

The Fourth Dakar International Forum
on Peace and Security in Africa
Speech by Mr. Masahisa SATO, State Minister for Foreign Affairs
13 November 2017, Dakar, Senegal

Your Excellency, Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal,

Your Excellency, Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda,

Your Excellency, Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali,

Your Excellency, Mr. Pahimi Padacké Albert, President of the Republic of Chad,

Your Excellency, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,

Your Excellency, Ms. Florence Parly, Minister for the Armed Forces of the French Republic,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor to attend the Fourth Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to His Excellency, President Sall, and to all those who contributed to organizing this important annual meeting.

As we live in a world where a great number of people, companies, goods and capital move across the borders, no one can be indifferent to Africa's peace and security. That is why I flew to Dakar, thirteen thousands kilometers from Tokyo. That is why Japan has been contributing to this Forum, since the first meeting in 2014.

Armed conflicts, terrorist attacks are happening in so many parts of Africa. I would like to express my deepest condolence to the people of Burkina Faso and Somalia, regarding the recent terrorist attacks

on their territory.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before sharing Japan's actions in support of peace and stability in Africa, allow me to touch upon my own story. Before entering into politics ten years ago, as an officer of Japan Ground Self Defense Force, I served in the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in Golan Heights as Commander of Transportation Unit. I was also dispatched to Samawa in Southern Iraq as Commander of Iraq Reconstruction Mission Support Team. Through these missions, as a practitioner of peacebuilding, I learned what is really needed to consolidate peace on the ground.

At the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, TICAD VI, held last year in Nairobi, the heads of States and Governments identified as one of the priorities, "Promotion of social stability for shared prosperity". We need to build a resilient society and institutions that ensure human security and leave no room for conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism.

In South Sudan, Japan dispatched the engineering unit of the Self Defense Force to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for over five years until this May. Off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, Japan has been deploying Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer and aircraft for anti-piracy operations since 2009.

To contribute to social stability in the Sahel region, Japan has provided assistance totaling about 1.4 billion US dollars since 2013. Japan also contributes to human resource development in the area of peacebuilding by dispatching trainers and providing financial support of over 40 million US dollars to peacekeeping training centers in Africa.

Through these measures, Japan supports the realization of “Peaceful and Stable Africa” as articulated in African Union’s “Agenda 2063”. With our eyes on TICAD 7 to be held in Yokohama in 2019, our contribution will continue.

Ladies and gentlemen,

More than half of agenda items discussed in the UN Security Council are those related to Africa, while there is no African permanent member in the Council. Japan openly supports Agenda 2063 which states clearly that by 2023, this historical injustice need to be corrected.

Turning to my region, we are facing North Korea’s relentless pursuit of nuclear and missile development, which poses an unprecedented, grave, and imminent threat to the security of the international community. We need to heighten the pressure on North Korea to the utmost level, including by fully implementing relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council.

The main theme of this year’s Forum is “integrated solution” to a wide range of issues, including migration, climate change, humanitarian crises and cyber-security. Multi-faceted and people-centered approach toward Africa’s security is totally in line with the “human security” approach that Japan values, which focuses on protection and empowerment of each individual.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that our joint endeavor for Africa’s peace and security will be further enhanced through the Dakar Forum.

Thank you very much.