Section 8 Africa

1 Overview

Africa, home to approximately 1.5 billion people[(1)] across 54 countries, is a young, dynamic region brimming with energy and potential, and is expected to account for one-quarter of the world's population by 2050. Endowed with abundant mineral resources and high economic growth rates, Africa is of growing importance to Japan, both for strengthening economic security and securing resilient value chains. At the same time, the continent is attracting increasing global attention as a promising destination for investment with significant opportunities.

In addition, Africa lies at the heart of the so-called "Global South," and, driven by its recent economic growth and ongoing effort toward political and economic integration led by the African Union (AU), is playing an increasingly prominent role in the international community. Strengthening cooperation with African countries is also of critical importance for advancing Japan's foreign policy priorities in the international community, including the promotion of responsible global governance.[(2)]

On the other hand, some parts of Africa continue to face threats to peace and stability from conflict, terrorism, and political instability, while the continent also confronts serious development challenges including poverty and hunger. These challenges facing Africa have the potential to become global challenges as well, underscoring the need for urgent action.

In 2025, multiple regions across Africa continued to experience political and security instability. From late January onward, attacks by armed groups intensified in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and those groups took effective control of major cities in the region. In Madagascar, located in the Indian Ocean off the southeastern coast of Africa, protest activities centered around young people erupted from late September onward, with demands escalating to calls for the resignation of the president and a change of government. Following the president's evacuation from the country, a military commander assumed the role of interim president. In Guinea-Bissau, located at the westernmost tip of Africa, presidential elections were held in November; however, on the day before the scheduled announcement of the provisional results, several persons including the incumbent President Umaro Sissoco Embaló, who had stood as a candidate in those elections, were detained by the military, resulting in a coup d'état with the Chief of Staff of the Guinea-Bissau Army assuming the role of interim president. Furthermore, in Benin, situated along the Gulf of Guinea in west-central Africa, a coup attempt by part of the military occurred in December. In the Sahel region,[(3)] the terrorist threat has continued following military seizures of power in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger since 2020.

In 2025, presidential elections were held in Gabon, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Malawi, Seychelles, and Tanzania.

In April, Foreign Minister Iwaya visited Senegal and exchanged views with the President, Prime Minister, and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Senegal. On this occasion, Foreign Minister Iwaya also visited the

(1) As of July 2023 ("World Population Prospects, 2024," Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations)

(2) Global governance: Efforts to provide predictability, stability, and order in dealing with interstate issues (the totality of institutions, policies, norms, procedures, and initiatives) in the international community, which lacks a higher level of governing bodies, unlike the domestic system.

(3) 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.

Japan-Senegal Vocational Training Center, established in 1984 with Japan's support, and also met and exchanged views with representatives of Japanese companies in the country. The Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9), held in Yokohama in August, was attended by 49 African countries, including 33 heads of state, as well as the co-organizers (the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and the African Union Commission (AUC)), international organizations, private companies, Diet members, and members of civil societies, among others. Under the theme of "Co-create innovative solutions with Africa," lively discussions were held across three areas: "Economy," "Society," and "Peace and Stability." (See the Opening Special Feature on page 8.) In particular, the discussions highlighted three cross-cutting priorities: "private-sector-led sustainable growth" "youth and women," and "regional integration and connectivity within and beyond the region." The outcomes of the three days of discussions were compiled into the "TICAD 9 Yokohama Declaration," the summit declaration, which was subsequently adopted.

Under the first pillar of "Economy," Japan introduced its initiatives related to the promotion of sustainable, private-sector-led growth, the strengthening of regional integration and connectivity within and beyond the region, and the diversification of economies through the strengthening of industrial ecosystems. Participants, including African countries and international organizations, pointed to the following as necessary for achieving economic growth that harnesses Africa's potential: industrial development including the utilization of mineral resources, economic diversification, good governance including the development of legal systems, the strengthening of intra-regional trade and value chains through infrastructure development and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), digitalization, investment in people through education and human resource development, debt issues, appropriate financing, and improving energy access. Participants also expressed expectations for further investment by Japanese companies in Africa and the strengthening of partnerships.

Under the second pillar of "Society," Japan introduced its initiatives in the areas of education and human resource development, health, the environment, and disaster risk reduction, aimed at building — together with Africa — a society that leaves no one behind. In the discussions among participants, including African countries and international organizations, it was noted that investment in people, such as improved access to quality education and vocational training, as well as initiatives in empowerment of youth and women, strengthening of health systems, water and sanitation, climate change countermeasures, and disaster risk reduction are indispensable, and expectations for further cooperation from Japan were expressed.

Regarding the third pillar of "Peace and Stability," Japan introduced its initiatives in this area, underscoring that "Peace and Stability" is the foundation for sustainable economic growth and an inclusive society. Participants, including African countries and international organizations, emphasized that peace and stability are an indispensable prerequisite for development and prosperity, and pointed to the need for African-led solutions, the strengthening of Africa's institutions and initiatives, the enhancement of the roles of youth and women, the prevention of conflicts and addressing of their root causes, and the importance of reforming the United Nations Security Council, while expressing expectations for further strengthening of cooperation.

