

## Section 8

## Africa

### 1 Overview

Africa, with a population of over 1.4 billion in 54 countries, is expected to account for a quarter of the world's population by 2050. It is a young, energetic continent full of potential. With abundant mineral resources and high economic growth rates, it is an important region in terms of Japan's economic security and securing value chains, and is also attracting global attention as a potential investment destination that should be further developed. At the same time, there are regions where peace and stability are threatened by conflicts, terrorism, and political turmoil, and they still face development challenges such as poverty and hunger.

To date, many countries and regions have held fora with Africa, including the United States (U.S.), France, Germany, the European Union (EU), Russia, China, the Republic of Korea (ROK), India, Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia. In 2024, there were numerous summit-level or ministerial-level fora with Africa, such as with Italy in January, with Nordic countries in May, with the ROK in June, with China and Indonesia in September, and with Türkiye and Russia in November. As the chair country, Italy set an agenda focused on Africa, including holding a session on “Africa, Climate Change and Development” at the G7 Apulia Summit in June. Since December, South Africa has served as the chair of the G20 and has presented an agenda that considers African development challenges, such as solidarity, equality, and sustainability, as Africa's role in the international community is becoming increasingly important.

Presidential and parliamentary elections that contributed to the consolidation and strengthening of democratic processes were held in countries such as Liberia,

Senegal, Chad, Rwanda, South Africa, Mauritius, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and Ghana. At the same time, in West Africa, the problems of terrorism and violent extremism continue to be serious in the Sahel region.<sup>(1)</sup> In the Horn of Africa<sup>(2)</sup> region, humanitarian crises are expanding as large numbers of people are being displaced due to conflicts and other factors, including in Sudan, where the armed conflict continues between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). In the Great Lakes region, particularly in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, armed groups remain active, and the human rights and humanitarian situation continue to worsen.

In February, Prime Minister Kishida met with Kenyan President William Samoei Ruto during his visit to Japan, and the two leaders concurred in working together to strengthen bilateral relations, including economic relations, promote a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” and enhance cooperation in the international arena. During the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in April, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held a foreign ministers' meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Mauritians Abroad of Mauritania Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug. Mauritania held the chair of the African Union (AU) and Minister Merzoug was a co-chair of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting.

In April, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria, and held foreign ministers' meetings in each country. In Madagascar, both sides confirmed their intention to strengthen

(1) The Sahel refers to a wide area located south of the Sahara Desert. Although there is no strict definition, it generally refers to the region including Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad.

(2) The “Horn of Africa” refers to the region on the northeastern part of the African continent that protrudes in the shape of a horn toward the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. It encompasses the countries of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, and Kenya.

bilateral cooperation in areas such as economic security and human resource development. Additionally, in Côte d'Ivoire, Foreign Minister Kamikawa exchanged views with local women leaders, and in Nigeria she held dialogues with internally displaced women.

TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in Tokyo in August (See the Opening Special Feature on page 8.) with representatives from 47 African countries, as well as international organizations, private companies, parliamentarians, and civil society groups participating. In preparation for the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9), scheduled for August 2025, discussions were held on three areas: society, peace and stability, and the economy. The session on the economy featured a new panel discussion and networking session with representatives from Japanese and African companies and Ministers. A meeting with female Ministers (in the form of a working lunch) and a welcome reception were also held, and the "TICAD Ministerial Meeting Joint Communiqué," the first of its kind at a TICAD Ministerial Meeting, was adopted as an outcome document.



Foreign Minister Kamikawa and Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Mauritians Abroad Merzoug, co-chair of the TICAD Ministerial Meeting (August 24–25, Tokyo)

TICAD 9 is scheduled to be held in Yokohama in August 2025. To lead the international community toward cooperation amid increasing division and confrontation in the world, Japan continues to work closely with African countries to co-create innovative solutions to African and global challenges, while emphasizing "ownership" by African countries and "partnership" by the international community.

## 2 African Union (AU)

The African Union Commission (AUC) is the secretariat of the African Union (AU), one of the world's largest regional institutions, and it works to achieve greater political and economic integration in Africa as well as prevent and resolve conflicts.

Taking advantage of the opportunity of the AU Summit in February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs FUKAZAWA Yoichi visited Ethiopia and held meetings and discussions with Deputy Chairperson of the AUC Monique Nsanzabaganwa, Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD), Nardos Bekele-Thomas, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment of the AUC, Josefa Leonel

Correia Sacko, and the Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of the AUC, Mohamed Belhocine.

In March, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa received a courtesy call by AUC Commissioner Sacko.

Deputy Chairperson of the AUC Nsanzabaganwa participated in the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August, and attended a working lunch for African female Ministers with Foreign Minister Kamikawa. She also held talks with the Minister.

