

(4) Sahel Region

The “Sahel¹⁵ countries” generally include the following eight countries – Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad, although there is no strict definition.

Due to the poverty and vulnerabilities of its state functions, the Sahel region has become a breeding ground for the illicit trade of firearms and narcotic drugs and organized crimes such as kidnapping. Moreover, as a result of the collapse of the Government of Libya in 2011, firearms and ammunition have flooded into the Sahel region, making it easier for terrorists to obtain firearms.

<Japan’s Efforts>

Following the terrorist attack¹⁶ at the Tiguentourine gas plant in Algeria in January 2013, Minister for Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida announced the three pillars of foreign policy¹⁷ on January 29. In addition, at TICAD V in June 2013, Japan pledged to continue providing support for the consolidation of peace, and has been rapidly promoting efforts to bring peace and stability to the Sahel region.

In March 2013, Japan announced its continuation of contribution to Mali refugees through approximately \$120 million. It provided food and tents for accommodation to refugees who escaped from Mali to neighboring countries, as well as provided support for the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation (PKO) Training Center in order to improve military and police capacities in West African countries.

Further, Japan has been implementing the following counter-terrorism measures in the Sahel region: (i) the Project for Strengthening Criminal Justice and Law

In 2012, the political situation in Mali became unstable, triggered by an insurgency launched by some members of the national army. Further, in 2013, Islamic extremists seized control of northern Mali. The French armed forces have been conducting military interventions to quash the terrorists, and UN PKO forces have been deployed. Due to such influences, refugees are not only generated in Mali but also escaping to other neighboring countries. The international community including Japan has been actively providing support for the refugees.

Enforcement Capacities in the Sahel Region (approximately \$6.81 million); (ii) the Project for Supporting the Consolidation of the Rule of Law and Access to Justice for the Poor Population (approximately \$3 million) in Burkina Faso; and (iii) the Project for Consolidation of Peace, Security and Justice (approximately \$3 million) in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

These assistance projects aim to contribute to improving public safety and reducing the threat of potential terrorist attacks in the Sahel region by strengthening the region’s ability to deal with the increase in inflow and proliferation of small firearms and improve judicial services. Through these projects, it is expected that the coping ability of the whole region will be improved.

In order to establish peace and stability in the Sahel region, Japan will work more closely with the countries in the Sahel region, international organizations, and other assistance organizations to provide steady assistance.

(5) Sudan and South Sudan

After the Second Sudanese Civil War lasted over 20 years, in July 2011, South Sudan gained independence by seceding from Sudan. The African Union (AU) mediated negotiations on many issues between Sudan and South Sudan prior to South Sudan’s independence. In September 2012, the governments of both countries agreed on issues such as oil and security measures in

border areas. However, some of the agreed issues remain unimplemented, and both countries have not reached agreements on belonging of the Abyei region¹⁸ to which both countries still lay claim and have problems in the disputed area. As of July 2013, Sudan and South Sudan are continuing discussions for coexisting peacefully.

Note 15: “Sahel” is a semi-arid region that stretches along the southern edge of the Sahara desert. It generally refers to West Africa; however, in some cases it includes Sudan and the Horn of Africa area. The word “Sahel” originated from ساحل (sāhil), which means a coast in Arabic. The Sahel countries are also called the countries at the southern edge of the Sahara Desert.

Note 16: An armed group attacked a natural gas plant in the Tiguentourine area in eastern Algeria and barricaded inside the plant, taking the workers and other people as hostages. Algerian military forces managed to control the situation by January 19. However, 40 people died, including 10 Japanese nationals.

Note 17: The three pillars are: (1) strengthening of measures against international terrorism; (2) support for the stabilization of Sahel, North Africa, and Middle East regions; and (3) promotion of dialogue and exchange with Islamic and Arab countries.

Note 18: The Abyei region is located on the north-south border in Sudan. Since it was one of the most hard-fought battlefields during the North-South civil war and has rich oil reserves, both countries claim sovereignty over this region.

<Japan's Efforts>

Peacebuilding is one of the important agendas of Japan's diplomacy towards Africa. In particular, stability in Sudan and South Sudan is directly related to the stability of the whole of Africa, so supporting the consolidation of peace in those two countries is a particularly important point on the agenda in Africa. With this understanding, Japan has disbursed over \$1.1 billion to Sudan and South Sudan since 2005. Japan continues to support the consolidation of peace through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) for former soldiers and lend assistance in fields dealing with basic human needs (BHN) so that the people of the two nations actually feel that peace has been established and do not revert to civil war. Specifically, Japan provides support focused on meeting BHN and maintaining a food production base mainly in the war-torn regions of Sudan. To South Sudan, in addition to the aforementioned support, Japan's assistance focuses on development of infrastructure and governance.

In addition, Japan has dispatched an engineering unit from the Japan Self-Defense Force to work on the



In October 2013, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Nobuo Kishi had a meeting with Ms. Hilde Johnson, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).

United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and is implementing projects that have a connection to the engineering unit's activities so that Japan can put forth an integrated effort for stability and nation-building in South Sudan. (As of September 2013)

South Sudan

The Project for Enhancement of Operation and Management Capacity of Inland Waterway in Southern Sudan Technical Cooperation Project (March 2011 - Ongoing)

Following the end of the civil war in 2005, South Sudan became independent in 2011. Since then, reconstruction of the country and the revitalization of economic activity have made progress but the lasting effects of civil war have caused significant delays in the construction of infrastructure. Transportation infrastructure is one area that suffers most significantly. Many arterial roads in South Sudan are still unsealed and are often impassable during the wet season. Of all the transportation routes in South Sudan, waterway traffic on the White Nile River plays the most important role but required urgent action due to insufficient port facilities and poor management of Juba Port.

Beginning with improvement works on a section of the pier at Juba Port in 2006, Japan has been providing supports for port and harbor projects in South Sudan. This Technical Cooperation Project began in 2011 with Japanese experts providing training to 29 South Sudanese in South Sudan along with providing training in Japan and other countries including Sudan, Kenya and Cambodia. This training will equip South Sudan with the capacity to conduct safe and efficient load handling, maintenance and management of Juba Port.

Japan is currently assisting improvements of pier facilities, load handling, load storage and load management facilities and the procurement of equipment through the provision of Grant Aid. Furthermore, Japan aims to increase the cargo handling capacity and ensure its safety and efficiency.
(As of August 2013)



A comprehensive fire drill was conducted in partnership with a state fire department, as part of the management of ports and harbors. Participants are extinguishing a mock fire using an actual fire truck and hose. (Photo: JICA)