2 African Union (AU)

The African Union (AU) is one of the world's largest regional institutions, comprising 55 African countries and regions, and has set as its goal an even greater degree of political and economic integration in Africa.

In February, utilizing the opportunity of the Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya visited Ethiopia and held meetings and discussions with Chief Executive Officer Nardos Bekele-Thomas of the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD), Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa,

Minister of International Relations of Botswana Phenyo Butale, and other African ministers.

At TICAD 9 held in Yokohama in August, a large number of representatives from the African Union Commission (AUC) — the AU's secretariat and a co-organizer of TICAD — participated, including AUC Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Deputy Chairperson Selma Malika Haddadi, and Commissioners for relevant portfolios. AUC Chairperson Youssouf held a meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba.

3 East Africa

(1) Uganda

Under President Yoweri Museveni's long-serving administration, Uganda has maintained economic growth owing to its stable domestic politics. The country hosts close to 2 million refugees from neighboring countries, the largest number in Africa, and is contributing to stability in the "Horn of Africa"(4) region by, among other things, providing the largest troop contingent among the contributing countries to the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM).

In May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Eri visited Uganda and paid courtesy calls on President Museveni and Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, and held talks with State Minister for Foreign Affairs (International Relations) Henry Oryem Okello. At TICAD 9 in August, Vice President Jessica Rose Epel Alupo paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Ishiba. Prime Minister Nabbanja visited Japan to attend the Uganda National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, in October, and held talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary HAYASHI Yoshimasa. Through these meetings, the two countries confirmed the further development of their good bilateral relations and their cooperation in the international arena.

(2) Ethiopia

With the second largest population in Africa (130 million), Ethiopia has great economic potential and is implementing macroeconomic reforms, including currency liberalization and fiscal reforms. Three years have passed since the end of the conflict in the northern part of the country, and road improvements in the capital of Addis Ababa are progressing. Sporadic fighting continues in parts of the Amhara region and elsewhere, and domestic stabilization remains a challenge. Through meetings such as the Japan-Ethiopia Policy Consultations between State Minister of Foreign Affairs Arga Moach Mesganu and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Eri in February, and a meeting between State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hadera Abera, who visited Japan to attend TICAD 9 in August, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs FUJII Hisayuki, the two countries shared the view to further develop bilateral relations in a wide range of areas.

(3) Eritrea

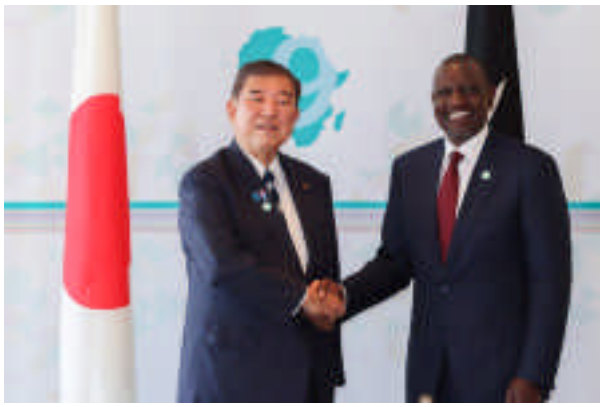
Eritrea is a country located on the international strait connecting the Indian Ocean, the Suez Canal, and Europe. Its territorial waters are a crossroads in terms of security, with many Japanese-related ships passing through them. Given the importance of Eritrea's role in the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa region, the Embassy in Eritrea was established in January.

(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 the East Africa region and one of the leading hubs for Japanese companies in Africa.

In January, the Public and Private Joint Mission for Promoting Trade and Investment in Africa, headed by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii, visited Kenya, and wide-ranging discussions were held with government officials and business representatives from both countries toward promoting economic exchanges between the two countries. In June, Cabinet Secretary

(4) The "Horn of Africa" refers to the region in 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.



Japan-Kenya Summit Meeting (August 20, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

Japan-Comoros Summit Meeting (August 21, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

for Investments, Trade and Industry Lee Maiyani Kinyanjui visited Japan to attend the Kenya National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. In August, President William Ruto visited Japan to attend TICAD 9, and at the summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba, the two countries shared the view to further strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation in the international arena, and confirmed that they would work together to address regional and international challenges including the situation in Africa and reform of the United Nations Security Council.

(5) Union of Comoros

Comoros is a partner that supports a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" as a maritime nation like Japan. Under President Assoumani Azali, 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(5) through sustainable fishing practices.

In August, Minister of Economy, Industry, Investment and Economic Integration Hassani Mohamed Moustoifa visited Japan to attend the Comoros National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. Additionally, at TICAD 9, a summit meeting was held between Prime Minister Ishiba and President Azali.