In October, Chief Executive Officer of AUDA-NEPAD Nardos Bekele-Thomas visited Japan and paid a courtesy call on Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa.

## 3 East Africa

### (1) Uganda

Under President Yoweri Museveni's long-serving administration, Uganda has enjoyed economic growth owing to its stable domestic politics. The country currently hosts approximately 1.7 million refugees from neighboring countries, the largest number in Africa. In July, it was selected as the host country for the AU African Humanitarian Agency (AfHA). Uganda also contributes to stability in the Horn of Africa by, for example, deploying its military forces to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS). At the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, State Minister for Foreign Affairs (International Relations) Henry Oryem Okello met with State Minister for Foreign Affairs TSUJI Kiyoto. In November, Chief of Defence Forces of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Muhoozi Kainerugaba met with State Minister for Foreign Affairs FUJII Hisayuki, and both confirmed further enhancing bilateral relations and cooperation in the international arena.

### (2) Ethiopia

With the second largest population in Africa (130 million), Ethiopia has great economic potential. Since July, the country has been implementing macroeconomic reforms, including currency liberalization and fiscal reforms, with support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. While sporadic fighting continues in parts of Amhara region and elsewhere, after two years have passed since the end of the conflict in the north ern part of the country, the situation is generally stable. Through meetings such as the Japan-Ethiopia Policy Consultation held in April and a meeting between State Minister of Foreign Affairs Mesganu Arga Moach, who visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji, the two countries shared the view to further develop bilateral relations in a wide range of areas, including efforts to promote peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and expand investment by Japanese companies.

### (3) Eritrea

Eritrea is a country located on the international strait connecting the Indian Ocean, the Suez Canal, and Europe. Its territorial waters are a crossroads in terms of security, with many Japanese-related ships passing through it. The Embassy of Japan in Kenya had been accredited to Eritrea and had a dual-role consulate in the country, but, given the importance of Eritrea's role for the stability of the Horn of Africa region, it was upgraded to the Embassy of Japan in Eritrea in January 2025.

### (4) Kenya

Kenya is an important like-minded country for Japan that shares fundamental values and principles such as the "rule of law." It is also the economic hub of East Africa region and one of the leading hubs of Japanese companies in Africa. In February, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with President William Samoei Ruto, who paid an Official Visit to Japan, and the two leaders concurred in working together to strengthen economic relations, promote FOIP, and strengthen cooperation in the international arena. Foreign Minister Kamikawa met with Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Musalia Mudavadi, who visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, where they agreed to launch the Japan-Kenya Policy Dialogue. In January 2025, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii, head of the Public Private Sector Joint Mission for Promoting Trade and Investment in



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii at the Japan-Kenya Business Forum (January 16, 2025, Nairobi, Kenya)

Africa, visited Kenya and held wide-ranging discussions with government officials and business representatives from both countries toward promoting economic exchanges between the two countries.

### **(5) Union of Comoros**

The Union of Comoros is Japan's partner and supports FOIP as a maritime nation like Japan. Under President Assoumani Azari, who was re-elected in the presidential election in January, the country has set the goal of becoming an emerging nation by 2030 under the "2030 Comoros Emerging Plan," and is promoting the development of infrastructure such as ports and the blue economy<sup>(3)</sup> through sustainable fishing practices. In August, Foreign Minister Kamikawa met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mohamed Mbae, who was visiting Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, where the two ministers shared the view to cooperate closely to promote FOIP.

### **(6) Djibouti**

Djibouti is strategically located on a major trade route connecting Europe and Asia and is an important partner in realizing FOIP. Since 2009, Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) have been engaged in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. The SDF base established in Djibouti in 2011 is also used for the protection and transportation of Japanese nationals abroad. In addition, in December 2024, Japan and Djibouti exchanged notes for the first Official Security Assistance (OSA) project (provision of a coastal surveillance radar system, among other items). During his visit to Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Ali Hassan held talks with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa and they shared the view to further develop Japan-Djibouti relations ahead of TICAD 9.

### **(7) Sudan**

In Sudan, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have been fighting since April

2023. More than 11 million people have been displaced both inside and outside the country, creating a serious humanitarian crisis. Japan is providing humanitarian assistance to improve the humanitarian situation in Sudan and neighboring countries and is also working toward peace and stability in the region through efforts such as those made by its Ambassador, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. In July, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji met with Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Gibril Ibrahim Mohamed, who was visiting Japan to attend the 5th Japan-Arab Economic Forum, and the two sides shared the view to work closely together to achieve peace and stability in the region.

### **(8) Seychelles**

Seychelles has one of the largest economic zones in the Indian Ocean and is an important partner for realizing FOIP. In June, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force's (JMSDF) training ships made a friendly port call at the country, followed by a destroyer in July, and the two countries conducted friendly drills. In August, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism Louis Sylvestre Radegonde visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, and met with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, in which they shared the view to further develop bilateral relations and continue to cooperate in the international arena.

