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TICAD 9 Special

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025



Yokohama is hosting the conference for the fourth time. GETTY IMAGES

Co-creating Africa’s brighter future: A new era of partnership

SHIGERU ISHIBA
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

Twenty-five years ago, I visited Senegal for the first time, marking my initial steps into Africa. I was overwhelmed by the dynamism of young students and the continent's vast potential, which convinced me that Africa had a bright future ahead. Now, that conviction is becoming a reality.

Indeed, 2025 is essentially the year of Africa, highlighted by the dynamic synergy between two major international forums focusing on Africa: Japan hosting the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) in Yokohama from Aug. 20 to 22 and South Africa taking the presidency of the G20.

Initially incepted in 1993, TICAD has remained a pioneering conference focused on African development for the past three decades, distinguished by its unique emphasis on “African Ownership” and “International Partnership.” Furthermore, TICAD’s inclusiveness and openness to engage a wide range of stakeholders —



CABINET PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

such as international organizations, third-party countries, businesses, academia and nongovernmental organizations — highlight its unique strengths. Embracing this philosophy, Japan will remain a steadfast

partner for Africa.

TICAD 9 will be held under the theme “Co-Create Innovative Solutions With Africa,” where Japan aims to explore innovative solutions to the challenges facing Africa by leveraging its cutting-edge technologies and expertise. It is mutually beneficial to combine homegrown solutions developed in Africa with solutions presented by Japan.

Africa possesses abundant resources, a vibrant youthful population and remarkable potential for innovation. At the same time, it faces significant challenges: poverty, conflict, unemployment, infectious diseases and climate change. TICAD 9 will address these head-on by focusing on three key cross-cutting approaches.

1. Driving sustainable economic growth through private-sector leadership:

Japan will accelerate Africa's economic transformation by fostering private-sector investment. This includes improving the investment environment and leveraging cutting-edge technologies in such areas as artificial intelligence, digitalization, green

transformation and utilization of satellite data. These will create new economic opportunities and enhance impact. Japan's expertise and resources will be harnessed to support the growth of African businesses and the development of robust industrial ecosystems.

2. Empowering youth and women:

Africa's future rests on the shoulders of its young people and women. Japan is committed to empowering youth and women through comprehensive human resource development programs and targeting skills development in high-growth sectors. By nurturing their potential, we can drive inclusive growth and create a more sustainable society.

3. Strengthening regional integration and connectivity:

Regional integration is crucial for Africa's prosperity. Japan will strongly support the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through facilitating cross-border trade and investment and building value chains. In line with the initiative of a “Free and

Open Indo-Pacific” announced by Japan at TICAD VI in Nairobi, Japan will continue to enhance connectivity and strengthen resilient institutions and human resource development in Africa.

To achieve sustainable development and an inclusive society through these approaches, promoting peace and stability is crucial. Japan continues to partner with African countries, vigorously supporting Africa's own initiatives to strengthen peace and stability on the continent.

To conclude, TICAD 9 is more than a conference — it's a vibrant and living platform for forging deeper partnerships, generating innovative solutions, and building a shared vision for a prosperous and sustainable future for Africa and the world.

Furthermore, the significance of the Japan-Africa partnership reaches far beyond its impact on Africa alone. Japan would like to work with Africa to strengthen inclusive and responsible global governance that ensures the peace and prosperity of the international community.



Inside This Issue

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| African initiatives | B2 |
| Opportunities, youth | B3 |
| JICA | B4 |
| JETRO | B5 |
| City of Yokohama | B6 |

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JEAN-MARC ROCHER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Africa is currently the fastest-growing region in the world, both in terms of population and economics. It has also been, however, one of the most vulnerable to disruption from internal and external influences, as the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent global economic crisis demonstrated.

Japan's relationship with Africa may not be as headline-grabbing as its high-tech gadgets or "culture of cute," but this partnership of more than three decades has achieved significant gains.

In his recent talk in celebration of Africa Day, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said: "The importance of Africa in the international community has been increasing in recent years. This is evidenced by the African Union's joining the G20 (Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations) as a full member in 2023, and by this year's G20 summit being held in Africa for the first time, with South Africa as chair. ... Against this backdrop, TICAD 9 will be held in Yokohama in August this year. I hope that TICAD 9 will be an opportunity for ... the joint development of innovative solutions that will lead to prosperity for both Africa and Japan."

Focus on solutions

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development is an open forum held every three years in which represen-



tatives from African nations, Japan, international organizations, academia and the private sector participate in discussions focused on the development of Africa. The event brings together global experts from a wide range of fields, including economics, public health, education, agriculture, urban management and digitalization, to report on their activities and share their ideas for the future. This year's conference will be held from Aug. 20 to 22 at Pacifico Yokohama.

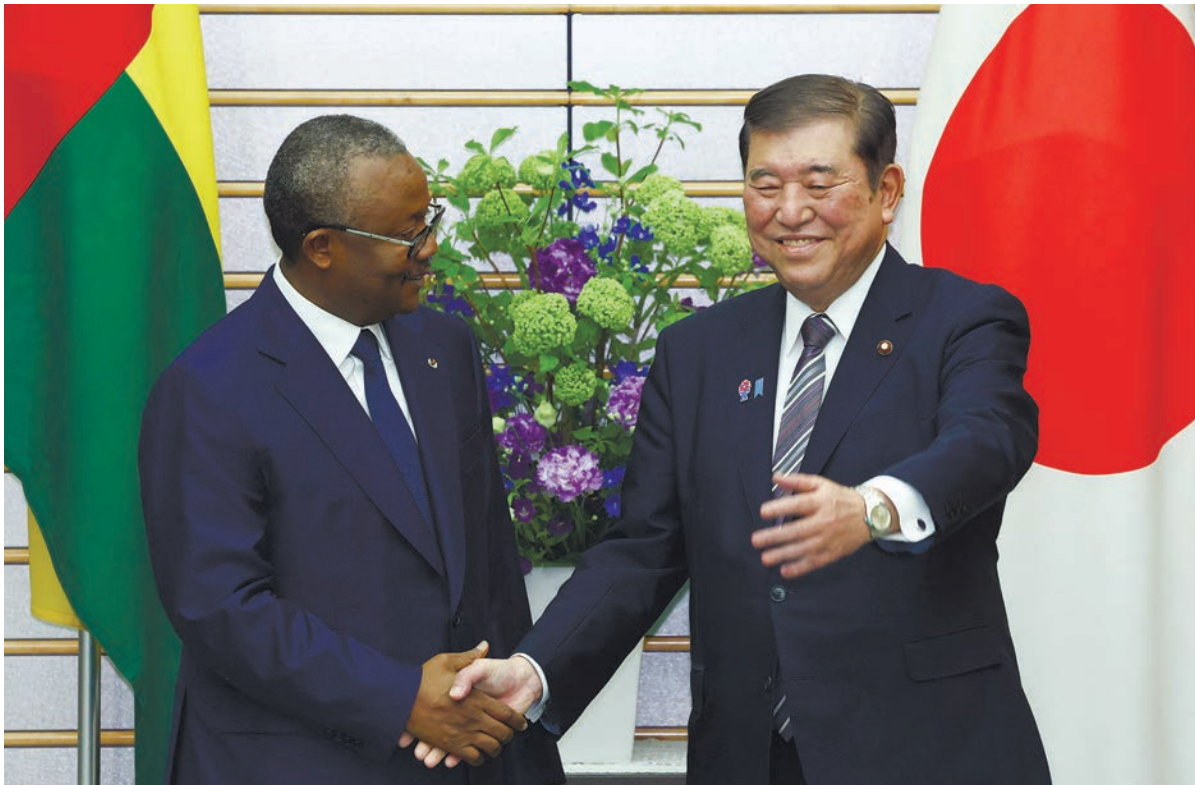
The theme for this iteration is "Co-Create Innovative Solutions With Africa," focusing on the possibilities for organizations and businesses in Japan to develop solutions that use new technologies, in cooperation with their African counterparts. "Japan wants to be an equal partner, not just a donor," said Shuhei Ueno, deputy director general for planning and TICAD process with the Africa Division of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, which is

in charge of administering Japan's official development assistance. "And in this era of digitalization, we want to focus on innovative solutions by working with Africa."

The first TICAD was held in Tokyo in 1993, at a time when interest in Africa was starting to wane among Western nations, in part because of the end of the Cold War. These first steps showed promise, and further conferences saw growth in the number of delegations and heads of state participating in person.

For TICAD VI in 2016, the event was held in Africa for the first time with Kenya acting as host. Since then, hosting duties have alternated between Japan and Africa, with Tunisia hosting the last conference in 2022.

Throughout this time, Japan has stressed the importance of building peace and stability through collaboration, in keeping with TICAD's core values of "African ownership and international partnership." This means developing solutions together with



Far Left: Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya speaks with a student at the Senegal-Japan Vocational Training Centre in Dakar on April 29. Left: Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba greets visiting Guinea-Bissau President Umaro Sissoco Embalo at the Prime Minister's Official Residence in May. AFP-JJL/JJL

African governments, organizations and people that they themselves will put into action, and encouraging Japanese firms to develop business relationships in Africa. "We really focused on aid at the beginning, but since about 2008, the discussion shifted to investment," Ueno said. "This started with TICAD V in 2013 with the Africa Business Education Initiative for Youth, bringing African youth to Japan to study in master's programs in universities and provide them with internship opportunities at Japanese companies."

Youth in the spotlight

Through TICAD, JICA has also been encouraging the growth of African-owned businesses. "TICAD 7 focused on innovation, after which we started Project Ninja to support new startups in Africa," Ueno said. "And after TICAD 8 in 2022, we started Home Grown Solutions focusing on health systems and pandemic prevention, supporting African companies producing medicine or health care equipment, as we found that during COVID there were not many African companies producing this equipment, which instead had to be imported." These programs have helped to spur economic growth, encourage young entrepreneurs, and build resilience by ensuring vital goods are not as dependent on overseas supply chains.

According to Ueno, an additional focus of the conference for JICA is youth. In contrast to Japan, whose population has become one of the most aged of the developed nations, Africa is the most youthful region on Earth, and supporting health, education and opportunities for young people here is a vital key to ensuring long-term stability and sustainable growth. "From the beginning, JICA's focus has been youth, and their voices should be more important. For Japan's future, we need to engage with Africa and with Africa's youth."

Amid this progress, there are still challenges ahead, but a broad road map is forming. The African Continental Free Trade Area has been ratified by 48 nations, making it the second-largest free-trade area after the World Trade Organization. Together, the members have been working to lower internal barriers to trade and labor, improving economic conditions and standards of living.

"Currently, one bottleneck is that there

is not much internal trade," Ueno said. "Right now, many countries trade directly with Europe, the U.S. or Japan, but they can increase their economies by increasing inter-Africa trade. After TICAD 8, JICA's president signed a memorandum of cooperation with AfCFTA because this has a lot of potential to reduce barriers and improve food security and economic growth. My hope is that by TICAD 10 (tentatively scheduled for 2028) there will be more African continental initiatives for development."

Benefits for the people

TICAD 9 is not only for foreign policy professionals and entrepreneurs, however. There will be a wide range of events for the public in and around Pacifico Yokohama from Aug. 19 and continuing until Aug. 22.

"TICAD is an opportunity to engage with Africa on an individual level, and culture should be a part of that," Ueno said. "We plan to organize roughly 40 events at TICAD 9, focusing on art, music and cultural heritage." Details are available at the official TICAD 9 website (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad/ticad9/index.html>). Furthermore, the city of Yokohama is holding its own Africa Month with additional cultural events open to the public (<https://ticad9.city.yokohama.lg.jp/>).

Used products find new homes overseas

Since its founding in 1991, Hamaya Corp. has been contributing to resource sustainability by exporting used products through its resale business. With recent growth in its recycling operations, the company's sales have reached ¥20 billion.

President Ippei Kobayashi shared his insights on the value of "Used in Japan" products overseas.

