

Section 6 Africa

< Future policy >

Africa has a population of more than 1.2 billion people, mainly of young generations, and in line with the continent's growth, there are growing needs for infrastructure, including power, transportation and port facilities. While some regions in Africa are rich in oil, natural gas and mineral resources, declines in international resource prices in recent years have caused the fiscal conditions of those regions to deteriorate, prompting various countries to reduce their dependence on resources. African businesses, which used to be centered around resources and infrastructure, are becoming more and more diverse, as evidenced by the spread of businesses using consumer goods and ICT. The government of Japan will support Japanese companies' advance into Africa by strengthening cooperation with third countries and international organizations in addition to African countries through the use of forums of dialogue involving both the public and private sectors, such as the Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum, at the same time as promoting the development of quality infrastructure and the conclusion of investment treaties.

< Progress status >

At the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI), which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in August 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the establishment of the Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum. This forum is intended to hold discussions on what is necessary for Japanese and African companies to develop together from business viewpoints, including energy, trade, investment, human resource development, infrastructure development and finance and create actual businesses.

The first meeting was held on May 3 and 4, 2018, in Johannesburg, South Africa, where many Japanese companies are doing business. The meeting was attended by representatives from 42 countries, including 28 ministerial-level officials. From Japan, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Seko, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Mitsunari Okamoto and Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Takahashi attended it, and from Africa, President Cyril Ramaphosa and Minister of Trade and Industry Rob Davies, both of South Africa, attended it. A total of around 2,000 people from around 400 African companies, more than 100 Japanese companies, companies in third countries in Europe, the Middle East and other regions, and international organizations also participated in the forum, and discussions were held about expanding business opportunities in Africa for Japanese companies.

At Plenary Session 1, which discussed opportunities for cooperation between Japan and Africa and challenges, Minister Seko announced initiatives concerning (1) infrastructure development using private funds, (2), expansion of the scope of business fields, (3), expansion of the range of players, and (4) improvement of the business environment, as four pillars for the sustainable development of the Japanese and African economies that leads to a "win-win" situation.

In addition, as an official side event of the Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum, the Japan Fair was held under JETRO's sponsorship, and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Seko, South African Minister of Trade and Industry Rob Davies and other officials inspected the event. The Japan Fair brought together industry, government and academia, including around 70 companies and

organizations, including Japanese companies, which exhibited a broad range of high-level technological capabilities and ideas of Japanese companies using robots and other technologies in such fields as infrastructure, communication, agriculture and healthcare, and provided information on Japanese companies contributing to Africa. The fair attracted many government officials and businesspeople.

Taking advantage of this event, which brought together many senior government officials, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Seko made a courtesy call on South African President Ramaphosa, and he also held meetings with 18 senior government officials, including South African Minister of Trade and Industry Rob Davie, and exchanged views about Japan’s business cooperation in Africa and the possibility of further developing bilateral relationships.

In addition, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yosuke Takagi visited Egypt in July 2017 and held meetings with Prime Minister Sherif Ismail and Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy Mohamed Shaker. In February 2018, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy Masaki Ogushi visited Egypt, and at meetings with Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy Mohamed Shaker and Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Tarek El-Molla, he exchanged views concerning the current state of Japan-Egypt cooperation in the fields of electricity and energy and future expansion of cooperation.

With respect to Morocco, Minister of Industry, Trade, Investment & Digital Economy Moulay Hafid Elalamy visited Japan in October 2017, and held a meeting with Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Seko to exchange views about enhancing the two countries’ investment and trade relationship. In April 2018, a substantive agreement was reached on the Japan-Morocco investment treaty.

With respect to sub-Saharan Africa, since January 2017, Japan started investment treaty negotiations with Cote d’Ivoire, Senegal, Nigeria, Zambia and Ethiopia. In October 2017, JETRO opened an office in Maputo, Mozambique, which is its eighth office in Africa. This is expected to promote trade and investment between Japan and Mozambique.

Figure III-2-6-1 Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum

METI Minister Seko participated in the forum.



H.E. Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa, attended the forum.



Source: METI.