### **(9) Somalia**

Peacebuilding and nation-building efforts are continuing in Somalia under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who took office in May 2022, and Japan is supporting the efforts of the Somali government. In 2024, Japan also provided support for strengthening the capabilities of police organizations, in addition to providing humanitarian assistance to people affected by terrorist activities by the radical Islamist group Al-Shabaab and by climate change. In August, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Ahmed Moallim Fiqi visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, where they confirmed the further development of bilateral relations and

<sup>(3)</sup> A concept to promote sustainable economic growth using marine resources.



cooperation in the international arena with Somalia, which will become a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) from 2025.

### (10) Tanzania

Tanzania is located in a strategic position connecting eastern and southern Africa and continues to experience economic growth thanks to its stable domestic politics. In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji visited Tanzania, where he met with Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation January Yusuf Makamba and others, and exchanged views with representatives of Japanese companies. Furthermore, at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji met with Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation Cosato David Chumi, where the two countries shared the view to work closely together to strengthen economic ties. Furthermore, the Embassy of Japan in Tanzania co-hosted the Japan-Tanzania Business Forum in July and the Japan-Tanzania Business Dialogue in August with relevant local organizations, with the aim of supporting the expansion of Japanese companies into the country and improving the business environment.

### (11) Burundi

Burundi is a landlocked country located in the central part of the African continent. Since the 1970s, Japan has been providing development cooperation to the country, such as infrastructure development at the Port of Bujumbura and improvements to basic social services. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation Albert Shingiro, who visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, met with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, where they shared the view to cooperate to strengthen connectivity in the East African region.

### (12) Madagascar

Madagascar is an island country in the Indian Ocean located off the southeastern coast of Africa that supports FOIP and is also an important supplier of mineral resources. In April, Foreign Minister Kamikawa became the first Japanese foreign minister to visit the country, paying a courtesy call on President Andry Nirina Rajoelina and meeting with Minister of Foreign



Foreign Minister Kamikawa inspects the mobile clinic during her visit to Madagascar (April 28, Antananarivo, Madagascar)

Affairs Rafaravavitaifika Rasata. The two ministers concurred on working together to promote economic resilience through cooperation in the development of a wider urban area and others by using “Co-creation for common agenda initiative” launched in the new Development Cooperation Charter. Foreign Minister Kamikawa also met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Rasata during the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August.

### (13) South Sudan

South Sudan has been in turmoil since clashes that broke out in December 2013, but a Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan was signed in September 2018. A general election based on the agreement was scheduled to be held in December 2024, but due to delays in preparations for the election, it was decided to extend the deadline for implementing the agreement by two years. Japan continues to support the peace and stability of South Sudan through development cooperation by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and support for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). When Minister of Foreign Affairs Ramadan Mohammed Abdallah Goc visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Foreign Minister Kamikawa had a meeting with him, and stated that Japan would continue to support efforts toward stability in South Sudan.

### (14) Mauritius

Mauritius, with which Japan shares fundamental values and principles, is an important partner for realizing FOIP. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration

and International Trade Maneesh Gobin, who visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, met with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, where they shared the view to promote cooperation in the fields of maritime security and the blue economy, as well as to expand investment. In October, Mauritius reached an agreement with the United Kingdom (UK) on the issue of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, confirming that the UK would recognize Mauritius' sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, subject to the conclusion of a treaty and accompanying legal documents. National Assembly elections were held in November and the opposition coalition led by Navinchandra Ramgoolam won, bringing about a change of government.

## 4 Southern Africa

### (1) Angola

Angola has a stable political foundation and plays an important role in regional peace and stability through active multilateral diplomacy. The country, which has abundant resources, is working to improve the business environment and promote domestic industries with the aim of diversifying and stabilizing its economy. In July, the Japan-Angola Investment Agreement came into force. In August, Minister of Industry and Commerce Rui Miguéns de Oliveira, who was visiting Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, met with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukuzawa and discussed enhancing cooperation with Angola, which will serve as the AU chair in 2025, toward TICAD 9. The two ministers also talked about promoting investment by Japanese companies.

### (2) Eswatini

Eswatini maintains the only absolute monarchy in Africa under King Mswati III. It is also the only country in Africa that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla, who visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, met with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, where they shared the view to continue cooperation in areas such as food security and education.

