

Ambassador of Japan

Addis Ababa

January 2022

Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends of Japan,

The year 2021 marked another milestone for the development of Japan-Ethiopia relations.

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games focused everyone's eyes on Tokyo, where the first gold medal for athletics was won by Mr. Selemon Barega of Ethiopia for the 10,000m, and Ethiopia's first-ever gold medal for Paralympics was won by Ms. Tigist Mengistu for the 1,500m T13. On the occasion of the Tokyo 2020 Games, the Japanese Embassy organized an online photo contests under the themes of "Sport and I" and "Japan and I", which received about 100 entries of excellent quality photos. It was also our pleasure to host a small reception to send good wishes to the Ethiopian delegation.



In June, Japan assisted Ethiopia's most democratic general election in its history, by contributing ballot boxes of international standard quality and indelible inks, as well as sending election observers from the Embassy.



In addition to Japan's continuous support for Training Courses at the International Peace Support Training Institute in Ethiopia, support from Japan and the UNDP enabled a new master's degree course on Peace and Conflict Management to start in December. The course will benefit peacekeepers not only from Ethiopia but also those from other East African countries.

With regards to development cooperation, construction on the Jimma-Chida Road began in February, facilitated by Japan's financial assistance. Japan also signed a grant aid agreement in January to provide the Ethiopian Roads Authority with asphalt material worth 4.8 million USD to help with the rehabilitation of the strategic logistic corridor. Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects were provided to build a vocational training center for people with disabilities in Arsi, and for youth in Addis Ababa, in addition to the construction of several schools and libraries in various regions. The handing over of a Boarding Training Center for victims of human-trafficking and GBV in Oromia was a particularly memorable success.



In October, the JICA Chair Program was started at Addis Ababa University to share Japan's experience of a non-western country becoming truly democratic and economically advanced, while maintaining its own traditions and culture. The first lecture dealt with education, and more will follow in 2022.

The first private licensing of a telecom in Ethiopia was given to Safaricom Telecommunication Ethiopia PLC, in which Japan's Sumitomo Corporation is a part of the consortium. Sumitomo's commitment and its experiences will certainly bring about the development of telecom services and other businesses in Ethiopia, which is expected to start providing services in 2022.

In March, Japan also provided about 16.5 mil. USD in humanitarian assistance to those in the most need in Ethiopia its partnerships with various international organizations focusing on Food Security, Livelihood & Nutrition, Health, WASH and Education, Environment & Disaster Prevention, and Peace Building.



COVID-19 continued to affect economic and social lives and development of people all over the world. In addition to its contribution through COVAX and UNICEF's last mile efforts for vaccine delivery, Japan assisted Ethiopia's fight against COVID-19, by providing Portable X-ray Machines and Syringe Pumps at hospitals and medical universities, with more delivery to follow in 2022.

The civil war in Northern Ethiopia was a serious concern for Japan as well. Japan was the first country to announce and disburse 6.6 mil. USD in emergency humanitarian assistance for the Tigray Region in February, and 12.4 mil. USD for Afar, Amhara and Tigray Region in December. The Supplementary Budget of 14 mil. USD recently approved by the Japanese Diet will soon be disbursed in order to help not only Northern Ethiopia, but other regions as well.

It is our sincere wish that the cessation of hostilities be achieved in all parts of Ethiopia, that the state of emergency is lifted soon, humanitarian assistances will be delivered to those in need, the human rights of all people in this country be respected, and that the inclusive national dialogue build a foundation for peace and stability that is truly desired by the Ethiopian people. After all, peace and stability are indispensable for economic and social development, including the attraction of FDI.

In this year 2022, The 8th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD8) will take place in Tunisia. It will be another opportunity to strengthen the multi-faceted ties between Japan and Africa, and Japan and Ethiopia. Let's have high hopes that we will continue to make strides forward to enhance our relations through political, economic, cultural and social cooperation and through people-to-people exchanges between Japan and Ethiopia.

With my best regards for your health and prosperity,

ITO Takako
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia