

Japanese Aid Diplomacy in Africa: An Historical Analysis

Makoto SATO

Abstract

At the Gleneagles Summit in 2005 the leaders of G8 agreed to debt cancellation for 18 highly indebted poor, including 14 African, countries. Japan reluctantly had to accept the cancellation, which clearly demonstrates the shift of the Japanese aid policy which for so long was based on loan-centred assistance. The history of the Japanese aid diplomacy in Africa could be divided into 5 stages: the first stage (almost exclusively Asia directed aid), the second stage (recipient Africa with natural resources), the third stage (a rapid expansion of Japanese aid), the fourth stage (beginning of political commitment), and fifth stage (a shift of the Japanese aid diplomacy). Against the conventional perception Japanese aid was mainly motivated by longer rather than shorter economic benefits. Japan also maintained a hidden agenda to gain support among African nations related to its political ambition to become a permanent member of the UN security council. Yet, what is more important is the fact that Japanese initiatives in Africa was often motivated by its consideration to other regions and countries than Africa.

1, Background of Japanese Aid Diplomacy in Africa

1) International Evaluation of Japanese Development Assistance

At the Gleneagles Summit in July 2005, the leaders of G8 agreed to boost aid for developing countries by \$50 billion. Among them Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan pledged to boost \$10 billion Japanese aid for five years between 2005 and 2009. The G8 leaders also agreed to full debt cancellation for 18 countries (14 African countries and other 4 countries). Initially Japan strongly resisted the

Professor, College of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan

© The International Studies Association of Ritsumeikan University:
Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies, 2005. ISSN 1347-8214. Vol.4, pp. 67-85

cancellation plan, reasoning that cancellation would bring about moral hazards among recipient countries. Eventually however, it had to compromise with other member states. The debate among G8 member states over the cancellation plan reflects the confrontation over the method of development aid between Japan and other major donors.

In April 2003, *Foreign Policy*, an American journal, collaborating with the Global Development Center, a think tank, published a newly invented index, Commitment to Development Index (CDI). The index aimed to evaluate the diplomacy of 21 donor countries to developing countries in 6 areas: aid, trade, investment, peace-keeping operations, environment and immigration. Each area was given score from 0 to 9, and the total figure became a country's general CDI. The Netherlands gained the highest CDI scoring 5.6, followed by Denmark (5.5) and Portugal (5.2). Japan was given the lowest rank with the score of 2.4. In the area of aid the evaluation of Japan was not remarkable either. It scored 1.2, the second lowest ranking only followed by the United States (0.8).

There may be room for argument about this index. Is it really possible to measure the highly complex diplomacy in numerical terms in only six areas? Can we evaluate the country's commitment to peace in the developing regions by simply calculating how many times it has participated in peace-keeping operations, ignoring many other factors such as the involvement in arms exports to conflict ridden regions? Nevertheless, the index is worth examining in that it reveals the significant perceptual gap between Japan and other donor countries over the ideal method of aid to developing counties. In the CDI measurement there are some rules of adjustment. The aid to poor countries with good governance gains additional scores, whereas the tied aid is subtracted scores. The Japanese government has long maintained that the loan rather than the grant is the desirable method of aid for developing countries. Actually, until recently, the majority of its aid took the form of loan, in particular the aid to East Asian countries. However, in the CDI measurement this is negatively evaluated, and large return loans subtract scores. It may not be so easy to conclude which one is the more appropriate method of aid between grant and loan without examining concrete historical conditions surrounding the recipient country. Yet, it is certain that Japan faces a serious challenge by the international donor community over its method and direction of aid.

Again in April 2003, almost at the same time of CDI publication, another important document was published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA). In its yearly *Diplomatic Blue Book* for the year 2003, the MOFA accepted that the Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) stood at a historical turning point (MOFA, 2003). In its explanation, the turning point meant the fact that Japan began to integrate its ODA with the conflict resolution and peace-building in its diplomacy to the developing regions. The *Diplomatic Blue Book* concomitantly admitted that Japan finally wrote off loans to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Up to then the Japanese government had officially maintained that the loan was superior to the grant as a form of aid since it enabled them to develop through hard work for repayment and that the loan-prioritized Japanese aid policy should be seen as superior to other policies. The write-off of the loans of LDCs, and thus, to convert a substantial part of loan into grant was a fundamental shift of aid formula in the Japanese aid policy.