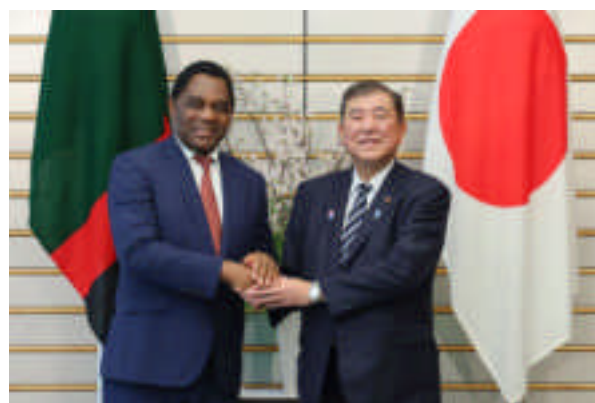
### (15) Rwanda

As Rwanda marks the 30th anniversary of the genocide, efforts toward national reconciliation and economic growth are continuing under the leadership of President Paul Kagame. President Kagame was re-elected in the presidential election held in July.

In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji visited Rwanda and met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Vincent Biruta. In August, he met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation James Kabarebe, who was visiting Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, where the two ministers shared the view to cooperate to further develop bilateral relations.

### (3) Zambia

In 2024, Zambia, a country with abundant mineral resources such as copper, celebrated the 60th anniversary of its independence and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Japan. In April, Minister of Mines and Minerals Development Paul Kabuswe visited Japan to attend a mining investment seminar. In August, Japan decided to provide an Emergency Grant Aid for food assistance to Zambia in response to the country's food insecurity. In the same month, Minister of Finance and National Planning Situmbeko Musokotwane visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, and met with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, where they shared the view to cooperate to further strengthen bilateral relations,



Japan-Zambia Summit Meeting (February 6, 2025, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

including economic relations. In February 2025, President Hakainde Hichilema paid his first official working visit to Japan and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba. The two leaders welcomed the signing of the Japan-Zambia Investment Agreement and shared the view to strengthen bilateral relations, including business relations, and deepen cooperation in the international arena.

#### (4) Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a key location in Southern Africa for transportation, distribution, and power transmission, and is a landlocked country with abundant mineral resources and fertile land. From August, it began serving as the chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Japan has maintained good diplomatic relations with Zimbabwe since its independence in 1980. In March, Japan made the decision to assist with the rehabilitation of the North-South Corridor, which will contribute to Zimbabwe's integration into the regional economy. In August, Japan decided to provide food aid to counter drought. Furthermore, at Japan-Zimbabwe Foreign Ministers' Meeting held during the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Frederick Musiwa Makamure Shava expressed gratitude for the assistance and discussed the stable supply of resources.

#### (5) Namibia

Following the sudden passing of President Hage G. Geingob in February, power was transferred peacefully to the new president, Nangolo Mbumba. In the presidential election held in November, Vice President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, candidate of the ruling South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), won.

In August, Japan made the decision to provide food aid through an Emergency Grant Aid to Namibia, which is suffering from serious drought damage. In the same month, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Peya Mushelenga, who was visiting Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, met with Foreign Minister Kamikawa where they confirmed that they would strengthen cooperation in a wide range of fields toward industrial diversification.

#### (6) Botswana

Botswana held a general election on October 30, and the opposition party, Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), won a majority in the National Assembly election, with UDC leader Duma Gideon Boko taking office as the new president on November 8. This was the first change of government since Botswana's independence in 1966, but both the electoral process and the transition of power were carried out democratically and peacefully in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

In August, Minister of Foreign Affairs Lemogang Kwape visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting and held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Kamikawa, in which they confirmed that they would promote cooperation in the areas of industrial diversification and human resource development, which are priorities for Botswana.

#### (7) Malawi

Malawi has maintained stable domestic affairs since its independence in 1964. Japan has built friendly relations with Malawi over many years, with which it shares fundamental values and principles. To mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Japan invited Minister of Foreign Affairs Nancy Tembo to Japan as a guest of the ministry in August. Foreign Minister Kamikawa met with Foreign Minister Tembo and the two shared the view to continue to cooperate in various fields, such as human resources development in the mining sector and further enhancing friendly relations through JICA volunteers, of which the largest cumulative number in the world have been dispatched to Malawi.



Japan-Malawi Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 24, Tokyo)

### (8) South Africa

In the general election held in May, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) received less than half of the votes for the first time since 1994, leading to the establishment of a Government of National Unity (GNU) with other parties. Under the reappointed President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, the country has served as the G20 chair since December, and continues to attract interest from foreign companies, including Japanese, as an economic powerhouse in Africa, as well as a base for expanding business operations. In July, JMSDF's training ships made a port call at the country, and the two countries conducted friendly training drills. In August, Foreign Minister Kamikawa met with Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Ronald Lamola during the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, where the two countries affirmed to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperate in the international arena. In December, Minister of Electricity and Energy Kgosientsho Ramokgopa visited Japan to strengthen cooperative relations in the energy sector, including hydrogen, ammonia, and electricity.



