G Africa (Sub-Sahara)

Overview

In 2005, as in the previous year, Africa made progress in the process of peace and democratization, with many countries taking first steps toward peace and stability, which are the foundation for development. These steps included the holding of the first democratic elections or constitutional referenda after the end of civil wars or coups d'etat, and the successful completion of UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO).[1] However, conflicts persist in some regions[2] and peace is still fragile in many countries.[3] One of the biggest challenges facing Africa now is to make such fragile peace more stable and lasting.

On the economy side, Africa's overall performance was encouraging as well. In 2004, 14 African countries recorded growth of over 5%, and inflation fell to a fifth of the level a decade ago.[4]

Nonetheless, Africa still faces many socio-economic challenges including severe poverty. While the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly held in September 2005, fives years after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, put special focus on development issues, notably, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UNDP reports that 21 out of the 27 "top priority countries" that need particularly urgent attention and effort to attain the MDGs are from Africa.[5]

In 2005, Africa enjoyed a high profile in the international community as issues of Africa became the main themes of important international fora such as the G8 Gleneagles Summit and the World Summit, which resulted in pledges of substantial aid for Africa. Moreover, cooperation with Africa was seen as critical by many countries in achieving their objectives in the international arena, including the reform of the UN Security Council and the success of the WTO Doha Round. Thus, the year 2005 was called the "Year of Africa" with international attention focused on Africa. Taking this occasion, Japan, in cooperation with the international community,

enhanced its own assistance to Africa and attempted to further strengthen its relationship with Africa.

(a) Principles and Basic Policies of Diplomacy toward Africa: Why Africa?

(1) The Importance of Africa

Japan is carrying out proactive diplomacy toward Africa based on the following viewpoints.

First, in the conviction that "there will be no stability and prosperity in the world unless the African issues are resolved," Japan, as a responsible member of the international community, is extending assistance to Africa to resolve these issues. Africa suffers a great many problems such as poverty and conflict (see the chart, "African Issues" in Figures), and it is the only continent that is forecast to achieve none of the MDGs. The grave African issues cannot be ignored for humanitarian reasons, and at the same time problems which have transnational effects, such as terrorism, infectious diseases, and environmental degradation, may pose a serious threat to the international community.

Secondly, within the international community, Japan is proactively carrying out discussions with and encouraging African countries to cooperate to realize its own ideas. There are 53 countries in Africa, accounting for nearly 30% of all the countries in the world; they carry considerable weight in the decision-making at international fora, where in many cases voting is carried out on a one-country-one-vote basis. In particular, since the establishment of the African Union (AU), Africa increasingly tends to vote as a single bloc, which further adds to Africa's influence.

In addition, Japan supports the promotion of trade and investment, and it is enhancing collaboration to strengthen its economic relations with Africa and make the continent's countries more stable. Africa has not only a variety of resources but also the hidden potential to become an enormous market. It could therefore become

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1. The first elections following internal conflict were held in Burundi and Liberia; the first elections following coups d'etat were held in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic; and a constitutional referendum was held in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mandate for PKO in Sierra Leone ended, and troops were withdrawn.
2. Conflict in Ethiopia and Eritrea, dispute in Somalia, etc.
3. New coups d'etat and breakouts of political tension during 2005 included the unconstitutional attempt to name the presidential successor in Togo; the coup d'etat in Mauritania; the rejection of the resolution on constitutional reform and the dismissal of the cabinet in Kenya; and the military confrontation in Côte d'Ivoire.
4. G8 Gleneagles Summit communiqués "Africa" and "Africa Progress Report."
5. UNDP: Human Development Report 2004.

a very important trading partner for Japan. For example, deposits of the rare metals vital to cutting-edge industries are concentrated in Africa, and Japan is importing them in large quantities. Furthermore, considering future trends in the international oil market, great attention is paid to Africa's crude oil reserves, which account for 9.4% of the world total. Also, Africa's population represents a market of approximately 900 million people, or 14% of the world population. And as the population growth rate in Africa is the fastest in the world, it is estimated that Africa will have about 17% of the world's population by 2025, and about 20% by 2050, meaning that in the future it is likely to become an even greater market.

(2) Japan's Basic Policies During the "Year of Africa"

Throughout 2005, when the attention of the international community was focused on Africa, Japan continued its cooperation with the international community and worked to further diplomacy toward Africa that centers on the provision of assistance.