These two new policies, integration on ODA to peace-building on the one hand, and prioritize grant to loan on the other, will affect Africa more than any other regions, since it is where LDCs and armed conflicts are most concentrated. Japan does not have an historical relationship with Africa as major European powers do. Its trade and investment relationship with Africa is also limited. Nevertheless, as a recipient region for Japanese ODA, Africa now occupies the second highest position next only to Asia.

2) Present State of Japanese Aid in Africa

In the performance of Japanese ODA for the year 2001, 24.3% was contributed to the international organizations, and the rest was directed to bilateral ODA (27.6% was for loan, 48.2% for grant in the form of monetary and technical assistance). The grant now accounts for twice as much as the loan in the Japanese ODA. Yet, the share of loan is still comparatively larger than other donors, such as Britain (3.2%), the United States (-6.9%), France (-7.0%) and Germany (-0.2%). When repayment is larger than new loans, the figure turns negative. As for the recipient region for the Japanese ODA, Asia receives over half of the Japanese ODA (56.6%), followed by Africa (11.4%), Latin America (9.9%) and the Middle East (3.9%).

Historically, Japan has contributed a major portion of its aid to the Asian region,

the East Asian region in particular. The majority of its aid, mostly in loan form, was applied to the construction of economic infrastructures in transport, energy and communication sectors. The East Asian region generally succeeded in a rapid economic growth in the 1980s and the early 1990s. In contrast, Africa, a major recipient region for British and French aid, experienced a protracted economic decline and rampant conflicts during the same period. The grant became the only possible option for aid in Africa. From the performance for the year 2001, loans shared 53.6% of Japanese ODA to the East Asian region, while 98.4% of Japanese ODA to Africa was in the form of grants (MOFA, 2002). In short, almost all of the Japanese ODA to Africa is now executed in a grant form and mainly applied to the social development projects such as education and health.

Japan is now the third most important donor country for Africa, following France and the United States. It is the prime donor for five countries (Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Mauritania), and the second major donor for twelve countries in 1999 (MOFA, 2001). It is no doubt that the foreign aid including Japanese one is a matter of life and death for African countries where, excluding South Africa, foreign aid amounts to 6.7% of their GDP in 1998 (Hirano, 2002).

In the Japanese aid related activities, the role of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer is particularly salient in Africa. Up to 2000, the accumulated number of JOCV volunteers dispatched to Africa reached 6,727, far surpassing the number of those dispatched to East Asia where 4,161 volunteers were accumulated (MOFA, 2001). Apart from the governmental activities, an increasing number of Japanese NGOs have been engaged in development assistance in Africa. According to a survey conducted by the Africa-Japan Forum, an NGO, 118 NGOs are engaged in various activities all over Africa (Africa-Japan Forum, 2002).

2, History of Japanese Aid in Africa

1) Initial Stage

The overall Japanese development aid has a half-century of history. Among them the history of aid in Africa could be divided into 5 developmental stages: the first stage = from the beginning of Japanese aid diplomacy to the first oil crisis (1954 - 1973): the second stage = from the first through the second oil crisis up to 1980 (1974 - 1980): the third stage = the period of rapid expansion of the Japanese aid

Japanese Aid Diplomacy in Africa

(1981 - 1988): the fourth stage = the period when Japan became the prime donor and began searching the policy initiatives of aid in the international community (1989-2000): and the latest stage = the period when the Japanese government faced a fundamental shift of the aid diplomacy (- 2001).

The aid diplomacy of post-war Japan began as part of war reparations to the Southeast Asian countries, which suffered from Japanese occupation during the Second World War. In this period the aid was officially rationalised as aiming to “expand the export market and to secure the import market of important raw materials” by a White Paper of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) in 1958 (MITI, 1958). In this period Japan itself was still on a course of reconstruction following the devastating war.

The fact that Japan tried to utilise aid as a means of trade expansion in the initial period created a strong impression which lasted for a long time. Even now studies on aid sometimes tend to characterise the Japanese aid as short-term profit searching nature. Obviously we cannot ignore the fact that Japan officially aimed to expand the trade market when it embarked on development aid in the late 1950s. Yet, in the course of historical development, the objects of the Japanese aid became far more diversified such as economic benefits for long and short terms, humanitarian considerations, security considerations, cooperation and coordination with other donor countries, and searching for political initiatives on the international scene.

The Japanese aid in Africa can never appropriately be understood by a simple reasoning of short-term economic benefits. In 2000, for instance, Africa occupied 0.8% of the Japanese exports, 1.1% of its imports and only 0.1% of foreign direct investment, whereas Africa received 10.1% of the Japanese ODA (MOFA home page in 2003).