"Products sold in Japan boast high quality and durability because of the stringent quality standards set by the Japanese market, a fact highly appreciated by our clients overseas," Kobayashi said.

Furthermore, Hamaya applies its own strict standards when purchasing used goods, carefully packing them for export so they are not damaged during transport. "We communicate closely with buyers to understand their needs in terms of product condition and quantity," he said.

All products are shipped in the condition in which they were purchased, so repairs may be necessary by the importers. However, the fact that Japanese products are easy to repair and last for a long time with proper maintenance helps keep prices low while supporting local repair jobs.



An overseas buyer purchases a container of secondhand goods from a Hamaya staffer.

Hamaya has branches in 17 cities in Japan, where about 9 million items a year are bought from individuals and organizations.

To date, Hamaya has traded with around 70 countries, shipping over 2,000 containers of used Japanese goods abroad each year. Popularity varies by region and market.

"In the Middle East, gas appliances such as heaters and stoves, along with sewing machines, are popular. In Southeast Asia, we see strong sales of home appliances as well as furniture and bicycles. In Central and South America, consumers favor knitting machines and musical instruments, while European countries such as France, Britain and Ger-

many prefer traditional handicrafts and antique furniture," Kobayashi said.

"Our aim is to grow together with African countries, where the population is increasing and economic development is expected to continue. We will continue our efforts to build new business partnerships to deliver more used items to Africa," he said.

Hamaya also extracts printed circuit boards from electronic devices collected from around the world to extract their rare metals using Japan's advanced, environmentally friendly refining technology so they can be recycled into new resources.

"The used goods and recyclable resources we handle might have ended up as waste without our involvement. Discarding them is not only wasteful but also increases the environmental burden," he said.

Kobayashi strongly believes that by finding new homes for items that have fulfilled their purpose in one place and using them to their fullest potential until the end of their lifespans, their value will multiply, benefiting a greater number of people.

For more information, visit <https://en.hamaya-corp.co.jp/>



Left: JICA volunteer Kouhei Kurihara teaches children blind football in Senegal in May 2018. Right: Journalists at work in the press room at TICAD 8 in Tunis on August 2022. AFP-JJL



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Opportunities, youth

Opportunity lies in the hands of African nations

TEODOLINDA ROSA RODRIGUES COELHO
AMBASSADOR OF ANGOLA



Today we have the opportunity to address aspects of the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development and to encourage African and Japanese companies to create

partnerships for development. For Angola, TICAD 9 comes at a particularly important moment in our history. It coincides with the celebration of 50 years of independence, Angola's assumption of the rotating presidency of the African Union and South Africa's first presidency of the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations — all at a time when the continent faces several challenges.

TICAD itself is a mechanism for strengthening and appealing to African states in the search for mutually beneficial partnerships for the development of our continent.

The opportunity lies in the hands of African countries, rich in mineral resources, which could become ideal partners for Japan, laying the foundations for development through the transfer of technology and knowledge.

It is also an opportunity to promote the image of the new Angola we are building. One that is increasingly seeking to explore our vast resources and ensure the main beneficiaries are our people.

At this unique moment when Angola will co-chair the TICAD summit with Japan for the first time, President of Angola and of the African Union H.E. Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco attaches great importance to the search for partnerships. This is why he is accompanied by a delegation of representatives of various ministerial depart-

ments focused on the economic sector. Angola and Japan will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their friendly and cooperative relations in 2026. In that time, the Japanese government has supported Angola's development process by financing various projects in the areas of demining, health, education, energy and water.

More recently, taking advantage of the Japanese government's growing interest in investing in Angola, we have made remarkable progress in the areas of infrastructure and health, with emphasis on the rehabilitation of the Port of Namibe on our southern coast, as well as the renovation and modernization of the Josina Machel Hospital in Luanda.

In terms of legal instruments, Angola and Japan signed in 2023 the Agreement on the Liberalization and Protection of Investments, which offers unique advantages and opportunities for entrepreneurs to create favorable conditions for investment.

Angola has a long-term vision that projects the country into the future and onto the international stage, valuing and enhancing human capital, building new and modern infrastructure and investing in economic diversification and protection of the ecosystem through environmental preservation and water and forest resource management.

In the field of infrastructure, several projects have been implemented by the government, notably the Lobito Corridor, a 1,344-kilometer route linking the Port of Lobito to Luau in Moxico province. This serves as an alternative for the export markets of countries such as Zambia and Congo.

The Lobito Corridor will also facilitate the movement of people and goods, as well as regional economic integration, and boost the cultivation of cereals such as corn, soybeans, wheat and rice, tubers, beans, vegetables and fruits.



Angola's Serra da Leba mountain pass is known for its stunning scenery.
THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ANGOLA

On Aug. 5, Foreign Affairs Minister H.E. Tete Antonio and Japanese Ambassador H.E. Hiroaki Sano signed an agreement aimed at expanding the capacity and resilience of electricity transmission infrastructure in the provinces of Huila, Namibe, Cuando, Cubango and Cunene.

Given the number of heads of state, representatives of international organizations and financial institutions that will attend the event, we can see that TICAD's vision is perfectly aligned and articulated with the priorities of the United Nations 2030 sustainable development goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

Despite its rich natural resources, the African continent continues to face serious economic development challenges, with a glaring lack of basic infrastructure, energy, transportation and communication. There is also difficulty in accessing subsidized credit lines, which hinders Africa's economic and sustainable growth.

We hope that TICAD 9 will provide mutually beneficial business opportunities between African countries and Japanese partners to transform Africa into a promising, dynamic and prosperous continent.

Only in this way will we be able to take advantage of the important resources we have, placing Africa in a strategic position in the contemporary world, thanks to its large reserves of raw materials — many of them strategic — its biodiversity and capacity to increase long-term agricultural production, and its dynamic population growth.

Let us combine Africa's potential with Japan's strength and serve as an example that we can make a better world.

Youth co-creation in summit spotlight

AHUNNA EZIAKONWA
U.N. ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL
AND REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA
U.N. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



In a world increasingly fractured by conflict and uncertainty, the relationship between Japan and Africa stands out for a simple reason: It is anchored in trust, partnership and built for the long haul.