There were a number of major international meetings about Africa during 2005. The Asian-African Summit 2005, which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the first Asian-African Conference, was held in April. Like the original conference 50 years ago, the summit was held in Indonesia and it declared to build cooperation between Asia and Africa. The G8 Gleneagles Summit, which was held in July, included major discussions on efforts by the international community toward African issues. The High-Level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly, held in September, included talks on the issue of world poverty. These talks were centered on African issues, giving consideration to the current status of achievement of the MDGs. A major topic for discussion at the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Conference, held in December, was the response to the development problems of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), of which the majority are African countries. On the basis of these trends, 2005 was indeed the "Year of Africa."

This increase in interest among the international community can be regarded as the fruit of Japan's efforts to arouse world awareness about Africa. Throughout the 1990s, when attention to African issues among Western donor countries had fallen after the end of the Cold War, Japan promoted the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD; see (b)) process, and it has become the world's biggest policy forum for African development. Also, Japan took the opportunity of the G8

Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Aisawa on the pitch at a friendly soccer match against African ambassadors in Tokyo. The match was organized by parliamentarians promoting soccer diplomacy (May 20, National Stadium, Tokyo)

Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000 to hold the first-ever outreach sessions with African countries in the G8's history. Japan has received many voices of gratitude and trust from African countries for these initiatives.

Furthermore, 2005 was a year in which coordination with African countries was pivotal in efforts toward reconstructing the international framework, particularly reform of the UN and the UN Security Council, as these countries can greatly influence the direction of such efforts. Japan regards the countries of Africa as important partners for the construction of an international framework that reflects Japan's principles and ideas. In the case of reform of the UN and the UN Security Council, although achieving concrete results have been put off until 2006, Japan carried out close consultations with African countries and searched for possible ways to accomplish the reform.

(b) Japan's Specific Efforts

(1) Japan's Active Contributions in the "Year of Africa"

During 2005, Japan unveiled a number of initiatives for African development at various international meetings, with a view to contributing to the efforts by the entire international community to address the challenges facing Africa. At the Asian-African Summit, in April, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced that Japan would host TICAD IV in 2008 and double its ODA to Africa over the following three years. In July, Prime Minister Koizumi stated Japan's intention to increase its ODA volume by US$10 billion in aggregate over the following five years at the G8 Gleneagles Summit. Furthermore, in December Prime Minister Koizumi set out comprehensive "Development Initiative

for Trade"[6] for the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Conference with a view to promoting the development of developing countries (especially LDC) through trade.

Japan, in cooperation with the international community, will continue to provide assistance to Africa in the areas where it is most needed, in order to keep the favorable momentum which was heightened during the "Year of Africa."

(2) Strengthening Relations with Africa in the International Fora

Japan is working to build cooperative relations with Africa as the continent could be a powerful partner for Japanese diplomacy in the international community. For example, regarding the reform of the UN Security Council, which has attracted great attention in the world, Japan along with the other G4 countries had a meeting with AU foreign ministers and Japan also discussed the issue with African leaders on various occasions to gain momentum for the reform through strengthened trust and cooperative relations.

Such endeavors in the international fora led to Africa's support for Japan's candidature in many important elections and its position in a number of international conferences. In the election for the director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in October, the AU as a whole made the collective decision to give its full support for the reelection of Director-General Koichiro Matsuura, which proved to be a significant factor in his reelection. In the June meeting of the International Whaling Committee (IWC), most African member states shared Japan's position to support sustainable whaling.

(3) Sustainable, Long-Term Efforts through the TICAD Process

Japan held TICAD I in 1993, co-organizing the event with the UN and the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA). TICAD II and TICAD III were held in 1998 and 2003, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (from 1994) and the World Bank (from 2000) newly joining as co-organizers. The TICAD process emphasizes Africa's ownership and partnership by the international community as its basic philosophy, and sets "consolidation of peace," "poverty reduction through economic growth," and "human-centered development" as its three pillars.

In 2005, under the concept of "poverty reduction through economic growth," a number of measures to promote trade and investment with Africa were taken to follow up the TICAD Asia-Africa Trade and Investment Conference (AATIC) in 2004. More specifically, "Team All Japan" comprised of institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI), and Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) have implemented various measures based on four concepts, namely, (1) the formulation of an appropriate policy for the promotion of industry, (2) the promotion of product development based on comparative advantages, (3) the empowerment of local SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), and (4) the promotion of social contributions by private enterprises.