(6) Djibouti

Djibouti is located at a strategic juncture facing a major trade route connecting Europe and Asia and is an important partner for realizing FOIP. Since 2009, the 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 May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Eri visited Djibouti and held talks with Prime Minister Abdoulkader Kamil Mohamed and others. In June, President of the National Assembly Dileita Mohamed Dileita visited Japan and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. Furthermore, at TICAD 9 in August, a foreign ministers' meeting was held between Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdoulkader Houssein Omar. Through these meetings, the two countries shared the view to further develop their good bilateral relations. In addition, in October, Minister of Commerce and Tourism Mohamed Warsama Dirieh visited Japan to attend the Djibouti National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(7) Sudan

In Sudan, the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has continued since April 2023, causing a serious humanitarian crisis. Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance to improve the humanitarian situation in Sudan and neighboring countries. In September, Minister of Industry and Trade Mahasin Ali Yaqoub visited Japan to attend the Sudan National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and called

(5) A concept for promoting sustainable economic growth through the utilization of marine resources and other means.

on Japanese companies to invest in Sudan during its reconstruction phase.

(8) Seychelles

Seychelles has one of the largest economic zones in the Indian Ocean and is an important partner for realizing FOIP. Furthermore, 2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Seychelles.

In March, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) minesweepers made a friendly port call in Seychelles, as in the previous year, and the two countries conducted friendly drills. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism Louis Sylvestre Radegonde participated in TICAD 9 in August, and a meeting was held with Foreign Minister Iwaya. Furthermore, in September, Principal Minister and Minister for Fisheries and the Blue Economy Jean-François Ferrari visited Japan on the occasion of the Seychelles National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. In October, presidential and National Assembly elections were held, resulting in the inauguration of President Patrick Herminie.

(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 June, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hamza Adan Haadoow, who visited Japan, paid a courtesy call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii, and Japan and Somalia — which serves as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from 2025 to 2026 — shared the view to work in close coordination in the UN arena, including the Security Council. At TICAD 9 in August, Foreign Minister Iwaya held talks with Minister of Planning, Investment and Economic Development Mohamud Abdirahman Sheikh Farah, and the two countries confirmed that they would work together to address regional and international challenges. Furthermore, in October, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Isaak Mohamud Mursal visited Japan to attend the Somalia National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(10) Tanzania

Tanzania is located at a strategic juncture connecting eastern and southern Africa and continues to experience economic growth. In May, Prime Minister Majaliwa Kassim Majaliwa visited Japan on the occasion of the Tanzania National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba. Through the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral cooperation and confirmed that they would continue to work closely together in the international arena. At TICAD 9 in August, a foreign ministers' meeting was held between Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation Mahmoud Thabit Kombo. Presidential elections were held at the end of October, and President Samia Suluhu Hassan was re-elected. Upon the presidential election, unrest causing casualties occurred in various parts of Tanzania, including Dar es Salaam.

(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, including improvements to basic social services in areas such as maternal and child health and agriculture. In June, Minister of Commerce, Transport, Industry and Tourism Marie Chantal Nijimbere visited Japan to attend the Burundi National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. At TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Ishiba and President Évariste Ndayishimiye held a summit meeting, and the two countries confirmed that they would continue to cooperate toward the further development of their good bilateral relations.

(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. At TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Ishiba and Prime Minister Christian Ntsay held a summit meeting, and the two sides shared the view to work together toward the realization of FOIP. From late September, protests over power outages and water shortages escalated, resulting in President Andry Rajoelina fleeing the country. In October, Colonel

Michael Randrianirina was inaugurated as President for Reconstruction.

(13) South Sudan

South Sudan had been in turmoil since clashes that broke out in December 2013, but the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was signed in September 2018. From March 2025 onward, tensions between the parties escalated, and First Vice President Riek Machar was placed under house arrest. Japan has been providing support for the country's peace and stability through development cooperation via the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and support for UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO). At the foreign ministers' meeting between Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Monday Semaya Kenneth Kumba, who visited Japan to attend TICAD 9 in August, Foreign Minister Iwaya expressed Japan's expectation that fair and transparent elections would be held in South Sudan.

(14) Mauritius

Mauritius is an important country for realizing FOIP, which shares values and principles with Japan. In May, the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius concerning the Chagos Archipelago including Diego Garcia was signed. Under the agreement, Mauritius's sovereignty over the Chagos Islands as a whole is recognized, and both countries are proceeding with ratification procedures (as of the end of 2025). In July, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade Dhananjay Ramful visited Japan on the occasion of the Mauritius National Day at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. At TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam participated and held a meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba. In that same month, the Embassy of Mauritius in Japan was established.

(15) Rwanda

Under President Paul Kagame, Rwanda continues its efforts toward becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2035. In June, a peace agreement was signed with the Democratic Republic of the Congo through mediation efforts by the United States (U.S.), Qatar, and the AU, aimed at achieving lasting stability in the Great Lakes region. In July, Minister of Trade and Industry Prudence Sebahizi visited Japan to attend the Rwanda National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. In August, a foreign ministers' meeting was held between Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Olivier Nduhungirehe, who visited Japan to attend TICAD 9.