As youth, leaders, partners and others capable of making changes gather for the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development this month, we are reminded that partnership is not about proximity; it is about shared purpose. Nowhere is this more evident than in the enduring relationship between Africa and Japan.

TICAD's bold, forward-thinking and cooperative trajectory has stood for more than 30 years as a pillar of Japan's commitment to Africa's future. But TICAD 9 signals more than continuity — it marks a shift in how we collaborate. The theme of this year's conference, "Co-Create Innovative Solutions With Africa," points to a new generation of cooperation — one where African agency, innovation and youth leadership drive the agenda.

This is not just semantics. It is a seismic shift in mindset. It is not about including Africa at the table, it is about reshaping the table itself. And at the center of this transformation are Africa's young people: the doers, disruptors and solvers. They are the designers of the continent's present, and its future.

Their ideas, energy and ambition are already reshaping sectors from tech to agriculture, education to green energy. What they need now are the tools, platforms and partnerships to scale their impact.

Too often, summits speak about African youth. TICAD 9 dares to speak with them.

Through initiatives like the African Business Education, the timbuktoo Creatives Lab, which is building the innovation ecosystem in Africa, and the newly launched Africa Youth Program 2025, we see a growing commitment to investing in the right tools. These include entrepreneurial skills, digital infrastructure and intercultural collaboration. These are the scaffolding of co-creation — solutions designed not for, but with or by young people.

This commitment will be brought to life during the TICAD 9 Model African Union conference that is co-organized by the UNDP, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Sophia University. Inspired by the Swahili word *inayojumisha*, which means inclusion, nearly 200 young people from 54 African countries and 26 Japanese prefectures will debate real policy issues with the urgency they demand. This is not role-play — this is rehearsal for reality. They are not preparing for the world ahead, they are shaping it. And this is a signal of what inclusive leadership and shared innovation between Africa and Japan can look like in action.

Likewise, the inaugural Youth TICAD 2025 will bring together up to 100 activists from Africa and Japan to Yokohama for three days of immersive programming under the theme of "Co-Creating the Future We Want for 2055." Through co-creation workshops, field visits and a project-pitching session, participants will develop real-world solutions grounded in shared vision and action.

Designed as a platform for both dialogue and delivery, this initiative is shifting from "programs for youth" to "solutions with youth." And the distinction matters.

In Ghana, we are seeing youth build climate-resilient agriculture startups using drones and artificial intelligence. In Niger, young entrepreneurs are bringing solar-powered solutions to off-grid villages. In Kenya, students are prototyping health technology in partnership with Japanese innovators. These are not isolated stories. They are the early chapters of a different

development model — one powered by agency, not aid.

Japan understands this. Its investments in education, innovation and entrepreneurship reflect a belief in long-term transformation, not transactional partnerships. But more is needed. The future will not be co-created in conference halls. It will depend on how we invest in the ideas of a 19-year-old coder in Lagos, a young policy scholar in Kigali or a social entrepreneur in Dakar. We need to go further:

- Finance must move at the speed of innovation. Youth-led ventures need capital with fewer strings and more trust.
- Policy must reward risk. Regulation should enable startups to experiment, not suffocate them before they scale.
- Education must adapt. A young person entering school today will graduate into a job market that doesn't yet exist. We must teach adaptability, not just arithmetic.

What TICAD 9 offers is a rare and radical opportunity to put youth-led co-creation at the heart of diplomacy and development. This is not just in Africa's interest. It is in Japan's and the world's strategic interest. Africa's youth is the future of humanity's labor force.

The spirit of co-creation is not a slogan. It is a strategy for building resilient, inclusive and sustainable societies. And it begins with the youth who will lead them.

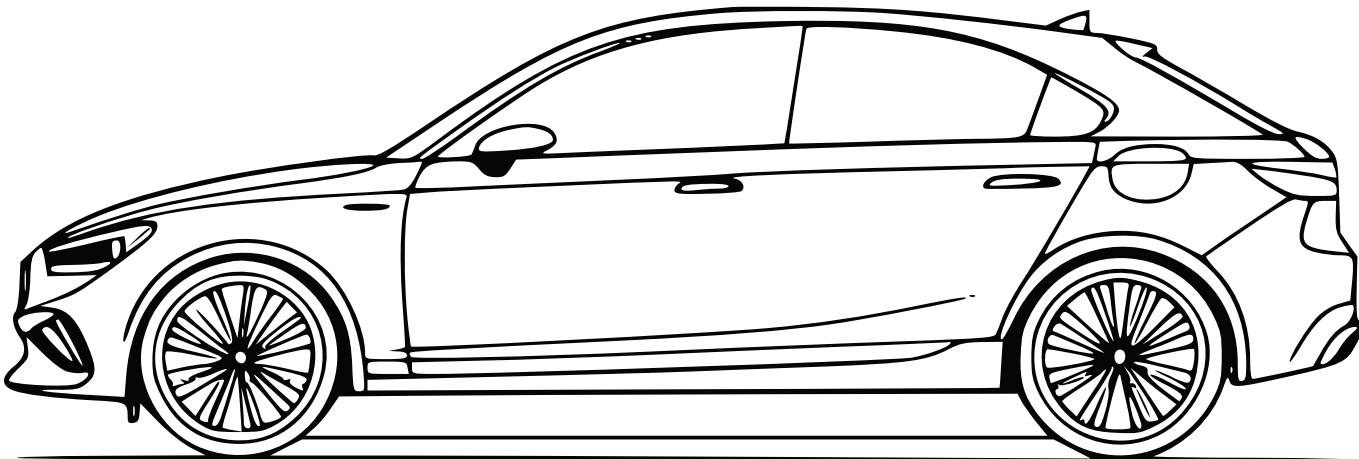
Because in a world grappling with climate disruption, rising inequality and geopolitical tension, the solutions we need most will not come from boardrooms alone. They will come from bold ideas forged in unlikely places like a tech lab in Dar El Salam, Egypt, a classroom in Sendai or a dialogue circle in Bamako.

Are we prepared to listen — truly listen — to those whose futures are at stake?