Moreover, in order to support "consolidation of peace" through Africa's ownership, the Japanese government decided upon and disbursed in March assistance totaling 6.7 billion yen for 14 post-conflict African countries, including Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in fields such as refugee repatriation, small arms and light weapons collection, community rebuilding, and assistance for elections.
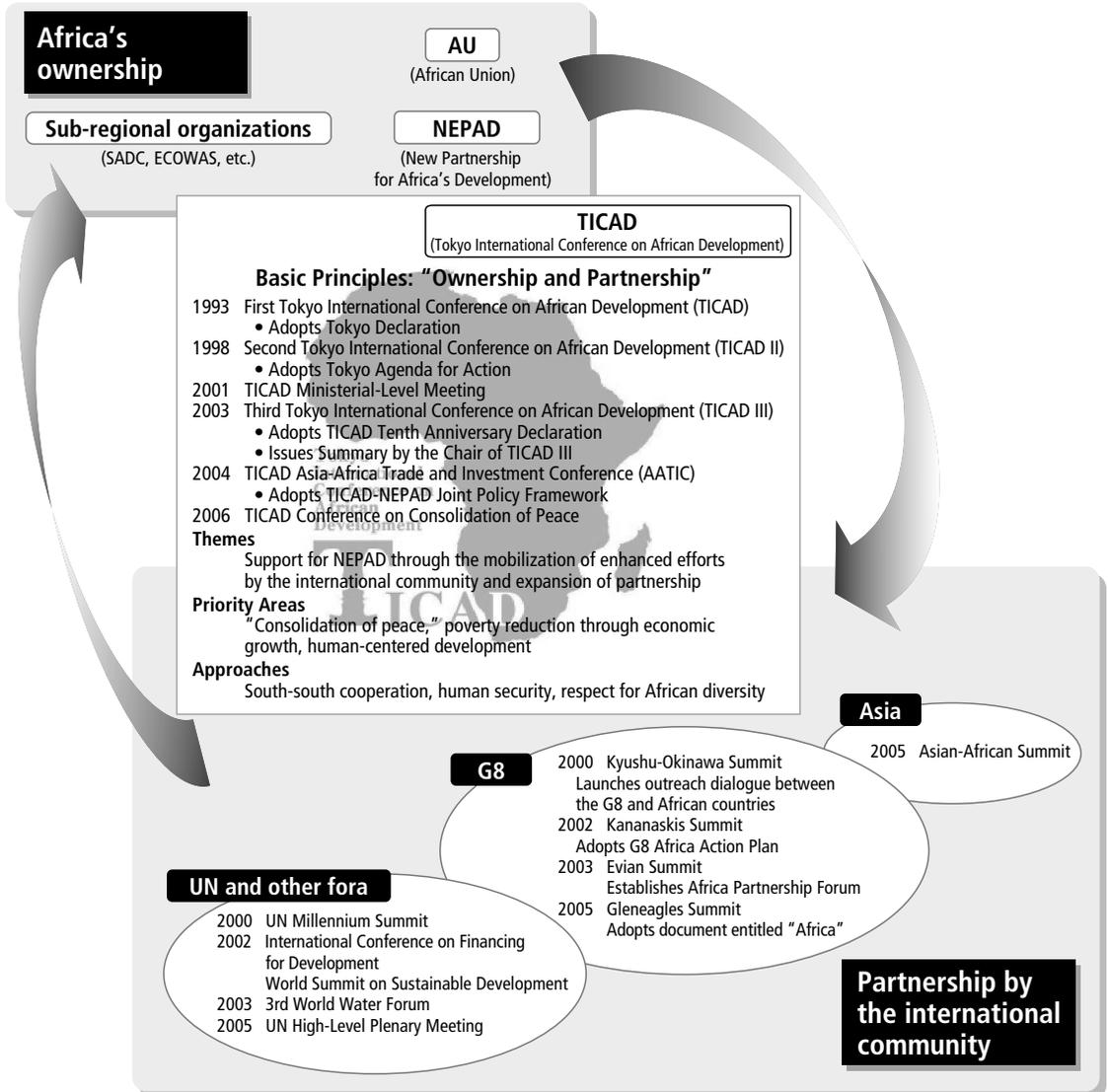
At the UN General Assembly in September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Nobutaka Machimura announced that Japan would host a TICAD conference on issues arising in the post-conflict situation in Africa. In February 2006, the TICAD Conference on Consolidation of Peace was convened in Ethiopia. It was held with the participation of African countries, major development partners, and international organizations with a view to strengthening efforts by the international community to implement seamless and effective assistance from the end of conflict to reconstruction and development. The participants from Japan included Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yasuhisa Shiozaki, who chaired the conference, as well as former UN Assistant Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi.

(4) Encouraging Mutual Understanding between Japan and Africa

Taking advantage of the 2005 World Exposition, Aichi, Japan held in 2005, many Japanese people enjoyed African culture. Also, many dignitaries from Africa took this opportunity to visit Japan, while there were vigorous exchanges at both the governmental and non-govern-

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6. See page 172.

International Framework for African Development

Africa's ownership

AU
(African Union)

Sub-regional organizations
(SADC, ECOWAS, etc.)