4 Southern Africa

(1) Angola

Angola has a stable political foundation and plays an important role in regional peace and stability. Angola served as the AU chair in 2025, and at TICAD 9 in August, President João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço served as co-chair alongside Prime Minister Ishiba, and a summit meeting was held between them.

In February, Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister of External Relations Téte António held talks on the occasion of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in South Africa. In July, Minister of State for Social Affairs Maria do Rosário Bragança visited Japan to participate in the Angola National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. On Japan's side, in July, Member of the House of Representatives YAMAGIWA Daishiro, as Special Envoy of Prime Minister Ishiba, paid a courtesy call on President Lourenço, requesting Angola's cooperation as co-chair of TICAD 9. Furthermore, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ONISHI Yohei attended the ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of Angola's independence in November and paid a courtesy call on President Lourenço, delivering a personal letter from the Prime Minister Takaichi.

(2) Eswatini

Eswatini is a country in which the monarch is actively involved in governance under King Mswati III, and it is the only country in Africa that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan. In June, Prime Minister Russell Dlamini visited Japan to attend the Eswatini National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba. At TICAD 9 in August, King Mswati III and Queen Inkhosikati LaMatsebula visited Japan, and Prime Minister Ishiba and His Majesty King Mswati III held a summit meeting, at which the two leaders shared the view to further strengthen bilateral relations.

(3) Zambia

Japan and Zambia, which has abundant mineral resources such as copper, celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2024, and President Hakainde Hichilema visited Japan in February 2025 and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. In July, Minister of Tourism Rodney Sikumba visited Japan to attend the Zambia National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and in August, Vice President Mutale Nalumango visited Japan to attend TICAD 9 and paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Ishiba. Japanese companies have an interest in investing in Zambia, and building on the Japan-Zambia Investment Agreement signed in February, through active high-level exchanges, the two countries confirmed the strengthening of bilateral relations and the deepening of cooperation in the international arena.

(4) Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a key hub in Southern Africa for transportation, distribution, and power transmission, and is a landlocked country with abundant mineral resources and fertile land. Japan and Zimbabwe celebrated the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2025. In July, President Emmerson Mnangagwa visited Japan to attend the Zimbabwe National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and also attended TICAD 9 in August and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba. At that meeting, the two leaders shared the view to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperate in the international arena. In September, Speaker of the National Assembly Jacob Mudenda visited Japan and held talks with the Speaker/President of both Houses of the Diet and with members of the Japan-Africa Union (AU) Parliamentary Friendship League, discussing the invigoration of inter-parliamentary exchanges.

(5) Namibia

Vice President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, the leader of the ruling South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), who won the presidential election in November 2024, was inaugurated on March 21 as the country's first female president. Member of the House of Representatives SUZUKI Takako attended the presidential inauguration ceremony and the 35th Independence Anniversary ceremony held on the same day as Ambassador on Special Mission, and paid a courtesy call on the President. In August, Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare, who visited Japan to attend TICAD 9, held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba, and the two leaders shared the view on promoting investment in mineral and energy resources and green hydrogen, cooperation in human resources support, and the further development of bilateral relations.

(6) Botswana

Botswana is a stable democracy in Southern Africa that has grown on the strength of its diamond resources; however, with declining diamond prices, economic diversification has become the country's most important challenge (as of the end of 2025). At TICAD 9 in August, Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Gaolathe paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Ishiba, and Minister of International Relations Butale

Japan-Botswana Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 26, Tokyo)

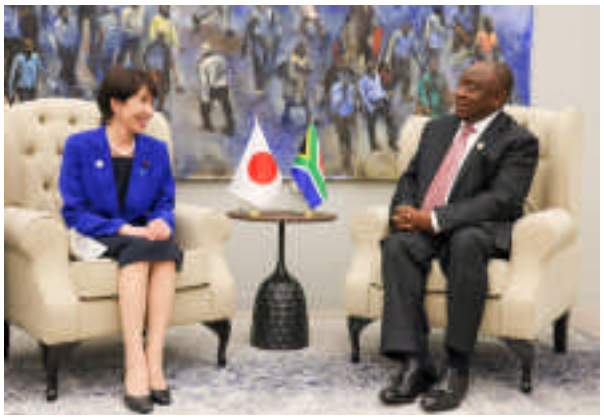
and Foreign Minister Iwaya held a foreign ministers' meeting. In November, Vice President and Minister of Finance Gaolathe made a return visit to Japan through a ministerial-level invitation and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Motegi, and the two countries concurred on accelerating cooperation toward further strengthening bilateral relations.

(7) Malawi

Japan has built long-standing friendly relations with Malawi, which shares the same values and principles, and in June, Minister of Trade and Industry Vitumbiko Mumba visited Japan to attend the Malawi National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. At TICAD 9 in August, Foreign Minister Iwaya and Minister for Foreign Affairs Nancy Tembo held talks, and the two countries shared the view to further develop bilateral relations through the promotion of friendly relations via the dispatch of JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers — of which Japan boasts the world's highest cumulative number dispatched — and through the strengthening of economic relations. In September, a presidential election was held and former President Peter Mutharika was elected.