At TICAD 9, we have the chance to show that we are. To go beyond promises. To match ambition with investment. To move from imagination to implementation.

Not just to reimagine the world we want, but to create it together.

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Harnessing youth and innovation: Charting a future for Africa and Japan

AKIHIKO TANAKA
PRESIDENT, JAPAN INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION AGENCY



As the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development convenes in Yokohama, the spotlight returns to Africa — a continent of extraordinary diversity and opportunity.

This year's conference carries heightened significance. As global challenges deepen — from geopolitical fragmentation to climate change and economic inequality — TICAD 9 provides an essential venue to reimagine developmental cooperation rooted in mutual respect, innovation and strategic partnership.

Central to this potential is Africa's youth — an energetic, connected generation that can shape not just the continent's future, but the world's. Africa could become a future manufacturing center, a trendsetter and a market for many businesses, as one in four people globally will be African by 2050. This demographic shift, if harnessed, can deliver what economists call a “demographic dividend,” an economic windfall driven by a young, productive workforce. However, without proper investment in education, health care and job creation, it could equally deepen poverty and unrest.

Homegrown innovation

At the heart of the Japan International Cooperation Agency's development strategy lies the belief in “homegrown growth” — an approach that nurtures Africa's own initiatives and capabilities to create local solutions and innovation.

Over the years, JICA has supported transformative initiatives such as the Coalition for African Rice Development program (CARD), the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion program (SHEP) and Kaizen, a productivity improvement methodology adapted from Japanese business practices. These initiatives have empowered farmers and improved the productivity of African businesses and entrepreneurs by building resilience and competitiveness.

CARD was launched in 2008 at TICAD IV. It has doubled Africa's rice production from 14 million tons in a decade. Building on this, JICA and its partners have expanded CARD to 32 countries, targeting a further doubling to 56 million tons by 2030. This initiative significantly advanced Africa's transformation from food dependency to self-sufficiency, which JICA remains fully committed to supporting.

SHEP and Kaizen, now thriving in 20 to 30 African countries, help unlock human potential with few additional resources. SHEP shifts small farmer's mindsets toward strategic production, boosting their incomes. Similarly, Kaizen empowers workers to improve their ability to complete daily tasks, enhancing productivity. African trainers can now spread these approaches throughout the continent, fostering sustainable, self-driven development.

Furthermore, Africa's youth are increasingly entrepreneurial, leveraging digital technologies to solve problems and launch startups. Some students who studied in Japan have returned home to build businesses, creating new bilateral collaboration opportunities.

To support this wave of innovation, JICA launched the Next Innovation with Japan project, dubbed “Project Ninja,” in 2020, connecting African startups with Japanese investors and expertise. This year, JICA

concluded a grant aid agreement with Nigeria to support local startups — the first of its kind in Africa.

At TICAD 9, JICA will introduce the Impact Investment for Development of Emerging Africa Initiative, offering financial backing to private funds targeting socioeconomic development and climate action. Complementing this, the Japanese government amended the JICA Act in April 2025, empowering JICA to take financial risks and mobilize private investment for African development.

Youth key to future

The Africa-Japan partnership is increasingly defined by the energy and talent of its youth. One of the flagship initiatives is the African Business Education (ABE) Initiative for Youth, which has enabled over 1,900 African students to study in Japan and intern at Japanese companies since 2013.

Among its many success stories is Pelonomi Moiloa from South Africa, who earned her master's degree from Tohoku University. She founded Lealap AI, developing artificial intelligence solutions for the 25 million under-resourced speakers of languages such as Zulu, Sotho and Afrikaans. She made the TIME 100 AI list in 2023, showcasing the immense potential within Africa to lead its own digital transformation.

Building on this progress, JICA is preparing to launch a new initiative — Tomoni Africa — at TICAD 9. This Japanese word has a dual meaning: “together” and “be friends.” Tomoni Africa will expand face-to-face exchanges between African and Japanese youth. The aim is not just to share knowledge but to build enduring friendships and collaborative ventures.

Such exchanges are already underway. In May, JICA and Sapporo Kaisei High School co-hosted the Japan-Africa Youth Camp,

where 300 Japanese high school students met with 20 of their African peers. They engaged in dialogue about culture, development and future partnerships, illustrating how youth-to-youth interaction can break down barriers and spark mutual understanding.

Equally important is the legacy of the Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program. Since 1965, over 16,000 Japanese volunteers have been sent to Africa, deepening bonds and contributing across sectors from education to agriculture to sports. Aya Tsuboi, after her service in Uganda as a JOCV, launched Sunda Technology with an innovative prepaid, pay-as-you-go internet of things solution for hand-pumped wells. By integrating mobile money, water meters and ID tags, Sunda revitalizes abandoned wells, ensuring transparent, usage-based payments for sustainable water access. Tsuboi was highlighted in Forbes Japan's Next 100 list in 2023 for empowering communities and driving sustainable development in Africa.

Boosting multilateralism

Since its inception, TICAD has stood for its multilateral, inclusive approach, bringing together diverse actors. This open format reflects the principle of “Ownership and Partnership” first articulated at TICAD II in 1998 and is still central today.

To increase intraregional trade integration and deepen connectivity across the continent, JICA signed a memorandum of cooperation with the African Continental Free Trade Area secretariat in 2022, to create a single, large free-trade zone across the continent.

Besides this, JICA has leveraged Japanese and other Asian know-how in promoting “corridor development” in Africa, connecting cities to boost economic activity. It has led One Stop Border Posts and trained cus-



A JICA volunteer (top right) poses with members of the Djibouti Judo Federation during a training camp in the country's Ali Sabieh region in July 2024.

toms officers in how to streamline trade. This concept spread in conjunction with the ambitious Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa via the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development, our peer in Africa. Fostering greater connectivity and international cooperation would lead to greater prosperity in the continent.

JICA has been a conduit connecting Africa to Asia and Latin America. Since 1985, JICA has engaged in triangular cooperation with Egypt to train other African officials, a partnership recently accelerated in 2019 at TICAD 7 by the signing of a memorandum of cooperation.

