

**Message by H.E. Chiaki TAKAHASHI, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of
Japan on the occasion of the Nineteenth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council
of the African Union**

June 26, 2011, Malabo

Your Excellency Mr. Ignacio Milam Tang, Prime Minister of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea,

Your Excellency Mr. Pastor Micha Ondo Bile, Chairperson of the Executive Council of the African Union,

Your Excellency Dr Jean Ping, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union,
Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegation,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Introduction

Let me express my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 19th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.

2. Expression of Gratitude for Support Provided by African Countries after the Earthquake and Japan's determination to support Africa

As you know, Japan was struck by an unprecedented earthquake disaster on March 11. Due to this disaster, a large number of people were killed and many people still remain missing. At Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, which was damaged by the tsunami, efforts to bring the situation under control are continuing day and night.

Amid this situation, we have received countless messages of sympathy and support from African countries. This earthquake disaster has reminded me that Japan and Africa are connected with each other by a strong bond (Kizuna) of trust despite their geographical distance. On behalf of the government and people of Japan, I would like to take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to you, the representatives of African countries.

As Foreign Minister Matsumoto and I stated at the TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) Ministerial Follow-Up Meeting that was held in

Dakar this May, Japan is determined to continue to faithfully implement the pledges that it made at the TICAD IV despite the difficulties caused by the earthquake disaster. While fostering its solidarity with Africa, Japan will vigorously pursue its policy toward Africa, centering on three pillars: (1) contributing to peace and stability , (2) expanding development assistance, trade and investment and (3) addressing global issues.

3. Three Pillars of Japan's Policy toward Africa

Japan's policy toward Africa is comprised of the three pillars.

(1) Contributing to Peace and Stability

The first pillar is "contributing to peace and stability."

Japan welcomes the ongoing efforts toward democratization and political stability in Africa. In Cote d'Ivoire, efforts toward the restoration of peace and national reconciliation are in progress under the leadership of President Ouattara. In Sudan, Southern Sudan is scheduled to become independent on July 9, respecting the will of the people in that region as expressed in the referendum.

In the meantime, violence in Libya must be halted immediately. Japan attaches importance to mediation and arbitration efforts being made by the United Nations and the African Union. As to the situation in Tunisia and Egypt, we hope for a stable transition to a democratic political system.

Japan is determined to continue contributing to peace and stability and a firm establishment of democracy in Africa through provision of support under the TICAD process. Our contribution in the field of peace-keeping and peace-building includes, inter alia, assistance for election and support for PKO training centers.

(2) Expanding Development Assistance, Trade and Investment

The second pillar is "expanding development assistance, trade and investment."

As I mentioned earlier, Japan is determined to continue to faithfully implement the comprehensive pledges that it made at the TICAD IV. Regarding MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) in particular, Japan will steadily implement development assistance, including assistance in the fields of health and education, crystallized in the "Kan commitment." Based on the results of the MDGs Follow-Up Meeting held in

Tokyo in early June which Japan hosted, and in cooperation with African countries, Japan will continue to lead international debates on the current MDGs and international goals beyond 2015. In this regard, Japan heartily welcomes South Africa's proposal to hold the next MDGs Follow-Up Meeting in 2013 in southern Africa.

On the economic front, Africa is achieving positive and steady economic growth. To help Africa achieve and maintain self-sustaining growth, Japan intends not only to provide assistance but also to implement comprehensive initiatives, including the promotion of private-sector investment, through public-private partnership.

(3) Addressing Global Issues

The third pillar is "addressing global issues." Africa is an indispensable partner for Japan in its efforts to address various global issues.

With regard to the climate change issue, in particular, how African countries will position themselves becomes a critical factor in the run-up to COP 17 which is scheduled to be held in South Africa in November. Japan hopes to strengthen cooperation with African countries with a view to achieve the early adoption of a new, single and comprehensive legal document which will establish a fair and effective international framework in which all major economies participate. While continuing to assist African countries' efforts to address climate change, Japan will also cooperate with those countries to flesh out the "Low-Carbon Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy in Africa." At the previous TICAD Ministerial Follow-up Meeting, it was agreed that this strategy should be formulated in cooperation with African countries.

Realization of early reform of the United Nations Security Council is a common agenda for Japan and African countries. We must reform the Security Council, whose basic composition has not changed for more than 65 years since its foundation, so that it will reflect the reality of the international community in the 21st century.

As more than half of the issues addressed by the Security Council are related to Africa, the representation of Africa in the Council should be embodied in the form of a permanent membership.

To improve the current situation at the earliest time possible, Japan has been leading the discussion on Security Council reform in cooperation with reform-minded countries.

As the desire for momentum is growing, Japan is determined to work together with African countries towards early reform of the Security Council.

4. Deepening of Japan-AU Relationship

I would also like to mention Japan's relationship with the AU. The AU plays an increasingly important role both in peace and security as well as in development. In this context, the African Union Commission participated in the preparation and organizing processes of the recent TICAD Ministerial Follow-up Meeting as a new co-organizer.

Japan intends to steadily develop the Japan-AU relationship and advance the TICAD process with the AU as a partner, based on the joint communiqué issued on the occasion of Chairperson Dr. Jean Ping's visit to Japan last August.

5. Conclusion

Africa still faces such challenges as poverty, military conflict and governance. However, Africa is attracting the attention of the international community as a 'continent of hope and opportunity'. I would like to conclude by stressing Japan's determination to move forward together with Africa while deepening its solidarity with the continent, which has been confirmed since the earthquake disaster.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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