

# Establishment of the Study Group on Strengthening Japan-Africa Economic Partnership

June 2026

African Affairs Department, MOFA

## 1 Progress of Regional Economic Partnership in Africa

- The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a flagship project of the African Union (AU).
- The founding treaty entered into force in 2019. Operations relating to trade in goods commenced in 2021. 49 AU member states and regions have ratified the treaty (as of late June 2025).
- Current challenges include establishing value chains within the region, strengthening regional connectivity, developing implementation frameworks in each country (e.g. legislative frameworks and human resource development), and promoting the use of this free trade area by raising awareness.

## 2 Announcement: Establishment of the “Study Group on Strengthening Japan-Africa Economic Partnership”

- Given its abundant resources and economic dynamism, it is crucial for the Japanese economy to strengthen economic ties with Africa, which is projected to become a huge economic zone covering one quarter of the world’s population in the next 25 years.
  - Japan's engagement with AfCFTA – key to integration and economic transformation in Africa – shows Japan’s support of a multilateral free trade system and a free and open international order.
- ⇒ Establishment of the study group comprising representatives from industry, academia, and government from both Japan and Africa announced at TICAD 9 in August 2025.

## 3 First Meeting of the “Study Group on Strengthening Japan-Africa Economic Partnership”

- First meeting is held on June 18, 2026 in a hybrid format.
  - Study group to discuss and issue report on the following topics in approximately two years.
- ① Measures to promote regional economic integration in Africa
  - ② Review of trade and investment between Japan and Africa
  - ③ Strengthening of economic relations between Japan and Africa