Around the same period in the 1980s, similar cooperation began with Brazil for Africa, sending experts to Mozambique. This model also applies to Southeast Asia. Last year, JICA and Indonesia signed a memorandum to jointly support African development. At TICAD 9, JICA will welcome representatives from Africa, Asia and Latin America to explore South-South collaboration opportunities.

Toward a shared future

Africa today stands at a crossroads. Its challenges — poverty, conflict and governance — are formidable. But its opportunities —

youth, innovation and democratic resilience — are equally compelling. For Japan, engaging with Africa is not charity, but a strategic investment in the world's shared future.

The concept of human security — championed by Japan — remains central. Beyond direct threats to livelihood, life and dignity, we now face complex challenges such as pandemics and climate change. JICA is operationalizing this concept in our cooperation to make it more responsive to these threats in Africa. As Africa 2063 includes a human security component in its development goals, I look forward to deepening discussions with African leaders at TICAD 9.

Human exchange lies at the heart of this partnership. Japan's overseas cooperation volunteers continue to earn respect across African communities, and many returning volunteers are revitalizing Japanese regions. Programs like the ABE Initiative and Tomoni Africa will be key to fostering a new generation of African and Japanese leaders who understand, trust and collaborate with each other.

As the global order faces increasing strain, Africa and Japan together can offer a model of co-creation — grounded in respect, powered by youth and guided by shared values. The future is in their hands.



Co-create innovative solutions with Africa

TICAD 9 JICA Thematic Events

| Date and Time | Title | Venue | Languages |
|-----------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Tue. Aug. 19 13:00-14:30 | Paving the Way to Africa's Single Market — AfCFTA's Journey for the Past Six Years and its Future | InterContinental Yokohama Grand, Silk Room | Japanese/ English/French |
| Wed. Aug. 20 09:00-11:00 | Promotion of International Brain Circulation between Africa and Japan | InterContinental Yokohama Grand, Pearl Room | Japanese/ English/French |
| Wed. Aug. 20 09:00-11:30 | Enhancing Continental Food Self-Sufficiency and Job Creation through Resilient Food System and Private-Sector Development in Africa | InterContinental Yokohama Grand, Silk Room | Japanese/ English/French |
| Wed. Aug. 20 10:30-12:10 | Rethinking Human Security and Economic Development in Africa: Addressing Multidimensional Challenges and Shaping the Future Beyond 2030 | The Yokohama Bay Hotel Tokyu, Ambassador's Ballroom B | Japanese/ English/French |
| Thu. Aug. 21 12:30-14:30 | AI Transformation for Africa — AI talent development and Ecosystem strengthening | InterContinental Yokohama Grand, Silk Room | Japanese/ English/French |
| Fri. Aug. 22 09:00-11:00 | Impact Investing for Development of Emerging Africa to Achieve SDGs | The Yokohama Bay Hotel Tokyu, Ambassador's Ballroom B | Japanese/ English/French |

JICA will be hosting 38 other events throughout TICAD 9 (Aug. 19-22)


Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
<https://www.jica.go.jp/english/>

For information on other events
<https://ticad9event.jica.go.jp/>




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Expanding the horizons of co-creation

NORIIHIKO ISHIGURO
CHAIRMAN AND CEO, JAPAN EXTERNAL
TRADE ORGANIZATION



From Aug. 20 to 22, the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development will be held in Yokohama. This year's TICAD is particularly noteworthy as it coincides

with Expo 2025 in Osaka, Japan's western commercial hub. Ahead of TICAD, 46 African nations are participating in the expo, strategically showcasing their countries' appeal by introducing their cultures through music and dance at National Day events and holding business seminars. The Japan External Trade Organization has been actively supporting these efforts by promoting African-led seminars in Osaka through various channels.

This year, Africa is receiving unprecedented attention in Japan's two major

metropolitan centers — Tokyo and Osaka — thanks to the synergistic effect of TICAD 9 and the expo.

Corporate expectations for the African market are strong in Japan. According to JETRO's annual survey of Japanese firms in the region, approximately 60% anticipate growing demand in African markets and plan to expand their operations in the next one to two years. Over half of the companies surveyed reported having increased their market share compared with pre-COVID levels in 2019, a figure that ranks high even by global standards. Believing in Africa's leapfrogging potential in emerging sectors, such as digital transformation, green transformation, health care and education, more entrepreneurs and business leaders are venturing into the continent.

Through initiatives like the Japan Tech Africa Challenge and the Japan Innovation Bridge platform, JETRO is supporting Japanese startups entering Africa and connecting African startups and ecosystem players with Japanese industrial circles. The same survey also revealed growing interest among Japanese firms in new energy sectors, such

as hydrogen and renewables, as well as food-related industries whose markets reflect Africa's youthful demographics — sectors they are ready to venture into. In response, JETRO has dispatched business missions to Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and South Africa to explore opportunities and foster business projects in the focal areas of hydrogen and renewables.

Personally, I have been preparing for TICAD 9 with great anticipation. In January, I visited Nigeria on my first overseas trip of the year and witnessed firsthand the real Africa of today. At the Dangote Refinery, I was impressed by the scale of dynamic capital investment and heard this powerful message from Aliko Dangote, "Japanese companies must engage deeply with their African counterparts."

In the commercial metropolis of Lagos, local startups were using digital technology to visualize complex distribution systems. In Abuja, the capital, I met a government minister responsible for innovation and the digital economy — a founder of Co-Creation Hub who had previously collaborated with JETRO during TICAD 7 in Yokohama six years ago. Despite its challenges, Nigeria is steadily advancing in democratic governance and leveraging private-sector wisdom to shape its future. These experiences reaffirmed my impression of Africa's immense potential.

Following my visit to Nigeria, JETRO welcomed President Hakinde Hichilema of Zambia in February and Deputy President Paul Mashatile of South Africa in March. Since assuming the role of JETRO chairman, I have also had the honor of hosting President Joao Lourenco of Angola in March 2023 and President William Ruto of Kenya in 2024. All of these visits included economic forums and roundtable discussions with Japanese companies present in Africa, with African leaders directly delivering their messages to Japan's business community.