(8) South Africa

South Africa served as the first African chair of the G20, beginning in December 2024. At the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in February, Foreign Minister Iwaya held talks with Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Ronald Lamola and confirmed the strengthening of bilateral relations and cooperation in the international arena. In March, Deputy President Paul Mashatile visited Japan through a ministerial-level invitation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Ishiba, as well as holding talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi. In August, President Cyril Ramaphosa visited Japan to attend TICAD 9 and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba. In November, Prime Minister Takaichi attended the G20 Leaders' Summit and held a summit meeting with President Ramaphosa, and the two leaders shared the view to continue close cooperation going forward, building on the outcomes of TICAD 9 and the G20 Summit.

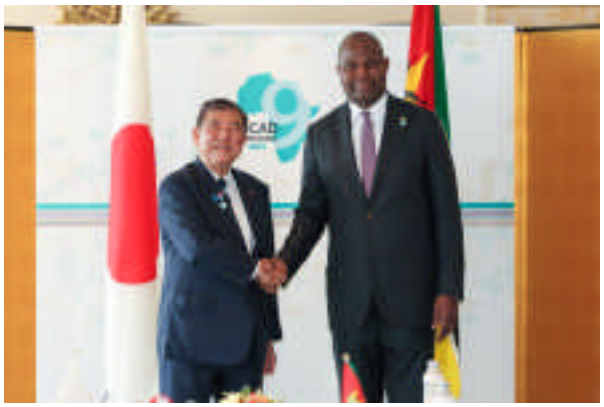


Japan-South Africa Summit Meeting (November 28, Johannesburg, South Africa; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

(9) Mozambique

Mozambique has abundant natural resources such as natural gas, coal, and graphite, and is at a strategic juncture facing FOIP from the west as the gateway to Southeast Africa. Due to the continuing attacks by armed groups in the north of the country, a liquefied natural gas (LNG) development project in which Japanese companies have been participating has been suspended since 2021, and the Government of Japan has continued to provide various forms of support to improve security.

In June, Prime Minister Maria Benvinda Levy visited Japan to attend the Mozambique National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and held talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi. At TICAD 9 in August, President Daniel Chapo visited Japan and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba, and the two leaders shared the view to continue cooperation in strengthening bilateral relations and in the development of the Nacala Corridor.



Japan-Mozambique Summit Meeting (August 22, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

(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 July, King Letsie III and Queen Masenate visited Japan to attend the Lesotho National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. Furthermore, at TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Sam Matekane made his first visit to Japan and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba, and the two leaders shared the view to further strengthen bilateral relations.

5 Central Africa

(1) Gabon

A presidential election was held in April, and Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, who had been serving as interim president, won with over 90% of the vote. Senator EJIMA Kiyoshi attended the Presidential Inauguration Ceremony held in May as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister. In July, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, Vice President Hugues Alexandre Barro Chambrier visited Japan and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. At TICAD 9 in August, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Regis Onanga Mamadou Ndiaye attended and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Iwaya.

(2) Cameroon

In the presidential election held in October, incumbent President Paul Biya was re-elected. The government continues to work toward resolving issues in the north, where Boko Haram and other armed groups are active, as well as issues in the English-speaking regions, where armed separatists operate.

In June, State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma visited Cameroon and held meetings with Minister of State, Secretary General of the Presidency Ferdinand Ngoh Ngoh, Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute, and Minister Delegate to the Minister of External Relations in charge of Relations with the Commonwealth Félix Mbayu. At TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Ngute and Minister of External Relations Lejeune Mbella Mbella attended and held meetings with Prime Minister Ishiba and Foreign Minister Iwaya, respectively. Furthermore, in September, Minister of Trade Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana visited Japan on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, making for a year of active high-level exchanges.

(3) Democratic Republic of the Congo

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

From late January, the activities of armed groups intensified in the eastern region, causing the situation to deteriorate, with armed groups taking effective control in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces. Large numbers of internally displaced persons were created, and the human rights and humanitarian situation worsened further. Large-scale demonstrations by citizens dissatisfied with the situation also occurred in the capital of Kinshasa, with some rioting and looting. The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is deployed in the eastern region. Japan is providing assistance through the reestablishment, dissemination, and entrenchment of the "local policing model."

In June, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and in August, to attend TICAD 9 in Yokohama, Prime Minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka visited Japan on both occasions and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba.

(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 UN World Food Programme (WFP). In August, Japan signed a technical cooperation agreement with the country. At TICAD 9 in August, Minister of International Cooperation and Promotion

of Public-Private Partnership Denis-Christel Sassou N'guesso attended and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya.

(5) Sao Tome and Principe

Sao Tome and Principe has a rich natural environment and is focusing on environmental fields such as eco-tourism. The Government of Japan continues to provide food aid.

At TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Américo Ramos attended and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. Furthermore, in September, Minister of Environment, Youth and Sustainable Tourism Nilda Borges da Mata visited Japan on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(6) Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea remains under the long-running administration of President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo. In July, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, Vice President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue visited Japan and held talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi. Furthermore, at TICAD 9 in August, Prime Minister Manuel Osa Nsue Nsua attended and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba.

(7) Chad

Chad held the country's first-ever Senate elections in February. In April, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, President of the Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Council Ahmat Mbodou Mahamat visited Japan. At TICAD 9 in August, Secretary General of the Presidency and Minister of State Mahamat Ahmad Alhabo attended and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. Japan continues to provide food aid and support for 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 UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) is deployed. Although the security and humanitarian situation is improving, there remain a large number of internally displaced persons.

In July, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, Minister in charge of Trade and Industry Thierry Patrick Akoloza visited Japan. Furthermore, at TICAD 9 in August, President Faustin Archange Touadéra attended and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba.

Furthermore, in August, Japan signed and exchanged notes regarding grant aid "Food Assistance Programme (WFP partnership)." Presidential, National Assembly, and local elections were held in December, and incumbent President Touadéra was re-elected.

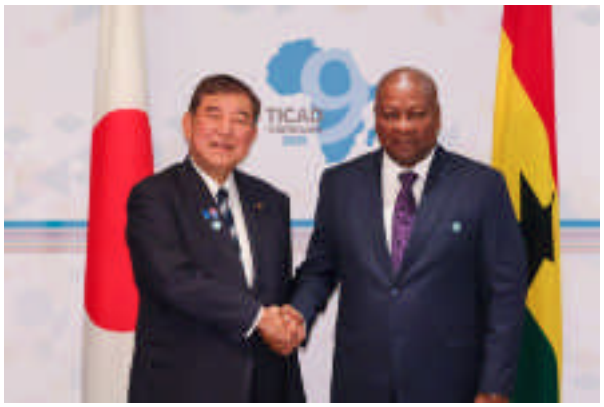
6 West Africa

(1) Ghana

In January, the second Mahama administration was inaugurated, and on January 7, Member of the House of Representatives TANAKA Ryosei attended the inauguration ceremony of President John Mahama as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister Ishiba. The administration has identified the restoration of economic and fiscal conditions as its top priority. In July, it announced the "24-Hour Economy and Export Promotion Development Programme," which aims to increase productivity in agriculture and manufacturing, improve the entire value chain, and establish an export-led economy, and is now promoting it.

President Mahama attended TICAD 9 in August and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. Minister for Foreign Affairs Ablakwa, who accompanied the President, also held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. In September, Minister of Trade, Industry and Agribusiness Elizabeth Ofosu-Adjare visited Japan on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

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



Japan-Ghana Summit Meeting (August 20, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

(2) Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde has a well-established democracy with high political stability.

In February, on the occasion of the AU Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation Miryan Djamila Sena Vieira held talks with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Eri. Furthermore, Prime Minister José Ulisses Correia e Silva attended TICAD 9 in August and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. In October, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, Minister of the Sea Jorge Santos visited Japan.

(3) The Gambia

The Gambia is working to strengthen the rule of law and improve its debt situation. Agriculture, the main industry, is fragile, and Japan provides support through agriculture and public-private partnerships.

In August, Minister of Commerce Baboucarr Ousmaila Joof visited Japan on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. Additionally, Vice President Muhammad B. S. Jallow attended TICAD 9 and paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Ishiba.

(4) Guinea

The transition to civilian rule is underway under the transitional government established in September 2021.

In January, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ismaël Nabé visited Japan and held talks with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Fujii. In June, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, Prime Minister Amadou Oury Bah of the Transitional Government visited Japan and held talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Hayashi. In June, Japan signed and exchanged notes regarding grant aid for food aid, and in July regarding grant aid for the provision of firefighting equipment. In August, at TICAD 9, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Nabé, who visited Japan, held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. In September, a new constitution approved by referendum was promulgated, and in the presidential election held in December, Interim President Mamady Doumbouya, who had held real power since September 2021, was elected.

(5) Guinea-Bissau

In May, on the occasion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, President Umaro Sissoco Embaló visited Japan and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. Furthermore, at TICAD 9 in August, Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Integration Soares Sambú attended and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. Presidential elections were held in November. However, on the day before the scheduled announcement of the provisional results, President Embaló, who had stood as a candidate in those elections, and others were detained by the military, and a coup d'état occurred in which the Army Chief of Staff assumed the role of interim president.

(6) Côte d'Ivoire

Economic relations with Côte d'Ivoire, which is achieving consistently high economic growth, have strengthened. In January, the Quality Infrastructure Conference (QIC) between Japan and Côte d'Ivoire was held in Abidjan, with private companies from both countries also participating.

