

Overview of the Symposium on Science and Technology Cooperation with Africa

1. Date and Venue

Date: April 27, 2009 2:00pm-6:30pm

Venue: Lecture Hall, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

2. Participants

Governmental Agencies: 35, Independent Administrative Institution: 35,

Other legal bodies: 10, Universities: 15, Companies: 6 Total: 110

3. Summary of Outcomes

- In Session 1, Mr. Chihara, Deputy Director-General, Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), presented a keynote speech on TICAD IV and its follow-ups and the vision of science and technology cooperation based on the diversity of Africa from the viewpoint of the significance of Japan's diplomacy towards Africa. Then, Mr. Iwase, Deputy Director-General, Science and Technology Policy Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), gave a presentation on Japan's science and technology policies and the efforts of MEXT from the viewpoint of African cooperation.
- In the report on the Mission in Session 2, Mr. Hashimoto, Counsellor of the Cabinet Office, explained the policy background of the Japan-Africa cooperation in the field of science and technology, the purpose of the Mission, and the details of the study, as well as lessons learned by the Mission. Then, Mr. Ono, Senior Researcher of Mitsubishi Research Institute, made a summary report on the study results about science and technology policies and the current status of research and development activities in African countries.
- At the panel discussion in Session 3, panelists made presentations under the theme of, "How Should Future African Science and Technology Cooperation Proceed?" A discussion followed the presentations. In the discussion, a broad range of views and opinions were expressed, including the significance of science and technology cooperation with Africa, the necessity of a mechanism that serves as a bridge to science and technology cooperation with full use of the outcomes of ODA in the past, the importance of long-term cooperation, the importance of human resources development in Africa and the expectation of support given to Japanese researchers who back up cooperation. The discussion ended with a speech by the moderator, Mr. Iwahashi, Deputy Director General of the Cabinet Office. He confirmed that the Cabinet Office will continue to perform the role of facilitator of science and technology cooperation between

Japan and Africa, while quoting a statement by an African minister (Japan-Africa Science and Technology Ministers' Meeting): "Africa may be poor, but it is the most abundant continent on earth. The need for science and technology is mandatory so that people can tap the resources for the development of their own."

- Dr. Shiraishi, executive member of the Council for Science and Technology Policy wrapped up the symposium expressing the following concluding remarks.

Science and technology diplomacy means how to achieve synergy between science and technology and diplomacy and it is essential to be conscious of this point. The following five points can be defined as future issues.

- The continuation of on-going science and technology cooperation that is important for resolving the various issues Africa is faced with, including cooperation for NERICA rice production and measures against infectious diseases.
- The cooperation in a wide range of areas considering Africa's interest in energy, biotechnology as well as agriculture and medical care.
- The discussions on transfer from ODA to science and technology cooperation as to what kind of program should be launched for a wide range of cooperation free from presumptions, with due consideration given not only to agricultural and medical fields, but also to the interests of African nations, such as energy and biotechnology, and for a linkage from "objects" or "facilities" to "people" or "research."
- The utilization of the centers developed by Japan's ODA as centers for developing science and technology, which is Japan's soft power.
- How to incorporate African researchers who have studied in Japan into Japan's R&D.

Then, the following two points were suggested as a direction of future Japan-Africa cooperation in the field of science and technology.

- It is important to address the issues in a coordinated way by sharing a common awareness of the issues among concerned government agencies and research institutions. Thus, discussions are necessary as to how to support researchers, who are the key persons and serve as the core in research cooperation.
- The issue commonly seen in the field of development cooperation is how to promote science and technology cooperation with Africa, in which partner countries are not symmetric in terms of research resources. There is a huge gap in the density of the cooperation network between Asia and Africa. When considering this situation, it is important to strategically connect researchers who will become the core.

Finally, the Council for Science and Technology Policy intends to promote cooperation among government agencies and further deepen coordination between science and technology policy and diplomatic policy.

The Symposium on Science and Technology Cooperation with Africa

April 27, 2009

Agenda

Opening Remarks

Dr. Takashi SHIRAISHI

Executive Member, Council for Science and Technology Policy, Cabinet Office

Session 1 : Keynote Speech

1) Japan's Diplomacy with Africa and Expectation on S&T

Mr. Nobuyoshi CHIHARA,

Deputy Director-General, Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau, MOFA

2) Japan's S&T Policy and Activities toward Collaboration with African Countries

Mr. Kimikazu IWASE

Deputy Director-General, Science and Technology Policy Bureau, MEXT

Session2 : Report on the African Science and Technology Research Mission

1) Overview of S&T Cooperation between Japan and Africa and Results of the Mission

Mr. Michio HASHIMOTO

Counsellor, Bureau of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, Cabinet Office

2) Current Status of S&T Policy and R&D in African Countries

Mr. Shinji Ono

Senior Producer, Project Management Professional, S&T Research Group, Science and Safety Policy Research Division, Mitsubishi Research Institute, Inc.

Session3 : Panel Discussion "How Should Future African Science and Technology Cooperation Proceed?"

<Moderator>

Mr. Akihiko IWAHASHI

Deputy Director-General for Innovation, Science and Technology Policy, Cabinet Office

<Panelists>

Dr. Sueo MACHI

External Advisor to the MEXT

Prof. Kiyoshi KITA

Professor, Graduate School of Medicine, the University of Tokyo

Prof. Taro YAMAMOTO

Professor and Chairman, Department of International Health, the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Nagasaki University

Dr. Kozo UTO	Director, International Affairs Department, National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology
Dr. Kensuke OKADA	Senior Scientist, Research Strategy Office, Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences
Ms. Ayako MAESAWA	Head, Asian/African Program Div. International Program Dpt. Japan Society for the Promotion of Science
Mr. Akira NAKANISHI	Director, Research Partnership for Sustainable Development, Japan Science and Technology Agency
Mr. Toshihiko KAYO	Deputy Director General, Office for Science and Technology Cooperation, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Comment

Dr. Takashi SHIRAISHI

Closing Remarks

Mr. Kimikazu IWASE