In addition to leading JETRO, I serve as co-chair of the Japan Business Council for Africa. In July, together with fellow co-chairs

from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Keidanren and the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Keizai Doyukai), we convened the third JBCA General Assembly to build momentum for TICAD 9. JBCA was established following recommendations from private economic organizations during TICAD 7 and serves both as a channel for public-private dialogue and a platform for collaboration on African business.

Japanese ministries and agencies are actively engaged in initiatives ranging from startup support and trilateral cooperation to agricultural development and quality infrastructure. JBCA works in tandem with these efforts, disseminating event information, and recently has been sharing updates on African National Days at Expo 2025.

That said, we must not be overly optimistic about Africa's current situation. TICAD 8 was held in Tunisia amid the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the three years since, African countries have faced new challenges. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and tensions in the Middle East have disrupted energy and grain supplies. As global trade decouples, the influx of Chinese goods into Africa has increased, offering affordable options for consumers across Africa but raising concerns about domestic industrial development and production.

More recently, the dismantling of the United States Agency for International Development has impacted health care, and reciprocal tariffs have conspicuously affected export industries. The situation is changing by the minute, with external shock waves destabilizing economies and political landscapes across the continent. Over the 30 years since its inception, TICAD has evolved significantly — most notably in its growing emphasis on business. Yet its core principle remains unchanged: being the platform where diverse stakeholders can have open dialogues about Africa's challenges and future — always with the continent at center stage. In an era of global



Reporters, government officials and businesspeople visit a hydrogen plant in Ain Sokhna, Egypt, in September 2024. JETRO

fragmentation, the spirit of dialogue that has defined TICAD from the beginning is more vital than ever. I believe that direct engagement between Japan and Africa will deepen mutual understanding and trust, laying the foundations for a new era of co-creation.

At TICAD 9, JETRO will co-host the TICAD Business Expo and Conference with JBCA. With a record 195 Japanese companies exhibiting and nearly 40 African nations participating, TBEC will feature the Japan Fair, showcasing Japanese technologies, and the Africa Lounge, where African countries will present their investment climates, both aimed at creating new business opportunities.

Memorandums of understanding between Japanese companies and African governments and companies will also be introduced. On the main stage, sessions will highlight African business leaders and explore themes such as innovation, hydrogen, renewable energies, space and pop culture, including anime. To build a new co-creative Japan-Africa relationship oriented to the future, business development in emerging industries is essential. The conference will spotlight the dynamism of African enterprises and the social challenges

they aim to address by collaborating with Japanese companies. These interactions will surely spark innovation on both sides. Many African countries are well suited for hydrogen and renewable energy production on a global scale. These are fields where Japanese technology can make a meaningful contribution and where mid- to long-term corporate engagement is crucial.

Space technology is another frontier for African public-private collaboration and co-creation, with Earth observation and telecommunications satellites are providing opportunities for a wide range of applications, from border control and resource exploration to carbon emissions monitoring. Japan's space ecosystem, including startups, can support Africa across all phases — from talent development to industrialization. Japanese pop culture can also serve as a bridge between the youth of Japan and Africa that easily transcends physical distance and fosters emotional connections. TBEC will explore business opportunities in anime and esports as well.

JETRO's vision, mission and values are encapsulated in the phrase: "Connecting with the world. Together, we move forward." TBEC is a bold embodiment of this enterprising spirit.



Dangote Group founder Aliko Dangote speaks with JETRO Chairman Norihiro Ishiguro in Nigeria in January. JETRO

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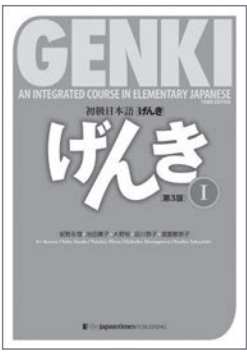
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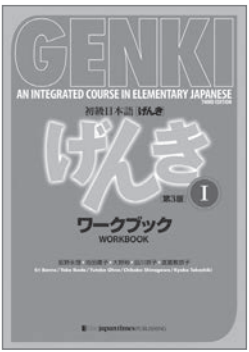


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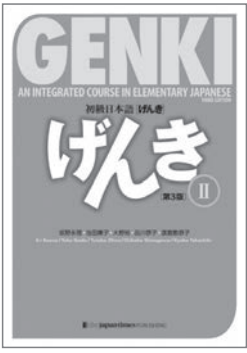
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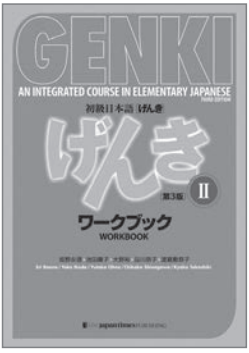
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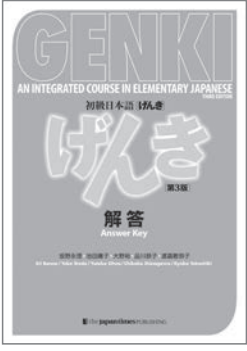
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City of Yokohama

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Cities play key policy role on environmental issues: mayor

Gateway city’s global engagement efforts contribute to realizing a green society

As host of the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development this year, Yokohama is actively promoting international cooperation on economic, environmental and other measures with local governments. Mayor Takeharu Yamanaka spoke about the crucial role cities play in addressing pressing global issues and the importance of exchange and cooperation with countries around the world, including in Africa.

The Japan Times: What responsibilities do cities bear in fighting climate change, one of the most urgent issues facing the world?
Yamanaka: Cities are playing an increasingly crucial role in promoting climate change measures. Globally, they account for approximately 70% of greenhouse gas emissions. Given their proximity to citizens and businesses, cities are uniquely positioned to drive behavioral change at scale. Yokohama is an international city with valuable experience in providing technical cooperation in the environmental field to cities across Asia. As a leading green hub in this region, we are further promoting climate change mitigation efforts in cities by sharing policies that actively promote behavioral change and the lessons we have learned from past international cooperation.

