

Section 4

Operational Status of the Principle of Assistance Implementation

The objective of official development assistance (ODA) is to contribute to economic development and improving the welfare of developing countries so as to create a world where all people can live in a humane manner and in peace. In addition, ODA aims to ensure the safety and prosperity of Japan by contributing to the peace and development of the international community.^(Note 45) In order to disburse funds, which come from taxpayer money, in an appropriate fashion, Japan provides assistance in compliance with the assistance principles of the ODA Charter, in consideration of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations (especially sovereign equality and non-intervention in internal affairs) as well as the points listed below, and after comprehensively taking into account the developing countries' need for assistance, socioeconomic conditions, and bilateral relations with the recipient country: (1) Environmental conservation and development should be pursued in tandem; (2) Any use of ODA for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts should be avoided; (3) Full attention should be paid to trends in recipient countries' military expenditures, their development and production of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, their export and import of arms, etc., so as to maintain and strengthen international peace and stability, including the prevention of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and from the viewpoint that developing countries should place appropriate priorities in the allocation of their resources on their own economic and social development; and (4) Full attention should be paid to efforts for promoting democratization and the introduction of a market-oriented economy, and the situation regarding the protection of basic human rights and freedoms in the developing countries.

● Specific Operations

For specific operation regarding the principle of ODA implementation, it is vital that judgments are made not by mechanically adhering to a series of set standards, but by comprehensive evaluation on a case-by-case basis that considers the various conditions in the recipient country and other related situations. In addition, humanitarian considerations for the people in the developing country must also be taken into account. In the event that development aid is

suspended or minimized according to the principle of ODA implementation, it is the ordinary people of these developing countries, in particular the impoverished people, that suffer from the most serious impact. Consequently, even in cases in which it has been decided to suspend or minimize development aid, it is necessary to consider combining such judgment with measures that give special consideration to the implementation of emergency or humanitarian assistance.

● Consideration on the Environment and Society

In promoting economic development, consideration is needed toward environmental burdens and the effects on the local community. Japan has experienced numerous instances of industrial pollution, including Minamata disease. Based on these experiences, Japan implements ODA carefully in order to minimize adverse impacts on the environment. Japan also pays consideration to making sure that its development policies do not elicit undesirable effects on local society, and in particular the socially vulnerable, such as those suffering from poverty, women, ethnic minorities, and disabled

persons. For example, JICA established guidelines^(Note 46) for addressing impacts on the environment and society and conducts procedures to confirm that consideration is being paid to environmental and social factors in its preliminary surveys, environmental reviews, as well as monitoring at the implementation stage. In addition, Japan intends to incorporate the gender perspective on all project levels—including policy formulation, planning, implementation, and evaluation—in order to promote gender mainstreaming in development.

Notes: (45) According to OECD-DAC definitions, ODA refers to the flow of funds that meet the following three requirements: (1) that the funds be provided by an implementing agency of government, (2) that the main purpose of the funds is to contribute to the economic development and welfare of developing countries, and (3) that the terms of provision of fund assistance do not place a heavy burden on developing countries and that the grant element constitutes at least 25%.

(46) Former JICA, "JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Concern" (April 2004) and former JBIC, "The Japan Bank for International Cooperation Guidelines for Verifying Environmental and Social Concern" (April 2002). In light of the launch of the new JICA in 2008, efforts are underway to unify the structures of the former JICA and former JBIC guidelines (as of December 2009).

● Avoidance of Military Uses and of Encouragement of International Conflict

The use of Japanese ODA in developing nations for military purposes or for encouraging international conflict must be strictly avoided. Therefore, Japan does not directly assist the military or military personnel of developing countries through official development assistance.

At the same time, Japan proactively contributes to the

fight against terrorism and for peace building. However, in order to avoid materials and funds provided through assistance by Japan to be used for military purposes, Japan follows the principles of ODA implementation when assistance is provided for anti-terrorism activities.

● Response for Promoting Democratization for Ensuring Basic Human Rights and Freedoms

In dealing with political turmoil in developing countries, there are instances where doubt exists over the democratic legitimacy of administrations established after conflict, and where a constitution, which guards against infringements of human rights, is suspended. What is more, there is fear that the basic human rights of the citizens may be infringed by such administrations under undemocratic processes. Japan is cautious and prudent when implementing ODA in such instances. Through this approach, Japan ensures that development assistance is used appropriately and conveys to the recipient country its strong concern regarding the state of democratization and human rights.

Myanmar: Myanmar is under the tight rule of a military government. Ever since the May 30, 2003 incident where Miss Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was detained by the military authorities, humanitarian projects of high-urgency, democratization and other human resources development projects, as well as projects in CLMV countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) and throughout the entire ASEAN region have been selectively implemented cautiously with thorough interest and attention being paid to their content and while watching over the respective political circumstances. While requesting that the Myanmar Government make prompt progress in national reconciliation as well as in the democratization process, Japan will continue to consider economic cooperation for Myanmar in the future.

Fiji: Commodore Bainimarama has held power over Fiji since December 2006 after a bloodless coup d'état. Prime Minister Bainimarama announced a roadmap in July 2009 in aim for holding general elections in September 2014; however, there are calls from the international community demanding that a general election be held at an earlier stage.^(Note 47) While focusing on the situation in the country

until the implementation of democratic general elections, Japan is encouraging the interim administration to promptly recover a democratic political system in Fiji. In addition, for the time being, Japan plans to pay careful consideration to the possibility of implementing projects on a case-by-case basis, while also evaluating the nation's progress in the democratization process.

Madagascar: In March 2009, an interim "government" has established around Andry Rajoelina, the mayor of Antananarivo, whom had received support from the military. Japan expresses concern over this type of change in administration that does not abide by constitutional order, urging the nation to swiftly reinstate constitutional order based on democratic procedures. In regards to ODA, while Japan takes measures to basically withhold new bilateral aid, Japan also plans to pay individual considerations to and make decisions on the appropriateness of projects in the case that they are urgent, possess humanitarian elements, or support the democratization process.

Guinea: In December 2008, the National Council for Democracy and Development, centered around army Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, assumed control of the nation, establishing an interim military "government." Japan denounces changes in government that are caused by coup d'états, and, at the same time, urges Guinea to swiftly reinstate constitutional order and a democratic system. In consideration of these political circumstances, Japan will take measures to basically withhold new bilateral aid. However, Japan also plans to pay individual considerations to and make decisions on the appropriateness of projects in the case that they are urgent, possess humanitarian elements, or support the democratization process.

Notes: (47) At the October 2007 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, the interim administration at one point pledged to implement a general election during the first quarter of 2009. However, the administration then expressed that abiding by that pledge would be impossible, as it must prioritize other items such as domestic political reform. In April 2009, in response to a court ruling that the interim administration was unconstitutional, President Josefa Iloilo took such measures as issuing a national crisis, which included terminating the current constitution, dismissing all judges, and restricting publications and broadcasts.