Japan-South Africa Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 23, Tokyo)

### (9) Mozambique

Mozambique is a strategic location facing FOIP from the west as the gateway to Southeast Africa, and development by foreign capital is progressing against the

backdrop of the country's abundant natural resources such as natural gas, coal, and graphite. Due to continuing attacks by armed groups in the north, a liquefied natural gas (LNG) development project in which Japanese companies have been participating has been suspended since 2021. The Government of Japan continues to provide various forms of support to improve security. In March, the two countries confirmed the importance of working together to advance multifaceted development that will lead to the stabilization of Cabo Delgado Province and growth of the entire northern region by using the Co-creation for common agenda initiative, a first for Africa, and shared the view to continue coordinating efforts to realize this. In August, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Manuel José Gonçalves visited Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, where he met with Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji and expressed his gratitude for Japan's cooperation in improving security in the north and for Nacala Port, which opened in October of the previous year. The two sides agreed to continue cooperation in various fields, including energy.

### (10) Lesotho

Lesotho is a landlocked country with most of its land mass being mountainous. It has abundant water resources, and exports water to neighboring countries. Japan has also built cooperative relations in various fields, including providing support for the country's small hydroelectric power generation facilities. In August, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held a meeting with Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Limpho Justice Tau, who was visiting Japan to attend the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, where they confirmed that bilateral relations would be strengthened through the promotion of renewable energy, human resource development targeting young people, food security, the blue economy, and other areas.



## COLUMN

## The 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Zambia

In 2024, Japan and Zambia celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Zambia is a landlocked country in southern Africa that borders eight neighboring countries. Since its independence, it has maintained a stable political system and has come to be known as the “Beacon of Peace” in southern Africa. It is also known for its beautiful nature and abundant mineral resources, such as copper. In particular, Victoria Falls, located on the border with Zimbabwe and registered as a World Heritage Site, captivates visitors with its grandeur. Zambia is also known for its national parks, which are home to a diverse range of wildlife, and for being a country where traditional culture coexists with modern cities.

The friendly relations between Japan and Zambia began coinciding with Zambia gained independence in 1964. That year, the Tokyo Olympics were held in Japan, and Zambia participated under its then name of Northern Rhodesia. The closing ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics was held on October 24, the day Zambia resoundingly declared its independence, and the brand new Zambian flag was hoisted on the international stage for the first time, creating a historic moment that is unique in Olympic history.

Japan has engaged in a wide range of cooperation in numerous fields to support Zambia's economic and social development. In particular, the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Zambia, which was completed in 1986 with assistance from Japan, has served as a flagship symbolizing the friendly relations between the two countries. To date, over 200 researchers from Hokkaido University have provided training and instruction there, while students from the University of Zambia have visited Japan to obtain degrees, etc.

Numerous commemorative events were held across both countries in 2024 to mark the important milestone of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, promoting mutual understanding and deepening friendly relations between Japan and Zambia. Examples of these include the overseas traveling exhibition “NINGYO: Art and Beauty of Japanese dolls” organized by the Japan Foundation (JF) and the photo exhibition “60 Years of Cooperation and Friendship, From Japan to Zambia” organized by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), both held at the Lusaka National Museum in Zambia.



Special performance by the Japanese drum (*wadaiko*) group “SAI” (September 3, Lusaka, Zambia)

Among these, the performance in Zambia by the Japanese drum (*wadaiko*) group “SAI”<sup>1</sup> was an important large-scale cultural event that further strengthened the friendly relations between the two countries. From August 31 to September 3, the group performed powerful, rhythmic and dynamic Japanese drum performances to a total audience of approximately 3,200 people at four venues, and at each venue, the standing audience gave them thunderous applause. Such cultural exchange events not only helped to bring the people of Japan and Zambia closer together but also laid the foundation for building even stronger friendly relations.

In addition, the commemorative logo selected from among many entries was based on the colors of the two countries' flags and features Zambia's national bird, the African fish eagle, and Japan's national flower, the cherry blossom. It beautifully weaves together symbols of the nature, strength, and culture of both countries, embodying the pride and gratitude for the past, present, and future partnership between Japan and Zambia.



Furthermore, President Hakainde Hichilema paid his first official working visit to Japan from February 3 to 7, 2025. President Hichilema held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba, and the two leaders shared the view to further strengthen economic relations and enhance cooperation in the international arena. During the president's visit to Japan, he met with His Majesty the Emperor at the Imperial Residence. President Hichilema also attended the Japan-Zambia Business Forum and visited Japanese companies. The visit was also an opportunity to sign the Japan-Zambia Investment Agreement, providing momentum for further strengthening bilateral relations in light of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2024.