The first stage of the Japanese aid diplomacy began in 1954 when Japan became a member state of the Colombo Plan. This stage lasted for nearly 20 years until the outbreak of the fourth Middle East War (Yom Kippur War) and the subsequent first oil crisis. During this period the Japanese aid was almost exclusively concentrated on the Asian region. Even for the year 1970, 98.2% of Japanese aid was directed to Asian countries (MOFA, 2002). Most of the recipient countries more or less suffered from the invasion and occupation of the Japanese

military during the war. And the people in these countries were experiencing a culminating nationalism immediately after the independence or liberation from foreign domination.

Under such circumstances the Japanese authorities had to deliberately and cautiously implement aid projects without attracting nationalistic backfire from the people of recipient countries. Some practical principles were gradually formulated by the Japanese authorities engaged in development assistance such as aid “on-request-basis” principle, and emphasis on supporting the “self-help efforts” of the recipient countries. The former means that Japan will respond to the request of aid to the development project only when the recipient countries initiate planning and propose projects by themselves. The latter implies that, although Japan gives assistance financially and technically at the initial stage, once the project is started, the recipient countries themselves assume all the responsibilities not only for economic management but also for social, political and other related matters, which may happen thereafter. Although these principles were created according to the specific historical conditions between Japan and Asian countries then, they came to be applied to the Japanese worldwide aid strategy even after Japanese aid became more globalised.

Another important characteristic of this period was that, though Japan gave assistance to Asian countries, it received an enormous amount of financial assistance from the World Bank and other international institutions at the same time. The World Bank loan to Japan started in 1953, a year before the Japanese entrant to the Colombo Plan, and continued for 14 years up to 1966. Japan was the second major recipient next only to India for the World Bank loan in the early 1960s. The World Bank loans were used for the construction of highways, bullet trains and power stations, all of which became the basic infrastructures to sustain high economic growth period of Japan. Business investments to some leading companies such as the Yawata Steel (currently Nippon Steel), Toyota and Mitsubishi Shipbuilding were also supplied by the World Bank. The Japanese loan to the World Bank was finally cleared off as late as 1990 (Nishigaki and Shimomura, 1997). By that time Japan became the second largest donor next to the United States. In other words, for nearly forty years Japan was concurrently recipient and donor of development assistance in the international community.

And this specific historical experience leads the Japanese authorities to believe that

an ideal form of development assistance is loan rather than grant since it drives recipient nations to hard work in order to repay the loan, which should ultimately result in successful economic growth and development. This thesis seemed to work to a certain extent for the Japanese aid in East Asian countries. It took some time for Japan to realise that the story was very different in other regions.

2) Oil Crisis and Change of Aid Strategy

The second stage was kicked off by the outbreak of the fourth Middle East War. The world economy plunged into chaos by the oil embargo of Arab countries and the quadrupled oil price of the OPEC countries. Faced with this disaster, Japan tried to acquire Arab oil by quickly approaching Arab nations and adopting a more pro-Arab diplomatic stance in the Middle East. Concomitantly it began searching alternative oil resources in order to diversify the country of origin of import oil. Africa became one of such newly spotlighted regions. In 1974 Toshio Kimura, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited Egypt and four sub-Saharan African countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Zaire, Tanzania), for the first time as a Japanese foreign minister to do so. Similarly, in 1979, immediately after the second oil crisis, Naoshi Sonoda visited five sub-Saharan countries (Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Tanzania and Kenya) as the second minister who visited Africa.

Kimura later explained two major motives for his visit to Africa. Firstly, being shocked by the vulnerability of the Japanese economy in the face of scarce natural resources, he became aware of the importance of Africa, as a place with rich natural resources but an almost virgin region for the Japanese economic diplomacy. Secondly, he was concerned with popular resentment to the economic activities of the Japanese capital in several Southeast Asian countries of the time. In extreme cases they resulted in anti-Japanese riots. Learning from these negative experiences he wished to build friendly relationship beforehand between Japan and African countries as future partners (Afurika Kyokai, 1975; 1976).

Primarily motivated with such economic security considerations, the Japanese aid for the first time came to operate worldwide including Africa. Aid to the regions other than Asia significantly increased in this period. In particular, bilateral aid to African countries increased in ten years from 1970 to 1980 by nominally 27.5 times while national general budget increased nominally 5.3 times (MITI, 1984).