In June, Minister of Commerce and Industry Souleymane Diarrassouba participated in the Côte

Japan-Côte d'Ivoire Summit Meeting (August 22, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

d'Ivoire National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. In August, Prime Minister Robert Beugré Mambe, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development Nialé Kaba, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Ivorians Abroad Kacou Houadja Léon Adom, Minister of Communication and Government Spokesperson Amadou Coulibaly, and Minister of Digital Transition and Digitalization Ibrahim Kalil Konaté participated in TICAD 9. On this occasion, Prime Minister Mambé held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba, and Minister for Foreign Affairs Adom held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. In October, presidential elections were held and President Alassane Ouattara was re-elected for a fourth consecutive term.

(7) Sierra Leone

President Julius Maada Bio, who was re-elected in 2023, is working on decentralization, regional development, reducing dependence on food imports, and improving infrastructure under the "2024-2030 National Development Plan."

In June, Sierra Leone assumed the chairmanship of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In September, Japan signed and exchanged notes regarding grant aid for food aid with the country. At TICAD 9 in August, Chief Minister David Moinina Sengeh attended and held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya.

(8) Senegal

In March, Minister of the Armed Forces Birame Diop visited Japan and held talks with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MATSUMOTO Hisashi.

In April, Foreign Minister Iwaya visited Senegal and paid courtesy calls on President Bassirou Diomaye Faye and Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko, and held talks with Minister for African Integration and Foreign Affairs Yassine Fall. On this occasion, Foreign Minister Iwaya also visited the Senegal-Japan Vocational and Technical Training Center (CFPT-SJ), which has been supported by Japan since its establishment in 1984, and exchanged views with representatives of Japanese companies in the country.

At TICAD 9 in August, President Faye, Minister for African Integration and Foreign Affairs Fall, Minister of Industry and Trade Serigne Guèye Diop,

Japan-Senegal Summit Meeting (August 20, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

and Minister of Economy, Planning and Cooperation Abdourahmane Sarr participated. On this occasion, President Faye held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. President Faye and his delegation also participated in the Senegal National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

In October, Japan signed and exchanged notes regarding two grant aid projects with the country: the construction of a branch of the Senegal Vocational Training Center and the provision of agricultural equipment.

(9) Togo

Following a constitutional amendment in May of the previous year, the appointment of the President of the Council of Ministers and the election of the President by a joint session of both chambers of parliament were carried out in May. As a result, former President Faure Gnassingbé was inaugurated as the inaugural President of the Council of Ministers, and Jean-Lucien Savi de Tové was inaugurated as President.

At TICAD 9 in August, President of the Council of Ministers Gnassingbé and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Togolese Abroad Robert Dussey participated. On this occasion, President of the Council of Ministers Gnassingbé held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba.

Furthermore, in August, the Togo National Day ceremony was held at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and Minister of Commerce, Crafts and Local Consumption Rose Kayi Mivedor-Sambiani participated. In October, Japan signed and exchanged notes regarding grant aid for the provision of police vehicles and other equipment for security measures.

(10) Nigeria

President Bola Tinubu, who took office in May 2023, has identified domestic economic development as a priority policy and is actively pushing forward with economic and fiscal reform measures.

In March, polypropylene production commenced at the Dangote Refinery, Africa's largest refinery. Furthermore, in late May, Moody's, a private credit rating agency based in the U.S., upgraded Nigeria's credit rating, and the Nigerian economy is on a recovery trajectory, moving toward a resolution of the foreign currency shortage and stabilization of the value of the local currency.

President Tinubu attended TICAD 9 in August, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Maitama Tuggar, who accompanied the President, held talks with Foreign Minister Iwaya. At these talks, the two countries shared the view to deepen cooperation in economic areas and on global challenges.

Furthermore, the two countries shared the view to launch a Co-creation for Common Agenda Initiative for Nigeria entitled "Solution of social challenges and building economic resilience by supporting startups," and Japan is promoting efforts for Nigeria's industrial development.

(11) Niger

Following the military seizure of power in July 2023, efforts toward a return to civilian rule have been closely watched. In March, the country promulgated a Charter of Reconstruction aimed at national restoration, with the objectives of strengthening judicial independence and adopting a new constitution.

Japan, while calling for efforts toward the early restoration of constitutional order in Niger, continues to provide support through international organizations to improve the humanitarian situation.

(12) Burkina Faso

Following the military takeovers of power in January 2022 and September of that year, a transitional government was established and is working toward 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 addressing the food crisis caused by the rapid increase in internally displaced persons and other factors, Japan signed and exchanged notes in August regarding grant assistance for food aid.

(13) Benin

As terrorist groups in the Sahel region move south, enhancing security measures in northern Benin has become an urgent priority. Moreover, a coup attempt by part of the military occurred in December.

Japan is deepening bilateral relations with Benin through infrastructure development, industrial promotion, and improving living conditions for the population. Japan has also decided to provide yen loans — the first in approximately 30 years — in order to improve Benin's investment environment, among other purposes.

