

Statement by Mr. Masakazu HAMACHI,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs,
at the Second Dakar International Forum
on Peace and Security in Africa

H.E. Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Senegalese Abroad of the Republic of Senegal,
Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Masakazu Hamachi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. It is my great honor to have this opportunity to participate in the Second Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa. I was appointed as Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs in October. This participation in the Dakar International Forum is my first official visit to a foreign country. For me, Africa has become an unforgettable, memorable place.

This Forum is quite timely, given that Africa is now facing various urgent security challenges including countering violent extremism and measures against terrorism, organized crime and smuggling.

I would like to express my respect to the leadership of the governments of Senegal and France as well as those in the private sector who have made efforts to convene this Forum. Japan is pleased to make a contribution again to this Forum just as we did last year.

Excellencies,

Next year, the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) will be held in Kenya. This is the very first time for us to hold the TICAD in Africa. Japan has built on discussion toward peace and stability in Africa with African countries as well as

other relevant actors for more than 20 years since 1993 through the TICAD process. Japan has also taken its own initiatives in this field. Peace and stability in Africa will again be one of the priority issues at TICAD VI next year.

Together with Senegal, Japan is joining the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member from 2016 to 2017. Japan is also assuming the G7 Presidency next year. We are determined to make a further contribution to the discussions on peace and security in Africa through the G7 Summit in May, Japan's Presidency of the UN Security Council in July and TICAD VI.

Mr. Manuel Carlos Valls, Prime Minister of France, paid a visit to Japan last month and had a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. On this occasion, both leaders announced the Japan-France Cooperation Plan in Africa with a view to further strengthening the Japan-France bilateral cooperation in Africa. By making use of frameworks like this Plan, Japan is determined to make substantial contributions to security in Africa with a focus on issues including peacebuilding, maritime security, law enforcement, border management and assistance for post-conflict communities.

Let me give you some examples. At TICAD V, based on the lessons learned from In Aménas-incident in Algeria, Japan announced the new assistance package for counter-terrorism capacity building in North Africa and the Sahel region. The package included capacity building of 2,000 people, provision of equipment, and advice and training for border control. Japan also showed its willingness to offer development and humanitarian assistance of one billion USD to contribute to the stabilization of the Sahel region. Japan further announced capacity building for 3,000 people engaged in peace building through its support to UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs) training centers operated by African countries so as to strengthen Africa's ability to resolve conflicts. Now Japan is steadily implementing these commitments.

The active role played by the Japan Self-Defense Forces in Africa is

also worth mentioning. The Self-Defense Forces are now engaging in counter-piracy activities off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden in cooperation with other countries including the US and France. These activities have contributed to the decline in the number of piracy incidents in the region. In South Sudan, the engineering units of Self-Defense Forces are taking part in UN PKOs and actively making a contribution to creating a favorable environment for humanitarian assistance.

Excellencies,

Under the policy of “Proactive Contributor to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation, Japan will contribute more actively to the peace, stability and prosperity of the region and international community. Recently, the “Legislation for Peace and Security” has been approved in Japan which enables Japan to contribute even more proactively to peace and security. Under this new legislation, Japan will further expand its contributions to UN PKOs. We will also steadily make even more quality contributions to UN PKOs in the field through engineering activities employing the Self-Defense Forces’ advanced technical skills and by dispatching personnel to mission headquarters and UN headquarters. Japan will also explore other possible contributions such as airlift support for mission rapid deployment.

The rapid deployment of UN PKOs is an urgent challenge in Africa. In order to tackle this, Japan has contributed approximately 40 million USD to the United Nations Secretariat to fund the UN Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities this year. Japanese Ground Self-Defense Forces labored together with engineering unit personnel from East African Troop Contributing Countries in Nairobi, Kenya, conducting a trial training on the operation and maintenance of heavy engineering equipment. We will develop this into full-scale training that is slated to commence next year.

These are some of the examples illustrating the development of multi-layered cooperative relations between Japan and Africa in various fields. Our African friends, let's work together hand-in-hand and reform the UN Security Council, which plays a leading role for peace and security of the international community, to the one that reflects the realities of the 21st century.

Finally, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to wish the participants of this Forum an active discussion on the various challenges that Africa is facing which will make this Forum a success.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

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