It is thus apparent that Japan embarked on aid to Africa primarily motivated by the long-term economic security considerations. At the same time Japan gradually came to see African countries as possible Japanese supporters in the international political scene, particularly at the UN meetings. Such considerations were most salient when Japan became a candidate for the election of non-permanent members at the Security Council. The MOFA consciously worked for the votes of African countries.

In the following third stage, the Japanese aid to Africa continued to expand. As before, Japanese aid became more globalised and expanded in absolute terms. However, there is a difference between the second and the third stage. In the former, the Japanese aid was motivated by economic security considerations, and its prime target was the recipient countries. In the latter, the Japanese prime target was less recipients than other donors which demanded Japan to increase its financial contribution to international development.

During the 1980s Japan was able to maintain stable economic growth better than other major industrialised countries. Because of this it faced a stronger pressure from other industrialised countries over the trade and foreign exchange issues. The United States, suffering from the twin deficits of trade and federal budget, initiated the announcement by the Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors of five major industrialised nations in 1985 to drive down the price of the dollar (Plaza Accord). The price of the yen and the assets in Japan went sky-high, and as a result, Japan entered a so-called "bubble economy".

The United States also brought a stronger pressure on Japan to increase the aid in Africa. In the same year of the Plaza Accord, Armacost, Undersecretary of State, visited Japan, and requested Japan to increase its aid in other regions along with Asia and to give a higher proportion of grant in its aid. Also at another meeting of 1985 in Paris between the Administrator of USAID and the Director-General of the Economic Cooperation Bureau of MOFA, the Americans requested Japan to increase aid specifically in Africa (Orr, 1990).

Under such international pressures Japan came to make its ODA as one of the three pillars of policies counterbalancing the trade surplus along with domestic demand expansion and promotion of imports. The proportion of Africa in the total Japanese ODA continuously increased, reaching a record 15.3% in 1989. Then it

dropped a little, but maintained a proportion of some 10% thereafter.

In the 1980s the World Bank and the IMF strenuously executed the structural adjustment programmes in Africa. Massive aid from the international institutions and donor countries flowed into Africa in return for accepting a set of conditions such as liberalisation of trade and foreign exchange, privatisation of state industries, deficit reduction of state budget. However, structural adjustment was not successful. Per capita income in Africa from 1980 to 1990 declined by 1.2% annually, making a striking contrast to the East Asia and Pacific region where per capita income increased by 6.4% annually for the same period (World Bank quoted in Takahashi, 2004).

In the middle of the 1980s Africa experienced a historical drought, which swept over the Sahel and many parts of the Eastern and Southern regions. In addition, several other factors including civil wars deteriorated the situation, which caused millions of death on the continent. An enormous famine relief campaign was organised worldwide in 1984 through 1985. The Japanese government embarked on famine relief operations and Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe visited famine stricken areas in Zambia, Ethiopia as well as Egypt in 1984. It was also for the first time that the Japanese civil society was organized solely for an African issue with a massive scale of relief campaign. Subsequently, a number of NGOs working for development were born. Yet it may also be true that successive events created a stereotype image of starving Africa in the minds of many Japanese people.

3) Top Donor Japan and Political Commitment

In the fourth stage Japan became a top donor in the bilateral aid. In 1989 Japan became a prime donor country exceeding the United States, and then, for the successive ten years from 1991 through 2000 it maintained its position. Japan also became a major donor in Africa along with France, the United States and Germany.

As the amount of the Japanese aid increased, its political implications became a serious agenda. The people's revolution in the Philippines in 1986 and the Gulf War in 1991 raised grave questions over the legitimacy and appropriateness of Japanese aids to the Philippines and Iraq. The Japanese government had to

clarify political principles over the aid outstripping the traditional aid “on-request-basis” attitude. In 1992 the cabinet officially adopted ODA Charter for the first time: co-existence of environmental conservation and development, no use for military purposes, attention to recipients countries’ military expenditure, and attention to democratisation and human rights.

The Japanese political commitment in Africa was also deepened and widened. The first major commitment was with the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) for peace-keeping operations and humanitarian relief activities. In 1993 Japan sent the SDF to Mozambique for participating in the UN peace-keeping operations after the ceasefire between the Frelimo government and the RENAMO forces backed up by Apartheid South Africa. It was the second time for the SDF to participate in the UN peace-keeping operations, and the first time in Africa. Then in 1994 the SDF was sent to the refugee camps in Zaire for humanitarian relief operation for the Rwandan refugees.

