

Communications News

Newsletter of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications(MIC), Japan

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TOPIC

Result of TICAD7 Official Side Event “Japan-Africa ICT High-level Round Table”

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications held the Japan-Africa ICT High-level Round Table, an official side event of the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7), in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture, on August 28, 2019, for the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and other stakeholders, including Smart African member countries, to discuss efforts to strengthen the cooperation between Japan and Africa in the field of ICT. This was the first ever conference between Japanese and African ICT and digital technology ministers. At the conference, participants shared the necessity of digitalization for the sustainable growth of Africa, discussed its promotion in Africa, and adopted a joint statement.

1. Outline of the Event

Taking advantage of the opportunity given by the TICAD7, which was held from August 28 to 30, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) sponsored the first ever Japan-Africa ICT High-level Round Table with the participation of stakeholders from 20 African countries as well as international organizations.

Mr. Masatoshi Ishida, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications co-chaired this round table with S.E. Mr. Moustapha Mamy Diaby, Minister of Posts, Telecommunications and Digital Economy of Guinea. They shared the need for digitization for sustainable growth in Africa, and exchanged opinions on measures to be taken in the future by related Japanese and African organizations. At the end of the event, Mr. Ishida, S.E. Mr. Diaby and Mr. Lacina Koné, Director General of Smart Africa, signed a joint statement.



Photo: Masatoshi Ishida, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications, co-chairing at the round table.

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The main points of the joint statement are as follows:

- (1) The participants confirmed the importance of digitization as a driving force for socio-economic activities in order to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as Agenda 2063, which is promoted by the African Union.
- (2) They shared the importance of enhancing basic education to foster future leaders in Africa, as well as improving quality of life and economic growth as brought about by digitalization.
- (3) They agreed on promoting the vision and prioritized projects of Smart Africa under the cooperation of Smart Africa, its member countries, and the public and private sectors of Japan. They also agreed on reinforcing the relationship between Japanese and African ICT companies and startups, enhancing education, including basic education using ICT, and sharing ICT infrastructure in line with the needs of African countries.
- (4) They agreed on cooperation in the fields of agriculture, finance, medical care, smart cities, cybersecurity, and safety and security services and solutions.

On the basis of the joint statement, MIC will promote digitalization in Africa in collaboration with African countries, international organizations, local governments, and private companies, as well as Smart Africa, and promote initiatives for the sustainable development of Africa.

(Reference 1) Outline of TICAD

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) is a leader-level international conference on African development that Japan launched in 1993. The first TICAD to the fifth TICAD in 2013 were held every five years in Japan. The TICAD is being held every three years, alternately in Japan and Africa, from the sixth TICAD which was held in 2016.

(Reference 2) Outline of Smart Africa

Smart Africa is a regional institution established by African countries in October 2013 with the aim of moving away from Africa's resource dependence in order to promote industries using ICT on the basis of the agreement of the heads of 54 African countries. Mr. Lacina Koné, former Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, in charge of Digital Transformation and Public Reforms, is the Director General of Smart Africa. Currently, Smart Africa consists of 24 African countries, with 27 participating partners, including private companies and universities as well as nine international organizations. (Source: Smart Africa website)

(Reference 3) Attendees at Japan-Africa ICT High Level Round Table

Japan: Mr. Masatoshi Ishida (Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications), Ms. Makiko Yamada (Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination), Kobe City, JICA, and JICT

African Countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritius, Rwanda, South Sudan, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

International organizations: AU (African Union), ITU, Smart Africa, and the World Bank

(Reference 4) JOINT STATEMENT

http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_content/000641210.pdf

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2. Outline of Bilateral Talks

The Minister and MIC officials held bilateral talks as follows:

(1) Mr. Masatoshi Ishida, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications

1. Rwanda (Tuesday, August 27)

He held talks with H.E. Ms. Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT and Innovation, and exchanged opinions on future cooperation for the realization of smart cities, human resource training, and new services.

2. African Union (AU) (Wednesday, August 28)

He held talks with Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, and exchanged opinions on strengthening relations between Japan and Africa in the field of ICT.



Photo: Meeting with H.E. Ms. Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT and Innovation of Rwanda.

(2) Ms. Makiko Yamada, Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination

1. ITU (Wednesday, August 28)

She held talks with Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and exchanged opinions on strengthening cooperation between Japan and the ITU to achieve the SDGs.

2. Zimbabwe (Friday, August 30)

She held talks with H.E. Mr. Kazembe, Minister of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services, and exchanged opinions on further cooperation between the two countries in the ICT field.

(3) Mr. Ken Watanabe, Director-General for International Affairs, Global ICT Strategy Bureau

1. Botswana (Tuesday, August 27)

He held talks with Mr. Tsiang, Deputy Permanent Secretary of President Affairs, and exchanged opinions to promote the introduction of the Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting - Terrestrial (ISDB-T) International system based on the Japanese standard system.

2. Angola (Wednesday, August 28)

He held talks with Mr. Carvalho, Director of Telecommunications and Information Technologies, and exchanged opinions to promote the introduction of the ISDB-T.