



**TICAD IV**  
**Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development**  
**Yokohama, Japan • May 28 - 30, 2008**

**For immediate release**

**FOREIGN MINISTERS IN GABON TO CHART COURSE FOR FOURTH TOKYO  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT**

LIBREVILLE, GABON, 19 March (UNDP) -- Foreign Ministers from across Africa will meet in Libreville, Gabon, on 20-21 March to lay the groundwork for this year's largest global gathering on African development: the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV), to be held from 28 to 30 May in Yokohama, Japan.

The Libreville Ministerial Preparatory Conference, which also brings together representatives from the Government of Japan, the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (UN-OSAA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the African Union, builds on the results of regional preparatory meetings held last year in Zambia and Tunisia, and focuses on plans to translate the theme of TICAD IV, "Towards a Vibrant Africa: A Continent of Hope and Opportunity", into new initiatives. Results from TICAD IV are expected to be fed into the July 2008 gathering of the leaders from the Group of Eight industrialized countries in Hokkaido Toyako, Japan.

The TICAD IV co-organizers are working in partnership with the African Union to map out a comprehensive development plan for Africa as a follow-up to TICAD IV. Also participating in the Libreville Conference will be high-ranking representatives from countries in Asia and other regions supporting African development, other regional and international organizations, and civil society organizations.

"The time has come for TICAD to make a significant leap forward by effectively taking up mid- and long-term issues for 5 or 10 years into the future, and the Ministerial Preparatory Conference for TICAD IV will begin hammering out a mechanism for that," said Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Kōmura.



Office of the Special Adviser on Africa



United Nations  
Development Programme



The World Bank

“The Libreville Ministerial Preparatory Conference is a decisive meeting for African foreign ministers, other heads of delegations, TICAD co-organizers, as well as other partners to chart the course that will enable TICAD IV to make major new steps in support of African development,” said Mr. Bouna Sémou Diouf, Director of the TICAD Office of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa in New York and head of the UNDP delegation.

El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon, will welcome participants at the opening session of the two-day Conference. Following statements by the co-organizers and foreign ministers and the opening session, breakout sessions in the afternoon will focus on three TICAD IV priority areas: boosting economic growth, ensuring “human security”, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and consolidation of peace and democratization, and addressing environmental issues and climate change.

Further breakout sessions on the second day will deal with cross-cutting elements for TICAD IV, including South-South cooperation; collaboration with the private sector, private foundations and civil society organizations; and gender. The second afternoon will include a plenary meeting to discuss the reports from the breakout sessions, followed by the closing session.

The first TICAD Conference was organized in 1993 to promote high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners. It has evolved into a major global framework to facilitate initiatives for African development under the principle of Africa’s “ownership” and “partnership” between Africa and the international community. The main feature of this framework is the cooperation between Africa and Asia.

One outgrowth of the TICAD process is a series of Africa-Asia Business Forums (AABF), and AABF IV, held in February 2007 in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, led to business prospects for African companies worth \$156 million to help spur African economic development.

Consultations are also under way within the TICAD framework to establish a financing mechanism for small and medium-sized enterprises through the Africa Enhanced Private Sector Assistance initiative, with funding of \$1 billion extended by the Government of Japan and managed by the African Development Bank.

The concept of human security is a key perspective for Japanese policy and the TICAD process, including spurring progress towards achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015 to combat poverty, hunger, illiteracy, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, discrimination against women and girls, and environmental degradation.

The regional preparatory meeting for TICAD IV noted that attaining the Millennium Goal of universal primary education is a priority, and that construction and staffing of schools and provision teaching materials is a major challenge, especially in rural areas. On health goals, strengthening programmes to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis continues to be a priority, and capacity-building to improve delivery of primary health services is needed.

Support for human security also forms the basis of Japan’s contributions to the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund totalling \$33.5 billion since it was established in 1999. The Trust Fund has supported approximately 180 projects implemented by United Nations agencies. These include more than 50 projects in Africa, which promote the consolidation of peace and democratization in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Sudan.

On the environment, the third TICAD priority, climate change, poses one of the greatest risks to sustainable development in Africa. Climate change affects natural resources conservation and their sustainable use, and its impact threatens to reverse decades of socio-economic development efforts. Climate change can also foster water-borne diseases such as malaria. The TICAD regional preparatory meetings agreed that support is vital for the creation and implementation of national environmental adaptation plans and development of renewable and alternative energy with appropriate technology, especially for poor communities which are particularly vulnerable.

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