The second political commitment by Japan was the organisation of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 1993 in order to initiate the development strategy in Africa. The second TICAD was held five years later. There were several new developmental initiatives proposed such as promoting South-South cooperation in utilising Japanese aid for training African personnel in Asian countries. Mostly, however, what TICAD did was to endorse the existing development strategies. Some argue that TICAD was a significant diplomatic initiative with little development initiative by Japan (Obayashi, 2003).

Another historical event of the period was the final abolition of Apartheid and the birth of democratic South Africa under the leadership on the African National Congress (ANC) and newly elected President Nelson Mandela in 1994. Since the mid-1980s the Apartheid regime and the National Party (NP) government was run down by the nationwide anti-Apartheid uprisings and the international economic sanctions. In 1990 President de Klerk of the NP government finally declared the abolition of Apartheid, legalised the activities of the ANC, and released Mandela. The negotiation process for peaceful settlement began.

Japan had officially condemned Apartheid at the UN meetings and prohibited direct foreign investment by Japanese capital and strictly regulated cultural exchanges. Yet, it had continued trade with South Africa as a major partner in

Africa. In 1987 Japan became the prime trade partner for South Africa. Facing international criticism, the Japanese government imposed the voluntary restraint from trade on the private companies. After the de Klerk announcement Japan lifted its sanctions in 1991, and then in 1992 finally resumed diplomatic relations with South Africa. The Japanese diplomatic mission worked to a certain extent for the realisation of the peaceful settlement during the negotiation process. Since the ANC came to power, Japan openly supported South Africa as a core nation in Africa. Yet, it may be possible to say that Japan could have exerted more influence on the NP government during the Apartheid days which might have hastened the democratisation process in South Africa.

As we saw, the Diplomatic Blue Book for 2003 admitted that the Japanese aid diplomacy was facing a big turning point. Their recognition coincides with the advent of the fifth stage in our periodization. However, the causes and backdrop of advent of the new stage are more complex than the recognition of the Blue Book. We will analyse the causes of this change by looking at five factors.

3, The Changing Africa Aid Diplomacy at the Turn of the Century

1) The Reduction of ODA and MOFA Reform

The first factor which brought about the new historical stage of Japanese aid diplomacy at the turn of the century was the ODA budget cutback deriving from the protracted recession and the constraining state budget. In the year 2001, the Japanese ODA was reduced by 27.1%. In contrast to this, the ODA budget of the United States for the same year increased by 14.8%, which made the United States the prime donor again for the first time in 11 years.

The financial constraint of the Japanese aid became apparent by the end of the last century. In the budget draft for the fiscal year 1998, the ODA budget in the general account decreased by 10.4% for the first time in the Japanese history, and continued to decline in 2000 and 2001, except 1999 when it recovered a little (MOFA, 2001; 2002). The general picture of the Japanese ODA may be slightly different since the ODA finance was also supplied by the government investment and loan programme. The internationally comparative analysis may also be affected by the fluctuating exchange market. Nevertheless, it became clear that the conventional method of Japanese aid diplomacy characterised by the

overwhelming total amount now faced a dead end.

In fact, almost all the donor countries faced serious financial constraint. Yet, the situation seems to be changing after the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000 and the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, which aim to attain 8 specific objectives with targeted figures by the year 2015. The United States declared that it would increase its aid incrementally, and by 50% until 2006. EU plans to increase the percentage of ODA in GNI from current 0.33% to 0.39% by 2006 in the average figure of member states. Some other donor countries such as Canada and Australia too expressed the wish to increase their aid (MOFA, 2002). The G8 agreement at Gleneagles will accelerate such trends.

Partly related to the budget cutback we saw, the second factor which brought about the new stage was the reform of the MOFA. Since 2001, the MOFA was flooded with a number of scandals: fraud, embezzlement and false accounting committed by its staffs at the headquarters in Tokyo as well as at the branches abroad. The in-house investigation confirmed by July 2002 that there were at least 12 cases of injustice committed, and as a result, those involved were administratively punished. Moreover, a member of parliament notorious for his influence on the decision making process of aid, and employees of a trade company deeply involved in aid projects were prosecuted with the charges of bribery or unlawful bidding. A grave mistrust spread among the nation to the financial control of aid and administrative handling of the MOFA.