NEPAD
(New Partnership
for Africa's Development)

TICAD
(Tokyo International Conference on African Development)

Basic Principles: "Ownership and Partnership"

1993   First Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)
  • Adopts Tokyo Declaration
1998   Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II)
  • Adopts Tokyo Agenda for Action
2001   TICAD Ministerial-Level Meeting
2003   Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III)
  • Adopts TICAD Tenth Anniversary Declaration
  • Issues Summary by the Chair of TICAD III
2004   TICAD Asia-Africa Trade and Investment Conference (AATIC)
  • Adopts TICAD-NEPAD Joint Policy Framework
2006   TICAD Conference on Consolidation of Peace

Themes
  Support for NEPAD through the mobilization of enhanced efforts
  by the international community and expansion of partnership

Priority Areas
  "Consolidation of peace," poverty reduction through economic
  growth, human-centered development

Approaches
  South-south cooperation, human security, respect for African diversity

Asia
2005   Asian-African Summit

G8
2000   Kyushu-Okinawa Summit
  Launches outreach dialogue between
  the G8 and African countries
2002   Kananaskis Summit
  Adopts G8 Africa Action Plan
2003   Evian Summit
  Establishes Africa Partnership Forum
2005   Gleneagles Summit
  Adopts document entitled "Africa"

UN and other fora
2000   UN Millennium Summit
2002   International Conference on Financing
  for Development
  World Summit on Sustainable Development
2003   3rd World Water Forum
2005   UN High-Level Plenary Meeting

Partnership by the international community

mental levels.

Japanese bilateral relations with African countries were also strengthened through a series of high-level visits to Africa, including a visit by Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Ichiro Aisawa to Rwanda in October, two visits to African countries by Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Katsuyuki Kawai in February and July, a visit to African countries by Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Itsunori Onodera in January, a visit to African countries by Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Keishiro Fukushima in May, and a visit to Liberia by Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Shintaro Ito to attend the inauguration ceremony of the new presi-

dent in January 2006.

In addition, "African Festa" in May, which attracted 63,000 people, was highly appreciated not just by Japanese people but also by the African diplomatic corp and African people in Japan. The event provided a rare opportunity for Japanese people not very familiar with Africa to deepen their mutual understanding.

(5) Cooperative Relations with Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations

Africa's regional organization (the AU) and sub-regional organizations (such as the Economic Community of

Japan-Africa Economic Relations

### Percent of World Reserves/Production of Major Resources in Africa

	Simple reserves	Usable reserves	Production (2003)	Uses
Platinum	88%	89%	72%	Jewelry, exhaust catalysts
Manganese	83%	17%	33%	Dry cells, magnets
Diamonds	58%	48%	47%	Jewelry
Phosphate rock	50%	42%	28%	Artificial fertilizers
Cobalt	Approx. 41%	53%	50%	Secondary cells, special alloy steel
Vermiculite	40%	28%	50%	Thermal insulators, lightweight aggregate
Gold	40%	19%	17%	Jewelry, telecommunications equipment
Gallium	33%	41%	N.A	Semiconductors
Vanadium	32%	23%	25%	Construction materials for high-rise buildings, bridges, superconducting magnets
Titanium iron & steel	30%	15%	22%	Passenger aircraft, submarines

Source: Mineral Commodity Summaries 2004.

Percent of World's Oil Produced by Africa (2004)

11%
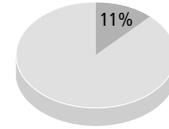
Percent of World's Oil Reserves in Africa

9%
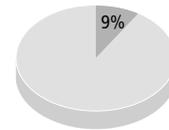
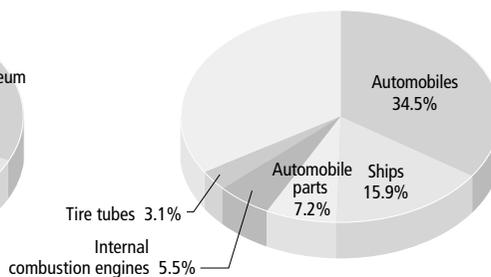Source: British Petroleum Statistics.

