japan and Africa to co-create innovative solutions to various issues such as employment, industry development, health and food. Also, they have agreed that they will sophisticate the co-created solutions and further enhance Japan-Africa cooperation toward the future.

Despite having a negligible impact on global greenhouse gas emissions, it is said that Africa is one of the regions most severely affected by climate change. This includes damage caused by extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, as well as its impact on agriculture and human health. This is an example of how the challenges faced by Africa are linked to those faced by the rest of the world. Resolving Africa's issues could help to solve the problems faced by Japan and the rest of the world.

I understand that the Ubuntu spirit, a philosophy originating from the Zulu people in South Africa, has been passed down through generations in Africa. It means, "I am because you are," showing that people are kept alive through compassion and bonds with each other.

Japan and Africa will cooperate to solve issues for greater prosperity, bringing together their abundant human resources, technologies and wisdom. Toward this ambitious goal, I think it is essential for the two sides to take steps forward together to promote the development of human resources and industries.

The world is currently at a historical turning point that comes around once in a century. One hundred years ago, for example, the First World War took place

from 1914 to 1918. The Russian Revolution occurred in 1917. From 1918 to 1920, the Spanish flu swept across the globe, claiming tens of millions of lives. Then, in 1929, the stock market crashed on Wall Street, marking the beginning of the Great Depression. From 1939 to 1945, World War II took place, and this year marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Such a great war must never be repeated. The use of nuclear weapons must never be allowed to happen again. A pandemic must never happen again. Nor must we ever experience another Great Depression that destroys the economy. I am not suggesting that the same events as 100 years ago will happen again, but similar events are happening today. The international community is becoming increasingly divided, and the international order is under significant pressure. Can we transform these challenges into opportunities for prosperity? It is an investment in Africa's future, a collaborative effort to solve problems on the ground, and a step-by-step process of nurturing each and every individual. I believe that TICAD 9 served as an important opportunity to confirm these points with our African partners and to define cooperation between Japan and Africa over the next 30 years.

Japan will work alongside the people of Africa, laughing, crying and working hard, to overcome every challenge facing the continent. It is not only for Africa, not for Japan, but for the world.

It is my sincere hope that TICAD 9 will remain in your memory as a starting point of the remarkable growth of Africa and of even stronger partnership between Japan and Africa.

“I didn't come here to teach. I came here to learn.”

These are the words of Dr. Noguchi Hideyo, who conducted research on

yellow fever in Ghana, as I mentioned at the opening ceremony. As TICAD 9 comes to a close, I am deeply moved by the meaning of these words. Through frank exchanges with many African leaders, I myself have learned a great deal. I would like to utilize this for the benefit of Africa and the rest of the world.

Finally, let me once again express my gratitude to all those who made efforts to the success of TICAD 9. Thank you very much.