In responding to such criticism, the MOFA embarked on the ODA reform. In March 2002 the Consultative Committee on ODA Reform, a body responsible for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, submitted a final report to the Minister, indicating the necessary measures for information disclosure, efficiency improvement and participation of citizens. Following this, the MOFA declared the reform in five fields: auditing, evaluation, partnership with NGOs, fostering and utilising human resources, and information disclosure. In August 2003 the Cabinet adopted the new ODA Charter.

The new Charter maintains the basic principles of the old one such as co-existence of environmental conservation and development, no use for military purposes, attention to recipient countries' military expenditure and human rights. At the same time it tries to integrate with ODA the concepts of human

security and peace-building such as humanitarian assistance, assistance to facilitating the peace processes, and assistance to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants. Also, it explicitly announces, possibly for the first time, that Japan will carry out ODA more “strategically”. For preventing fraud and corruption it lists information disclosure and participation by Japanese citizens. It emphasises partnership and collaboration with other donors and international community. All in all, we could say that the new Charter indicates the final departure from the traditional aid “on-request-basis” attitude.

2) Development Aid and Peace-building

The third factor which characterises the fifth stage is the integration of peace-building and ODA. The concept of peace-building became widely known through the publication of two related reports “Agenda for Peace” in 1992 and 1995 by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the UN Secretary-General. Generally speaking, the Japanese government used to detach its aid diplomacy from the conflict resolution activities. However, it was gradually recognised and accepted that any kind of development project was instantly destroyed once the armed conflicts developed, while development assistance would also contribute to the eradication of root causes of conflicts.

In July 2000, the G8 foreign ministers’ meeting at Miyazaki agreed that member states should make efforts for conflict prevention from the pre-conflict phase to the post-conflict phase in a comprehensive approach comprising of political, security, economic, social and development dimensions. In accordance with this the Japanese government publicised its own action programme, “Action from Japan”, where it was stressed that development policies would be constructed so as to contribute the elimination of potential causes of armed conflicts.

Then in April 2001 the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) publicised the report on conflict prevention as a first such attempt by JICA. From the development assistance point of view, the report indicated necessary measures of peace-building at three consecutive phases: emergency humanitarian aid in the midst of the conflict, development assistance in the post-conflict phase, and the conflict prevention measures thereafter (JICA, 2001). Japan also advocated the establishment of Human Security Commission (HSC) at the UN and financially supported the commission until it submitted the final report to the UN Secretary-

General in May 2003.

No one would deny the necessity of integrated effort for development assistance and conflict prevention given the vicious circle of violence and poverty rampant in many parts of the LDCs, Africa in particular. The final report of the HSC too concluded that the “freedom from want” and the “freedom from fear” are inseparably bonded, and thus, an integrated approach of development and conflict prevention is needed. Yet, this integrated approach requires a highly sophisticated political judgment so as to analyse the roots and causes of the conflict as well as its international background. What is required is very different from the experiences accumulated in the past Japanese development assistance activities. In the past, Japan mostly concentrated on financial and technical assistance in constructing economic and social infrastructures from a more or less neutral stance. When judgement is inaccurate, it may result in the biased support of one-side of the parties concerned. The integrated approach of development assistance and conflict prevention may imply a double-edge sword for Japan.

3) Collaboration and Coordination of Aid

The fourth factor which marks the fifth stage of Japanese aid in Africa is the acceptance of the international major trend of aid, departing from the traditional, and rather isolated, Japanese way. In December 2002 Japan announced that it would write-off the debt by the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) from the fiscal year 2003. Up till that time, the Japanese Government had responded to the debt relief request from an indebted country by giving a new grant equivalent sum to the debt to the country on the condition that debt was once repaid to Japan. The reason the Japanese government made debtors follow such a complicated and peculiar procedure seemed to lie in the fact that Japan wished to maintain the legitimacy of the argument it had persisted for such a long time that the loan rather than grant was the best method of development assistance. Yet, the debt relief campaign worldwide finally drove the Japanese government to accede to write-off, an apparent breakaway from the traditional Japanese method.

Another international trend of aid that the Japanese government acceded to was coordination and collaboration among donors. Based on the reflection on the failed structural adjustment programme in the 1980s, most donor countries and

the international institutions forged a consensus that development assistance would attain much better results and should be planned and implemented at sector level rather than each project level separately, and with collaborated donors efforts rather than each donor's separate attempt, even making a common fund when necessary. They also recognised the importance of partnership between donors and recipient on the one hand, and ownership of recipient country in every development stage on the other.