Please tell us about Yokohama’s decarbonization initiatives.
The Minato Mirai district, home to Pacifico Yokohama, where TICAD will be held for the fourth time, is a dynamic area with diverse functions including offices, commercial facilities and residences, as well as corporate headquarters, research and development facilities and universities. The district is also a major energy consumption area, accounting for approximately 10% of the city’s commercial energy consumption. Having been designated as a “decarbonization leading area” by the Environment Ministry, the area is striving to build a decarbonization model for urban areas through public-private partnerships to achieve its ambitious goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions from electricity consumption in the power sector by 2030. With around 140,000 people working within just 2 square kilometers, Minato Mirai represents a microcosm of the modern city — necessitating a multipronged approach to decarbonization. For example, there is a road surface that generates solar power to supply electricity to buildings along the road. We are also promoting various initiatives in collaboration with the public and with companies, such as horizontal recycling of used plastic bottles into new bottles and production of sustainable aviation fuel from used cooking oil. We have also begun efforts to visualize resource circulation within the district. This marks the first initiative in Japan to quantitatively assess resource inflows and outflows as well as the amount of resources that are recycled, and to quantify the circularity of the process. This will enable us not only to quantitatively track our progress in the tran-

sition to a circular economy, but also identify areas of high priority for improving the circularity rate, which is expected to lead to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

How does Yokohama engage the rest of the world in sharing its knowledge and experience with decarbonization?
I have been selected as an OECD Champion Mayor for Inclusive Growth and serve as an East Asia board member of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. I am fully committed to driving initiatives for a green society, including climate change mitigation together with like-minded city leaders worldwide. Last May, I had the honor of being the sole mayor from Asia invited to attend “From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience,” a summit hosted by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences at the Vatican, where I delivered a speech on Yokohama’s efforts toward achieving a green society. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has decided to prepare a “Special Report on Climate Change and Cities” by 2027. To incorporate the experiences of Japanese local governments into this report, Japan’s Environment Ministry and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, an international research institute addressing issues such as climate change and sustainability, jointly hosted a seminar in Yokohama in March. In my keynote speech at the seminar, I had the opportunity to speak on behalf of the local governments and shared specific examples of our city’s efforts toward decarbonization and the transition to a circular economy with the international community, including



Yokohama Mayor Takeharu Yamanaka
YOKOHAMA MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

IPCC experts, and discussed the pivotal role cities should play in these initiatives. Yokohama has been selected as the first city in the world to undergo evaluation by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development as a model for climate change measures. The OECD’s report, published this April, highly praised Yokohama’s wide-ranging initiatives for promoting decarbonization through public-private collaboration in leading regions and its continued contributions to sustainable development in other Asian cities. We hope this report, widely shared with the international community, will contribute to addressing global challenges.

What are some examples of collaboration with other cities or areas on environmental and economic sustainability?
Yokohama hosts the Asia Smart City Conference every year, aiming to foster

a green society that balances economic growth with a healthy urban environment. Last year, the event gathered more than 2,000 stakeholders from 39 cities and international organizations, sharing knowledge and ideas for achieving a green society. Yokohama effectively utilizes the Asia Smart City Conference as a platform for sharing knowledge and creating projects for intercity cooperation through public-private partnerships with international organizations, government agencies and companies. Since signing a memorandum of technical cooperation with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration in 2012, for example, Yokohama has dispatched officials on over 20 visits to provide expert technical advice, contributing to the Bangkok Master Plan on Climate Change and the Energy Action Plan.

How has Yokohama been fostering its engagement with Africa?
In Africa, we have been promoting technical cooperation mainly in the areas of waste management, water supply and port development to share technology and expertise with African cities that are undergoing rapid development. To date, we have accepted more than 1,400 individuals from African countries for study tours and training. Among these, our technical cooperation in the water supply sector which began with the dispatch of personnel to Kenya in 1977 has spanned nearly half a century. In addition, we have deepened ties with African countries in various ways, including exchanges between children in Yokohama and those in Africa who are the next generation’s leaders, support for Yokohama-based companies expanding their businesses in Africa, and support for female entrepreneurs in Africa. Furthermore, in the lead-up to TICAD 9, we have invited ambassadors from African

countries to Yokohama for discussions, and in September 2024 we were honored to be invited to the African Diplomatic Corps in Tokyo meeting, where we introduced Yokohama’s various policies and initiatives, thereby strengthening our collaboration and cooperation. It is a great privilege for Yokohama to host TICAD for the fourth time. By strengthening global partnerships, we aim to contribute to Africa’s sustainable growth and further elevate Yokohama’s international presence, especially in sustainability.

What are Yokohama’s aspirations for global sustainability?
Toward the realization of a sustainable green society, Yokohama will be a host city for the International Horticultural Expo in 2027. This international exposition aims to address global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss through the power of green initiatives. The venue, which will be surrounded by 10 million flowers and plants, will offer countless discoveries and learning opportunities day and night. This expo will offer exhibitions and experiences that will delight people from around the world, ranging from cutting-edge technologies that contribute to the realization of a green society to learning and experiences in agriculture and food supported by biodiversity. Visitors can also enjoy the traditional beauty of Japan through Japanese gardens, Ikebana and bonsai crafted with the highest level of technique and expertise. Through this expo, we aim to inspire people worldwide to take action for living in harmony with the Earth, starting from Yokohama, and spread this movement across the globe. Let us work together to create a sustainable, circular society.

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This article is sponsored by the Yokohama Municipal Government.



Participants from Japan and abroad attend the 13th Asia Smart City Conference from Oct. 22 to 24, 2024, in Yokohama. YOKOHAMA MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT



Working to share technology and know-how with African cities, Yokohama is promoting technical cooperation in waste management and water supply, and accepting visits and trainees from African countries. YOKOHAMA MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

The Official Mascot: Tunku Tunku ©Expo 2027



GREEN
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EXPO
2027
YOKOHAMA JAPAN



International Horticultural Expo 2027, Yokohama, Japan

March 19, 2027 - September 26, 2027

Theme: Scenery of the Future for Happiness

Location The Former Kamiseya Communication Facility (City of Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture)
Organizer Japan Association for the International Horticultural Expo 2027, Yokohama