In June, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyaji visited the country and paid courtesy calls on Vice President Mariam Chabi Talata, Minister of Foreign Affairs Olushegun Adjadi Bakari, and Minister of Economy and Finance Romuald Wadagni. He also exchanged views separately with former Japanese government scholarship students, former JICA trainees, and Japanese residents. At TICAD 9 in August, Vice President Chabi Talata attended and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. Moreover, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Jean-Michel Abimbola participated in the Benin National Day ceremony at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(14) Mali

Following the military takeovers of power in August 2020 and May 2021, a transitional government was established and is working toward a transition to civilian rule. Even after the withdrawal of the UN 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, as well as security and health, in order to support Mali's peace, stability, and sustainable growth.

(15) Liberia

Liberia is embarking on the establishment of tribunals to resolve war crimes and corruption from its civil war in order to establish the rule of law. In January, it also formulated a five-year plan centered on infrastructure and health, which are priority areas for development.

President Joseph Boakai attended TICAD 9 in August and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba. The two leaders discussed development cooperation and the strengthening of economic relations. In the same month, Minister for Foreign Affairs Sara Beysolow Nyanti participated in Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(16) Mauritania

Although Mauritania is located in the Sahel region, where political and security conditions are becoming unstable, no terrorist incidents have occurred since 2011, and it continues to maintain stable governance. The country is rich in resources such as fishery products, iron ore, gold, and natural gas, and from 2025, the liquefaction and export of natural gas extracted from large-scale gas fields have commenced.

In April, Minister of Economy and Finance Sid'Ahmed Ould Bouh visited Japan and held talks with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Matsumoto. In May, former Finance Minister Sidi Ould Tah of Mauritania was elected as the new President at the presidential election of the African Development Bank (AfDB). Furthermore, in August, President Mohamed Ould Cheikh El Ghazouani visited Japan to attend TICAD 9 and held talks with Prime Minister Ishiba.

Column

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde — An Island Nation in the Atlantic Ocean —

Cabo Verde is a small island state composed of 10 islands in the Atlantic Ocean. The archipelago comprises islands of distinctive character: Santiago Island, where the capital of Praia is located; Sal Island, with its beautiful beaches that draw many tourists from Europe; São Vicente Island, a hub of fisheries and culture and the birthplace of Cesária Évora, Cabo Verde's most celebrated singer; and Fogo Island, home to a frequently active volcano.

With an area of approximately 4,033 square kilometers — roughly the same size as Shiga Prefecture — and a population of 500,000, Cabo Verde is a small country but one that enjoys considerable diversity. Ethnically, approximately 70% of the population is of mixed European (Portuguese) and African descent, with the remainder being of African descent. The official language is Portuguese, and 80% of the population is Christian.

In recent years, Cabo Verde has flourished as a tourist destination. In 2023, the number of annual visitors exceeded one million, the highest figure ever recorded.

Relations between Japan and Cabo Verde

Since gaining independence from Portugal in July 1975, Japan and Cabo Verde have built strong bilateral relations. In 2025, the two countries marked the dual milestones of the 50th anniversary of Cabo Verde's independence and the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Cabo Verde.

Japanese culture event held in Cabo Verde (March, Mindelo, Cabo Verde)

In this commemorative year, a number of initiatives were carried out to further deepen exchanges between the two countries. In March, the Embassy of Japan in Senegal, which holds concurrent accreditation for Cabo Verde, co-hosted an event on Japanese culture with the Government of Cabo Verde. The event featured a joint performance by *Kanju Taiko* drummers invited from Hachijojima and Aogashima alongside traditional Cabo Verdean drummers, promoting mutual understanding and cultural exchange between the two countries. In August, Prime Minister José Ulisses Correia e Silva visited Japan to attend TICAD 9, held in Yokohama. On that occasion, he held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Ishiba, where the two sides concurred to continue to work closely together toward further deepening the bilateral relationship. Furthermore, in October, Minister of the Sea Jorge Santos visited Japan to attend the National Day of Cabo Verde at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

Japan has provided a wide range of assistance to Cabo Verde, including food aid and support for the fisheries sector through grant aid, assistance in the water supply and electricity sectors through yen loans, and technical cooperation across various fields. Most recently, in December, Japan decided to extend grant aid of 150 million Japanese yen for food assistance. Furthermore, a Japanese company has signed a contract with the National Water and Sanitation Agency of Cabo Verde and is advancing the construction of a seawater desalination plant and water transmission pipelines on Santiago Island. These initiatives are also helping to strengthen Japan-Cabo Verde relations at the private sector level.

Japan-Cabo Verde Summit Meeting held on the occasion of TICAD 9 (August 21, Yokohama; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan)

Cabo Verde is a distant country, requiring some 30 hours by air from Japan. Even so, Mindelo, its second largest city, has served as a way port for Japanese tuna fishing vessels for more than 50 years, a relationship that predates the country's independence. Approximately 40 tuna fishing vessels operating in the Atlantic Ocean call at the port each year, where frozen tuna is transshipped onto vessels bound for Japan. In this way, Cabo Verde plays an unsung role in supporting Japanese dining tables.

Japan will continue to further strengthen its relations with Cabo Verde, a maritime nation surrounded by seas just like Japan, and one that upholds shared universal values such as democracy.