Japan-Africa Trade

(Million dollars)
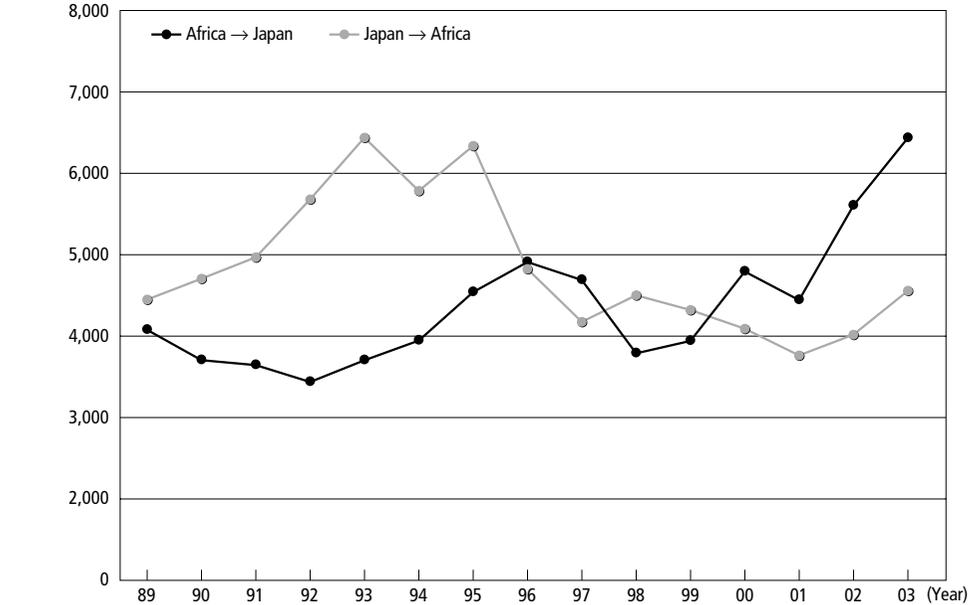
Source: IMF Direction of Trade Statistics.

Main Goods Exported from Africa to Japan (2004)

Crude oil, partly refined petroleum 31.8%
Platinum, platinum alloys 14.2%
Automobiles 9.6%
Crustaceans, mollusks, etc. 3.3%
Aluminum, aluminum alloys 4.2%
Woodchips 5.1%
Pig iron 5.6%

Main Goods Exported from Japan to Africa (2004)

Automobiles 34.5%
Ships 15.9%
Automobile parts 7.2%
Tire tubes 3.1%
Internal combustion engines 5.5%
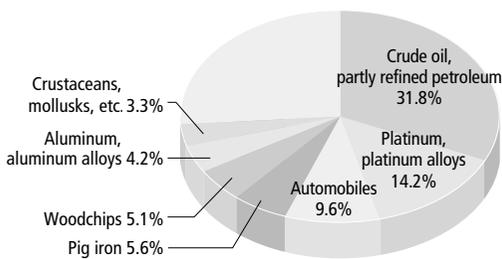
Source: Foreign Trade Statistics 2005.
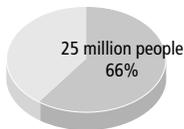
"African Issues" in Figures

Least Developed Countries in Africa as Percentage of World Total (50 countries)
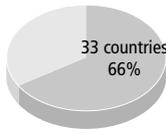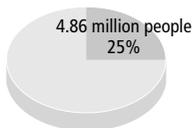
33 countries
66%

(As of February 2005)

Least Developed Countries: Developing countries in which development is particularly backward. Decided by UN General Assembly resolution based on standard criteria.

Average Life Expectancy at Birth (2003)

(Age)

|	
OECD countries	77.7
Central and Eastern Europe, CIS countries	68.1
East Asia, Pacific countries	70.5
Latin America, Caribbean countries	71.9
South Asia	63.4
Africa	46.1
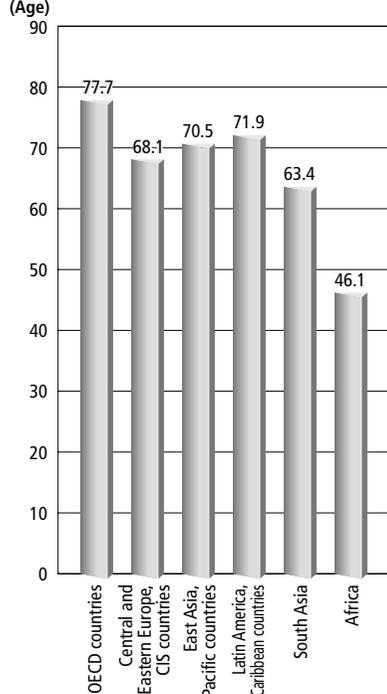
Source: Human Development Report 2005.

**Percentage of People in Africa Living on One Dollar a Day or Less (2001)**

46%

Source: Human Development Report 2005.

People Infected with HIV/AIDS in Africa as Percentage of World Total (2003)

25 million people
66%

Source: Report on the global AIDS epidemic 2004.
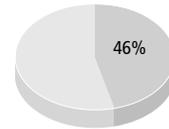
Illiteracy Rate for Africans Aged 15 or Over (2003)

39%

Source: Human Development Report 2005.