Finally, the fifth factor characterizing the fifth stage was the appearance and international acknowledgement of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a rebirth plan for Africa. Initiated by the African leaders, NEPAD was adopted at the OAU in July 2001, and became a pillar development strategy of the African Union (AU) when the OAU was transformed into the AU in July 2002. NEPAD aims the rebirth and development of Africa in various fields such as infrastructure building, industrial development and human resources development. It emphasises the African initiative, importance of peace, democracy and governance based on the continental as well as regional integration approach. The G8 summit at Kananaskis in June 2002 invited the leaders of Algeria, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa who initiated the NEPAD, and endorsed the NEPAD. The Japanese government officially announced its support of NEPAD at the TICAD III in 2003. Although it is certain that NEPAD was initiated by the African leaders themselves, its idea is not yet widely shared by many ordinary people. The prospect of NEPAD and concrete way of supporting it by donors are yet to be seen.

4, The Essential Characteristics of Japanese Aid in Africa

The Japanese aid policy is more complex and diversified than the images often described as with no political commitment, short-term economic interests seeking, disproportionate emphasis on loan, and overwhelming concentration on the Asian region. The fact that Japan distributes a substantial portion of its aid, almost all in grant form, to Africa, where there is no immediate prospect of short-term economic interests for Japan, refutes such conventional perceptions. As our analysis shows, the features of Japanese aid in Africa have substantially changed for over thirty years. For the whole period we could see five major motivations behind the Japanese aid.

Firstly, Japan was motivated by long-term rather than short-term economic interests. Particularly considerations for economic resources in Africa and Japanese economic security played an important role. Secondly, Japan was often politically motivated by the aims such as to increase Japan supporting nations in the international political scene, at the UN general assembly for instance. This consideration turned out more acute when Japan openly announced its ambition to become a permanent member of the UN security council. Thirdly, there also existed humanitarian considerations in many cases, responding to the calls from the Japanese civil society as well as the international community. This was exemplified by famine relief campaign in the middle of 1980s. Fourthly, during the Apartheid era development assistance to African countries implied counterbalancing their criticism on Japanese trade with South Africa. Finally, Japanese aid in Africa was often motivated by the consideration of other countries' reaction than Africa. For instance, an expansion of Japanese aid in Africa during the 1980s was seen as a countermeasure to the Japanese trade surplus, responding to the criticism of other industrialised nations, particularly the United States.

Calder characterises Japan as a “reactive state” based on his analysis of the Japanese economic foreign policy. In his analysis “reactive state” does not mean the state which formulates and implements diplomatic policies by carefully observing other states' policies and reactions. In that sense every state will be, and should be, more or less reactive in the diplomatic scene. The “reactive state” by Calder means the state which : 1) cannot take initiatives of its own economic foreign policy in spite of the fact that it has sufficient power and incentives to do so; and 2) change policies without systematic consistency by simply responding foreign pressure. Calder concludes that every dimension, including development assistance, of the Japanese economic foreign policy is reactive in nature (Calder, 1988).

We could certainly observe a “reactive” nature of the Japanese overall aid policy, particularly up to the certain period when the aid “on-request-basis” principle was maintained. In applying Calder's thesis to the Japan-Africa relations we could make two findings which do not necessarily accord with his hypothesis. The first finding is concerned with contents and characteristics of Japan's “reactive” nature. Japan sometimes directly reacted to African counties when, for example, it was criticised by them on its trade with South Africa. Yet, more often than not,

Japanese reaction was directed to other actors than Africa.

Take, for example, the motivation that led Japan to a drastic increase of the aid in Africa after the oil crisis in the 1970s. It was based on the serious consideration of economic security of natural resources, particularly oil. However, such a consideration was not generated by African countries, but by oil producing Arab countries. Another motivation behind the Japanese action was a long-term consideration to build a friendly relationship with a future partner. However, what led Japan to this consideration was again not the reaction of African countries but the popular resentment to the expansion of the Japanese economic activities in Southeast Asia of the time.

The fact that the third party other than Africa has a significant, often decisive, impact on Japan's Africa policy making implies that without identifying the third party and recognising its role, it is impossible to properly understand the real motivation of Japan's Africa policy and implication of its policy. In other words, Japanese Africa policy is well to be understood in the context of triangle relationship between Japan, Africa and the third party in a specific historical context.