Presentation of the signed investment agreement at Japan-Zambia Summit Meeting (February 6, 2025, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

- <sup>1</sup> For more information on the 60th anniversary events taking place in Zambia, including this performance, please visit the official Facebook page of the Embassy of Japan in Zambia (updated regularly): [https://www.facebook.com/JAPANinZAMBIA/?locale=ja\\_JP](https://www.facebook.com/JAPANinZAMBIA/?locale=ja_JP)



## 5 Central Africa

### (1) Gabon

The interim government that was inaugurated in August 2023 is steadily progressing with the process of transferring power to civilian rule toward the presidential election scheduled to be held in 2025 as it conducted a national dialogue in April and a national referendum on a new constitutional proposal in November, both of which were peaceful and transparent. Japan is supporting Gabon's transition to civilian rule through measures such as strengthening the country's judicial system, including the signing and exchange of notes in July regarding the grant aid project "The Project for Promoting an Accountable, Effective and Inclusive Justice Sector (in cooperation with UNDP)."

### (2) Cameroon

Cameroon remains under the long-running administration of President Paul Biya. The government continues to work towards resolving issues in English-speaking regions.

In March, Japan signed and exchanged notes regarding the grant aid project "The Project for Promoting Sustainability and Strengthening International Competitiveness of Domestic Products by Enhancing Advanced Technologies" (in cooperation with UNIDO).

Minister of External Relations Lejeune Mbella Mbella attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held a foreign ministers' meeting with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

### (3) Democratic Republic of the Congo

President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo began his second term in office in January. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa attended the presidential inauguration ceremony later that month as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy and held talks with the president.

Japan is promoting cooperation on socio-economic development of the country, including infrastructure support in areas such as transportation and electricity.

In the eastern region, activities by armed groups have led to the internal displacement of people and a worsening human rights and humanitarian situation, resulting in the deployment of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). Japan is providing assistance through the reestablishment of a local policing model.

Delegated Minister to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Francophonie



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa pays a courtesy call on President Tshisekedi at the Democratic Republic of the Congo presidential inauguration ceremony (January 20, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo)

in charge of Cooperation and Francophonie Bestine Kazadi Ditabala, attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji.

Mpox infections began to spread around the fall of 2023, and in August 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). In response to a request from the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Japan signed and exchanged notes with the government of the country in September regarding the donation of vaccines and other supplies.

#### (4) Republic of Congo

The Republic of Congo is home to the vast Congo Basin and is actively working to address climate change issues, including forest conservation.

As food security measures are an urgent issue, Japan continues to provide food aid to the country through the United Nations World Food Program (WFP).

#### (5) Sao Tome and Principe

Sao Tome and Principe has a rich natural environment and is focusing on the environment, such as ecotourism. In December, it graduated from being a least developed country (LDC). The Government of Japan continues to provide food aid, and the counterpart funds<sup>(4)</sup> accumulated in return for food aid are used to promote the country's economic and social development.

#### (6) Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea remains under the long-running administration of President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. Japan appointed Francisco Esono Mba Onguene as its first Honorary Consul in Malabo.

In February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa met with Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Simeón Oyono Esono Angue during his visit to Ethiopia for the AU Assembly.

Secretary of State for International Organizations Mari-Cruz Evna Andeme attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa.

#### (7) Chad

Chad held a presidential election in May and interim President Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno was inaugurated as president. A national assembly election was held in December, which was an important part of the process towards the country's transition to civilian rule.

In February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Mahamat Saleh Annadif during his visit to Ethiopia for the AU Assembly.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abderaman Koulamallah attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

Japan values and encourages the role that Chad plays in maintaining peace and stability in the Sahel and Lake Chad regions and continues to provide food aid. Japan also supports the host communities (host areas) facing an increasing burden due to the acceptance of refugees and displaced persons from neighboring countries, including Sudanese refugees.

#### (8) Central African Republic

There are numerous anti-government armed groups in the Central African Republic where the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) is deployed. Although the security and humanitarian

<sup>(4)</sup> The recipient government is required to deposit a certain amount of surplus local currency generated when the Japanese government provides aid funds (foreign currency) in a local currency bank account (counterpart funds). The recipient government may use the counterpart funds for projects and procurement of goods that contribute to economic and social development, after discussing the use of the funds with the Japanese government through its diplomatic missions overseas.



TICAD Ministerial Meeting Female Ministers Working Lunch (August 23, Tokyo)

situation is improving, there remain a large number of internally displaced persons.

In September, Japan signed and exchanged notes for grant aid for food aid in collaboration with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP).

Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Francophonie and Central Africans Abroad Sylvie Baïpo-Temon attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August, where she attended a working lunch with African female ministers hosted by Foreign Minister



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto speaking at the 3rd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum (December 16, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire)

Kamikawa and held a foreign ministers' meeting with her. In December, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MATSUMOTO Hisashi attended the 3rd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum held in Côte d'Ivoire and met with Minister in charge of Trade and Industry Thierry Patrick Akoloza.

## 6 West Africa

### (1) Ghana

The Akufo-Addo administration, which started its second term from 2021, has promoted investment and industrial diversification, as well as focused on revitalizing the domestic economy, including the debt situation.

Japan continues to support Ghana in a wide range of areas, including infectious disease control through the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research.

In January, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa visited Ghana and paid a courtesy call on Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey.

Minister Botchwey attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August, where she attended a working lunch for African female ministers hosted by Foreign Minister Kamikawa, and held a foreign ministers' meeting with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

A presidential election was held in December, and

former President John Dramani Mahama was elected president. The vote was conducted peacefully without any major disturbance, highlighting the maturity of democracy in the country.

### (2) Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde has a well-established democracy and enjoys a high degree of political stability.

In January, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji met with Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation Miryan Djamila Sena Vieira, who was visiting Japan, and the two sides confirmed that they would cooperate on regional and global issues through fora such as TICAD and the United Nations (UN).

Additionally, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Regional Integration Rui Alberto de Figueiredo Soares attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.



### (3) The Gambia

The Gambia is pursuing reforms based on fundamental values and principles such as democracy and the rule of law. At the same time, it faces social issues such as a fragile economic structure dependent on agriculture and serious poverty.

In order to contribute to stabilizing the country's food supply, Japan signed and exchanged notes in August regarding grant aid for food aid.

### (4) Guinea

In Guinea, a transitional process to civilian rule is underway under a transitional government that was established in September 2021. Guinea has abundant water resources and fertile land. It is also a major producer of mineral resources such as bauxite and iron.

Japan has been friendly relations with Guinea over the years, and to support the country's sustainable development, the two sides signed and exchanged notes in April regarding support for the development of economic infrastructure, and in August regarding grant aid for food aid.

During the 3rd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum held in Côte d'Ivoire in December, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto met with Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ismaël Nabé.

### (5) Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau aims to overcome poverty and political instability by taking advantage of its fertile lands, blessed with fishery and mineral resources. Japan provides food aid and other support to Guinea-Bissau.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Communities Carlos Pinto Pereira, attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa. During the 3rd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum held in Côte d'Ivoire in December, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto met with Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Integration Soares Sambu.

### (6) Côte d'Ivoire

In February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa met with Minister for National



Foreign Minister Kamikawa inspecting the new maternal and child health care annex of the University Hospital Center of Cocody (April 29, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire)

Education and Literacy Mariatou Koné, during his visit to Ethiopia for the AU Assembly.

In April, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Côte d'Ivoire, where she paid a courtesy call on President Alassane Ouattara and met with Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Ivorians Abroad Kacou Houadja Léon Adom. Foreign Minister Kamikawa also inspected the new maternal and child health care annex of the University Hospital Center of Cocody, the largest hospital in Côte d'Ivoire, which was constructed and renovated with assistance from Japan, and met with women leaders of the country.

In June, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs KOMURA Masahiro met with Minister of Animal and Fishery Resources Sidi Tiémoko Touré, who was visiting Japan.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Ivorians Abroad Kacou Houadja Léon Adom attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

In December, the 3rd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum was held in Côte d'Ivoire, where Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto gave a speech to economic ministers from African countries and numerous private companies from Japan and Africa. The Vice-Minister also met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Adom and visited the Shinzo Abe / Japan-Côte d'Ivoire Friendship Intersection, which was constructed with Japanese assistance, the new maternal and child health care annex of the University Hospital Center of Cocody, and the Centre for the Promotion of Japanese Language

Education and Japanese Studies (Japan Corner) at the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, among other sites.

Côte d'Ivoire is scheduled to hold a presidential election in October 2025. To support the election, Japan signed and exchanged notes in October regarding the grant aid project "The Project for Preventing Conflicts related to Election and Promoting the Political Participation of Women and Vulnerable People (in cooperation with the UNDP)."

## (7) Sierra Leone

President Julius Maada Bio, who was re-elected in 2023, has made food security, human resource development, youth support, and technology promotion his domestic policy priorities.

During the United Nations Security Council Ministerial Meeting held in New York in March, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Frances Piagie Alghali paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

Japan and Sierra Leone signed and exchanged notes on assistance for improving agricultural productivity in May and on grant aid for food aid in August.

Also, Deputy Minister Alghali participated in the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and attended a working lunch with African female ministers hosted by Foreign Minister Kamikawa. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji held a meeting with Sierra Leone's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

## (8) Senegal

In the presidential election held in March, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, the opposition candidate, was elected for the first time. The vote was conducted peacefully without any major disturbance, highlighting the maturity of democracy in the country.