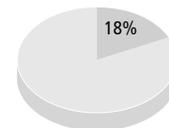**Percentage of World's Refugees/ Displaced Persons in Africa (2005)**

4.86 million people
25%

Source: UNHCR website.
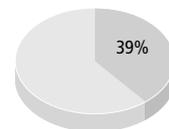
PKO Expenditure in Africa as Percentage of Total (2005/2006)

80%
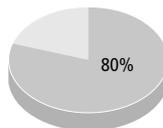
Source: Expenses calculated from UN General Assembly resolutions.

Mortality Rate for Infants Five or Under in Africa (2003)

18%

Source: Human Development Report 2005.

West African States [ECOWAS] and the Southern African Development Community [SADC]) have been working on the prevention and resolution of regional conflicts and economic development. Japan welcomes their energetic activities which represent Africa and are a form of the ownership stressed in the TICAD process, and has assisted such capacity building. Japan's high regard for these regional organizations was exemplified by the attendance at the 2005 SADC Summit by H.E. Ambassador Keitaro Sato in charge of Peace Building in

Africa as well as the appointment of H.E. Ambassador Kenjiro Izumi, first permanent representative of the Government of Japan to the AU.

(c) The Situation in Each Region
(1) East Africa

In Ethiopia, the results of the third national election in May gave a third term in office to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Since October 2005, tension has mounted over the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea due to

the restrictions the Eritrean government imposed on the activities of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), whose main mandate was to observe the ceasefire between the two countries. While Somalia has not had an effective national government since 1991, a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established in January. In Kenya, the entire cabinet was dismissed by President Kibaki after the proposed new constitution was rejected in a referendum in November. In Tanzania, a presidential election was held in December, and Jakaya Kikwete was newly elected as president. Uganda has witnessed an abatement of anti-government activities in the northern region, but more than 1.6 million people remain as refugees or Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda formed a customs union under the umbrella of the East African Community (EAC) that entered into force in January.

(2) Southern Africa

Angola marked the 30th anniversary of its independence in November. In Swaziland, where the constitution had been suspended since 1973, the King approved a new draft constitution in July 2005, which came into effect in February 2006. In South Africa, President Thabo Mbeki dismissed Deputy President Jacob Zuma after a former close associate of the deputy president was judged guilty of corruption and fraud in June. In Zimbabwe, whereas parliamentary elections were held in March and the ruling party claimed an overwhelming victory, Western observer countries strongly criticized the electoral process as not ensuring freedom or impartiality. Zimbabwe continues to have tense relations with the international community on issues such as the clearance of residential areas for illegal squatters in an operation called Operation Restore Order, which started in May.

(3) Central Africa

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as per the terms of the peace agreement, parliamentary and presidential elections are to be held by the end of June 2006, and as a first step, a new constitution was adopted in a referendum in December 2005. In Burundi, parliamentary and presidential elections were held and the administration of President Pierre Nkurunziza was established, which marked the completion of the transition to peace since internal conflict broke out in 1993. In Gabon a presidential election was held in November, and the incumbent Omar Bongo was reelected. Having served seven terms since his inauguration in 1967 and now in his 39th year, president Bongo is the longest-serving president in Africa. In the Central African Republic, the first parliamentary and presidential elections following a coup d'etat were held in June, and provisional President François Bozizé was officially inaugurated as president. In Chad, there was an increase in causes of political instability in the run-up to the presidential elections scheduled for 2006, including an increase in anti-government activity near the border with Sudan and the deterioration of relations with Sudan.

(4) West Africa

This was a seesawing year in the process toward the "consolidation of peace" in West Africa, where there have always been a repeated occurrences of conflict. In Côte d'Ivoire, where the situation had been deteriorating since November 2004, President Laurent Gbagbo accepted mediation by the AU and the UN. Although it was agreed that President Laurent Gbagbo, whose term of office ended in October, would remain in power as Head of State for up to 12 months, the appointment in December of Charles Konan Banny as the new prime minister allowed the peace process to continue its progress

Left: Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Ito together with US First Lady Laura Bush and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at the inauguration ceremony of the president of Liberia (January 16, 2006, Monrovia, Liberia) Right: Newly inaugurated President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia giving her inaugural speech

Major Conflicts in Africa (as of February 2006)

Sierra Leone

Outline: Civil war between the government and anti-government forces over occupation of the diamond-producing areas in the east of the country, which was started in March 1991 by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), backed by Charles Taylor of Liberia.