The second finding is that the reactive nature of Japanese diplomacy is different from a simple passiveness. The Japanese government often utilised the foreign pressure to embark on tackling or drastically solve the longtime issues by pretending that it simply reacted to the external pressure. That was most clearly exemplified by the SDF dispatches to the peace-keeping operations in Mozambique and the humanitarian operations for the Rwandan refugees in the 1990s. There was strong resentment to the SDF dispatch overseas among the Japanese public as well as peoples of neighbouring countries deriving from the historical experiences of the Japanese military activities during the Second World War. Under such circumstances the government fully utilised the request from the countries concerned and the international pressure for rationalising the SDF dispatch. The dispatch of the SDF dispatch in Mozambique and Rwandan refugee camps in the 1990s became one of the contributing factors which enabled the government to send the SDF for reconstruction assistance to Iraq after the Iraq War.

However, even if the government could materialise the hidden agenda by utilising

foreign pressure, it did not succeed in formulating and implementing Japan's original development philosophy to attain international credibility. Although Japan's aid in Africa grew dramatically during the 1970s through 1980s, it was not very successful in proposing new development strategy even with hosting three consecutive TICADs in the 1990s through the new century. Japan now officially publicises integration of development assistance and peace-building as a pillar aid strategy in the LDCs ravaged with conflicts. The dispatching of SDF to Iraq, responding to the US request, was the first test case for this strategy. Yet, the new strategy could work as a double-edged sword. It may even result in simply deepening military commitment of Japan without showing any new development strategy or achieving significant progress. It seems high time for Japan to seriously reconsider the existing Japan-Africa-the third party triangle relationship to establish a better and deepened bilateral relationship between Japan and each African country.

Bibliography

- Africa-Japan Forum (2002), "Afurika Rikai Handbook".
- Afurika Kyokai (1975), *Gekkan Afurika*, February.
- Afurika Kyokai (1976), *Gekkan Afurika*, August.
- Calder, Kent (1988), "Japanese Foreign Economic Policy Formation: Explaining the Reactive State", *World Politics*, vol. XL, no.4, July.
- Foreign Policy* (2003), May-June.
- Hirano, Katsumi (2002), *Zusetsu Afurika Keizai*, Nihon Hyoron-sha.
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (2001), "Heiwa Kochiku: Ningen no Anzen-hosyo no Kakuho nimukete"
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) (2001), *ODA White Paper*.
- MOFA (2002), *ODA White Paper*.
- MOFA (2003), *Diplomatic Blue Book*.
- Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) (1958), *Keizai Kyoryoku no Genjo to Mondaiten*.
- MITI (1984), *Keizai Kyoryoku no Genjo to Mondaiten*.
- Nishigaki, Akira and Shimomura, Yasutami (1997), *Kaihatsu Enjo no Keizaigaku*, Yuhikaku.
- Obayashi, Minoru ed.(2003), *Afurika no Chosen*, Showa-do.
- Orr, Robert (1990), *The Emergence of Japan's Foreign Aid Power*, Columbia University Press (Japanese Translation, Toyo Keizai Shinpo-sha, 1993).
- Takahashi, Motoki (2004), "Gekido-suru Afurika" in Kitagawa, Katsuhiko and Takahashi, Motoki eds. *Afurika Keizai-ron*, Minerva-Shobo.

[This paper is a revised version of a draft of two presentations separately given as a special lecture at an MSc in International Relations Programme at London School of Economics on 20 October 2004, and at the Training Program Risk Management in Southern Countries at Institut d'Etudes Politique, Bordeaux on 17 February 2005.]

Japanese Aid Diplomacy in Africa

Table: Japanese Aid Policy in Africa

	Periodization	Overall Policy	Africa Aid Policy
I	1954(Columbo Plan)-1972	Searching for Short Term Interests; Forming Basic Characteristics ("on-request -basis")	Concentration on Asia and Non-existence of Africa Aid
II	1973(First Oil Crisis)-1980	Expansion of Aid as a Means of Economic Security	Attention to Africa as a Resource Continent; Africa as a Japan Supporters at UN
III	1981(ODA Duplication Plan)-1988	ODA for Counterbalancing Trade Surplus; Expansion and Globalization of Aid	Expansion of Africa's Share; Structural Adjustment Programme; Famine Relief Campaign
IV	1989(Japan as a Prime Donor)-2000	Japan as a Prime Donor; Departure from "on-request-basis"	A Major Donor for Africa; Political Commitment and Dispatch of SDF; TICAD for Searching Initiatives
V	2001(Prime Donor USA)-	Reduction of ODA; Changing Aid Policy	Write-off to LDCs; Peace-building and Aid; Aid Coordination and Cooperation; Support of NEPAD/AU