In January, Minister of Economy, Planning and Cooperation Doudou Ka, visited Japan and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa. Japan and Senegal also signed and exchanged notes regarding grant aid in the fisheries sector.

In February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa met with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad Ismaïla Madior Fall, during his visit to Ethiopia for the AU General Assembly.

In July, Japan signed and exchanged notes with Senegal regarding four grant aid projects in the fields of human resources development, health, landmine clearance, and food aid. In the same month, the JMSDF's training ships *Kashima* and *Shimakaze* called at the port of Dakar and conducted friendly drills with the Senegalese Navy.

Minister of African Integration and Foreign Affairs Yassine Fall attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August, where she participated in a working lunch with African female ministers hosted by Foreign Minister Kamikawa and held talks with her.

## (9) Togo

In Togo, agriculture accounts for about 40% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and about 70% of the workforce is employed in the sector.

In May, Japan signed and exchanged notes with Togo regarding the Economic and Social Development Program, a grant aid project to provide agricultural civil engineering equipment (tractors, bulldozers, etc.). Also, in August, notes were signed and exchanged regarding grant aid to provide food aid with Japanese government rice.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Togolese Abroad Robert Dussey, attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

## (10) Nigeria

In August, protests broke out across the country against the backdrop of soaring prices, but reform efforts towards sustainable economic growth progressed, including the start of domestic supply of domestically refined gasoline in September.

Japan is providing assistance to communities in three northeastern states that are facing threats such as terrorism to enhance governance and provide support to improve access to basic health services.

In April, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Nigeria and held a bilateral meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Maitama Tuggar. She also exchanged views on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) with female executives of UN agencies and female displaced persons.

Minister Tuggar attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with



Japan-Nigeria Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 23, Tokyo)

Foreign Minister Kamikawa. The two sides shared the view to strengthen partnership in the economic field.

### (11) Niger

Following the military takeover of power in July 2023, Japan is calling for efforts toward the early restoration of constitutional order in Niger, while providing support through international organizations to improve the humanitarian situation.

### (12) Burkina Faso

Following the military takeovers of power in January 2022 and September that year, a transitional government was established and is working towards a transition to civilian rule. The security situation has seriously deteriorated, with frequent terrorist attacks and assaults occurring in rural areas, resulting in a large number of internally displaced persons.

To contribute to the improvement of the humanitarian situation, Japan signed and exchanged notes with Burkina Faso, regarding grant assistance for food aid in October. In particular, Japan is also working to provide assistance to internally displaced persons through food aid with Japanese government rice.

### (13) Benin

As terrorist groups in the Sahel region move south, enhancing security measures in northern Benin has become an urgent task.

Japan is deepening bilateral relations through infrastructure development, industrial promotion, and improving the living environment of its people. Also, Japan is supporting Benin's green growth efforts through cooperation in the electricity sector.

In July, Minister of Economy and Finance Romuald Wadagni visited Japan and met with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tsuji.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Olushegun Adjadi Bakari attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

### (14) Mali

Following the military takeovers of power in August 2020 and May 2021, a transitional government was established and is working towards a transition to civilian rule. Even after the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), terrorism, attacks and clashes have occurred frequently, particularly in the north and east, and the security and humanitarian situation has worsened.

Japan is providing cooperation in areas such as education and food security to promote peace, stability, and sustainable growth in Mali.

### (15) Liberia

President Joseph Nyumah Boakai took office in January. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukazawa attended the presidential inauguration ceremony that month as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy and paid a courtesy calls on the president and Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Sylvester M. Grigsby.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sara Beysolow Nyanti attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held talks with Foreign Minister Kamikawa.

Japan has been supporting efforts to address development challenges by developing quality infrastructure and other efforts. Also, in September, Japan signed and exchanged notes on grant aid for food aid.

### (16) Mauritania

While being located in the Sahel region, where politics and security are becoming increasingly unstable, there have been no terrorist attacks since 2011 in Mauritania, and its government continues to be relatively stable.

A presidential election was held in June and President Mohamed Ould Cheikh El Ghazouani was re-elected.

Japan has continuously provided assistance such as food aid, and in addition to its long-standing cooperation in the fisheries sector, Japan is also supporting the country's development through cooperation in the agricultural sector.

Mauritania served as the AU chair in 2024. In April, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held a bilateral meeting with Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Mauritanians Abroad, during her visit to Italy. Also, Minister

Merzoug acted as the co-chair of the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Tokyo in August and held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Kamikawa. During the 3rd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum held in Côte d'Ivoire in December, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto met with Minister Delegate to the Minister of Economy and Finance, Responsible for the Budget Codioro Moussa N'Guenore.