Trends/current status: The conflict intensified from then onward. The RUF received arms and military backing from Liberia using smuggled diamonds as collateral, and as the conflict continued the humanitarian situation worsened with repeated atrocities. UN-AMSIL (UN PKO) was deployed in October 1999. The completion of disarmament, etc., in January 2002 brought peace. Presidential elections were held peacefully in May 2005, and security has been stable since then. There are concerns, though, that the reconstruction progress is lagging behind. UNAMSIL withdrew at the end of 2005.

Challenges: Economic recovery and the country's own efforts after the withdrawal of UNAMSIL.

Liberia

Outline: Civil war broke out when Charles Taylor led a rebel army in an armed uprising against the government in 1989.

Trends/current status: Taylor assumed office as president in 1997, but military activity by anti-government forces increased in 2002. Refugees flowed into neighboring countries. The civil war intensified in August 2003; a comprehensive peace agreement was reached between the government and the anti-government forces through the mediation of the international community, and a transitional government established. UNMIL (UN PKO) was deployed in October 2003. Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration of Ex-Combatants (DDR), as well as repatriation of refugees, started in earnest in 2004. Presidential elections held October 2005. First democratically elected woman president inaugurated in January 2006.

Challenges: Smooth operation of the transitional government, steady implementation of reconstruction process.

Sudan

Outline: Civil war between the government (northern Arab Muslims) and anti-government forces (southern African Christians) broke out in 1983. Hostilities have intensified between Arab nomads and African peoples (both groups are Muslim) in western Darfur since 2003.

Trends/current status: Civil war ended with establishment of comprehensive north-south peace agreement in January 2005. UNMIS (UN PKO) deployed in March 2005. AMIS (AU mission) deployed to oversee ceasefire in Darfur in March 2004.

Challenges: Steady implementation of north-south peace process (fulfillment of peace agreement, reconstruction, reconciliation with anti-government forces), improvement of humanitarian and security issues in Darfur, peace agreement between parties concerned.

Ethiopia-Eritrea border conflict

Outline: Conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea over border demarcation

Trends/current status: A ceasefire was agreed in June 2000, and a peace agreement was signed in December 2000. UNMEE (UN PKO) was deployed. The conflict is in a deadlock as Eritrea has not lifted restrictions on the UNMEE activities imposed in October 2005, while Ethiopia has not progressed to full acceptance of the decision of the Boundary Commission.

Challenges: Border delimitation, restitution

Horn of Africa

Mano River basin countries

Côte d'Ivoire

Outline: Hostilities between government and anti-government forces (New Forces) broke out in September 2002. Peace agreement was concluded in January 2003, but country remains divided between north and south.

Trends/current status: French and UNOCI (UN PKO) forces are overseeing a ceasefire, but the situation deteriorated again in November 2004 when government forces struck at anti-government forces. UN Security Council passed a resolution, which included economic sanctions. In December 2005, the resolution was extended until December 2006.

Challenges: Rededication by concerned parties to implementing the peace agreement.

Somalia

Outline: A state of anarchy with armed forces holding various territories

Trends/current status: In October 2002, a ceasefire agreement was concluded. In October 2004, Interim President Abudllahi Yusuf Ahmed was elected. In December, Interim Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Ghedi was appointed, and in January 2005, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established in Nairobi. The government is being relocated to Mogadishu. Interim President Yusuf and Interim Speaker of the Federal Parliament Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adem signed the Aden Declaration calling for a Transitional Federal Parliament in January 2006.

Challenges: Establishment of a federal state.

Rwanda

Outline: Hostilities between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups since before independence in 1962.

Trends/current status: Genocide (Rwandan Genocide) was committed in 1994. Government formed by Rwandese Patriotic Front in July 1994. In May 2003, a new constitution was adopted. Presidential elections were held in August 2003, and parliamentary elections were held from September through October in the same year.

Challenges: Socio-economic development, national reconciliation.

Angola

Outline: Civil war between government and anti-government forces from the time of independence in 1975.

Trends/current status: There have been repeated peace negotiations and re-occurrences of civil war since 1990, and in 2002 the anti-government UNITA guerrilla forces were weakened, increasing the momentum for peace. Ceasefire agreement was signed in April 2002.

Challenges: Reconstruction of infrastructure, clearance of landmines, repatriation of refugees and displaced persons, reintegration of ex-combatants into society, implementation of national assembly and presidential elections, etc.

The Great Lakes region

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Outline: Hostilities between government and anti-government forces, both supported by neighboring countries, since the coup d'etat in 1997. MONUC (UN PKO) deployed in November 1999. Comprehensive agreement on transitional government established in December 2002. Interim government inaugurated in July 2003.

Trends/current status: Referendum on draft of new constitution held in December 2005. Parliamentary and presidential elections to be held by end of June 2006.

Challenges: "Consolidation of peace" under transitional government (in particular, restoration of civil order, and DDR, etc., in eastern region), implementation of parliamentary and presidential elections.

Burundi

Outline: Hostilities between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups since after independence in 1962.

Trends/current status: Civil war broke out in 1993. In 2001, a transitional government of interethnic collaboration was established. In April 2003, AMIB (AU mission) was deployed, and ONUB (UN PKO) took over from AMIB in May 2004. Communal elections in June 2005, Lower House elections in July 2005, and presidential elections in August were held democratically.
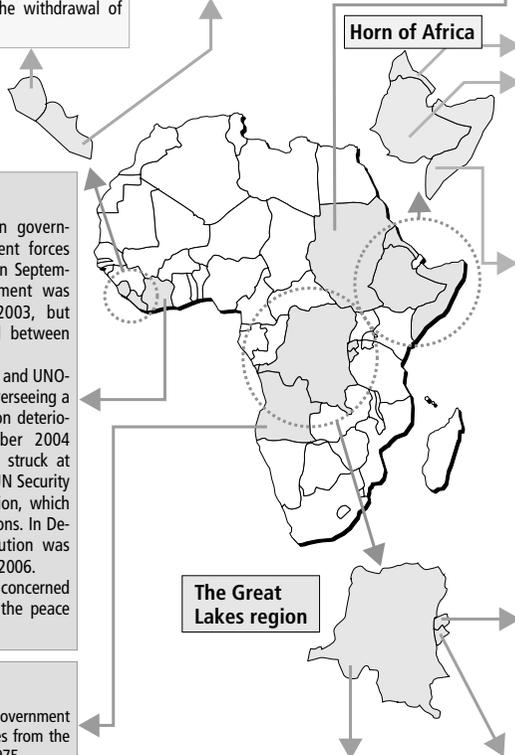
Challenges: Restoration of civil order, country's own efforts after the withdrawal of ONUB (scheduled for end of December 2006), socio-economic development.

unabated. In Togo, disturbance following the death of President Gnassingbe Eyadema in February was eased as a result of the presidential election, and in Mauritania the progress of the democratization process brought calm after a coup d'etat in August. In October and November, the presidential and parliamentary elections in Liberia were held peacefully, and in January 2006 Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was inaugurated as Africa's first democratically-elected woman president. Presidential elections were held in July in Guinea Bissau, which had been under an interim authority, and an official administration authority was launched with the inauguration of President João Bernardo Vieira. In Burkina Faso, incumbent President Blaise Compaoré was reelected in the presidential election held in November.

TOPIC

Japan's Support for the Fight against Malaria in Africa: Sumitomo Chemical Co.'s Olyset Net

Malaria is a parasitic disease transmitted to humans by the anopheles mosquito, which is seen throughout the world, especially in tropical and subtropical regions, infecting about 300 million people and taking more than one million lives each year. The disease is particularly severe in Africa where nine-tenths of the deceased victims are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the people who suffer from malaria are children under the age of five for whom it is the most frequent cause of death. Malaria causes losses equivalent to US$12 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) and its negative effects on the economy are serious and cannot be ignored.

A Japanese company has been playing an important role in addressing this problem which has to be tackled on a global scale. The use of mosquito nets is an effective way to prevent malaria. With its unique technology, Sumitomo Chemical Co. has developed a product called Olyset Net, an insecticidal bed net woven with fibers from synthetic resin embedded with insecticide. The net releases the active ingredient gradually so that it will retain insecticidal efficacy for five years even after repeated washings. In the Tanzanian village of Usariver where Olyset nets have been distributed to all houses, the number of people infected with malaria has fallen dramatically and children have to be taken to the hospital less often. This long-lasting insecticidal net has been officially approved by the World Health Organization (WHO). With the request of the WHO, Sumitomo has been working to expand supply capacity and reduce transportation costs by increasing Olyset production in Tanzania through the transfer of the manufacturing technology to a Tanzanian company (A to Z Textile Mills, hereafter referred to as A to Z Co.) with a no-fee license. In addition, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) provides financial resources needed to increase Olyset production to a corporation invested in by Sumitomo. Since the Olyset Net production started, A to Z Co. has provided 900 new job opportunities. Another 1,000-plus new jobs will be created with this increased level of production.

The Government of Japan, which has been actively committed to the fight against infectious diseases including malaria, has decided to provide 10 million long-lasting insecticidal nets to Africa by the year 2007. Through public-private partnership, Japan is not only contributing to malaria prevention but also providing an economic boost including the creation of local employment thorough investment promotion.

A child sleeping under a light blue Olyset Net
(Photo: Telepack Co., Ltd)