

BEYOND TICAD DIPLOMACY: JAPAN'S AFRICAN POLICY AND AFRICAN INITIATIVES IN CONFLICT RESPONSE

Takehiko OCHIAI

Part-time Lecturer of African Studies, Tokai University

ABSTRACT One of the significance of the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II) in 1998 was its expression of great concern in conflicts undermining Africa's efforts to pursue sustainable development. TICAD II also affirmed necessary strong commitment among countries to strengthen African structures and capacities for conflict response. This paper examines Japan's foreign policy in supporting the efforts of African regional and subregional organisations for conflict prevention, management and resolution, with the focus on its relationship with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The author proposes Japan to go beyond the diplomacy of economic cooperation and adopt a security-oriented approach to support African initiatives in conflict response.

Key Words: TICAD; Conflict; Japan; Diplomacy; OAU; ECOWAS.

INTRODUCTION

In October 1998, the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II) was held under the joint auspices of Japan, the United Nations (UN) and Global Coalition for Africa. The Conference was attended by 80 countries (51 African, 11 Asian, 18 North American and European), 22 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and 40 international organisations. At the end of the proceedings, delegates adopted the "Tokyo Agenda for Action," which included guidelines for action to be taken by African countries and their development partners in order for Africa to achieve social development, economic development, good governance and conflict prevention. One of the most significant features of the Agenda is that it expressed a great concern in conflicts that undermine Africa's efforts to pursue stability and sustainable development, thus upholding the strong commitment among the countries to necessary actions in strengthening African structures and capacities for conflict response. The necessary actions declared in the Agenda included continued financial and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and subregional organisations for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.⁽¹⁾

TICAD was initially proposed by the Japanese government at the UN General Assembly in 1991. It was a part of Japan's diplomatic attempts to play a more active role in international affairs of the post-Cold War era as an economic power. TICAD I was held in 1993, when the "Tokyo Declaration on African Development" was adopted. The Tokyo Declaration emphasised the principles of the African initiative

and the partnership between African countries and their development partners, and these ideas were carried on into the Tokyo Agenda of TICAD II.

The two meetings of TICAD were significant in the development of Japan's foreign policy towards Africa during the last decade of the 20th century. To follow up TICAD I and II, Japan convened meetings in Africa to monitor progress subregion-by-subregion, and hosted the Asia-Africa Forum in ASEAN countries to discuss South-South economic cooperation. In a policy speech delivered at the University of Pretoria in May 1999, Keizo Takemi (State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Japan), who served as co-chairman of TICAD II, said, "Tokyo International Conference on African Development is a process for realising Japan's new and positive African policy" (Takemi, 1999). In November 1999, on the first anniversary of TICAD II, Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono remarked that the Tokyo Agenda had gained international recognition and had become the foundation of Japan's diplomacy towards Africa (MOFA, 1999b). In March 2000, Japanese ambassadors to Africa agreed that TICAD was the mainstay and an important asset of Japan's diplomacy towards Africa, and recommended that the Japanese government make strenuous efforts to follow up TICAD II (MOFA, 2000).

TICAD visibly demonstrated global awareness of Japan's increased presence in Africa. On the other hand, contemporary Japan faces a great challenge in that the objectives of TICAD are expanding beyond the scope of her TICAD diplomacy. Japan is not a military power in the international arena because the Article 9 of the so-called "Peace Constitution" prohibits use of military means to solve international disputes. As an economic power, Japan has utilised economic wealth for national strategies in international relations, and it has been reflected in her Africa policy. In other words, TICAD is the fruit of Japan's aid policy in Africa.

In close scrutiny, the Tokyo Agenda includes not only economic and social objectives but also political and partly security-related objectives. Although TICAD is deeply rooted in Japan's traditional aid policy towards Africa, the author believes that sole economic cooperation is increasingly inappropriate for Japan to play a leading role in achieving TICAD's new goals, namely strengthening African capacities for conflict prevention, management and resolution.

This paper examines the nature of Japanese foreign policy in supporting the efforts of African regional and subregional organisations for conflict prevention, management and resolution, namely the OAU, which Japan has aided financially, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which Japan is currently considering supporting.

BACKGROUND: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF JAPAN'S AFRICAN POLICY

Historical development of Japan's foreign policy towards Africa can be roughly divided into three periods: the first period (1960-1973); the second period (1973-1989); and the third period (1989 to present).

THE FIRST PERIOD (1960-1973): SEPARATING POLITICS FROM THE ECONOMY

While postwar Japan established diplomatic relations with independent African states in the late 1950's and 1960's, Africa received little consideration from Tokyo until the oil crisis of 1973. This is mainly because foreign policy-makers of postwar Japan attached greater importance to developing Japan-US relations and improving foreign relations with neighbouring Asian countries. Before the oil crisis, no Japanese ministers visited Africa.

During the first period, however, Japan's trade with Africa steadily increased. Japanese exports to Africa rose almost fourfold, from \$603 million in 1965 to \$2.3 billion in 1973. Japanese imports from Africa also rose more than fivefold in the same period, from \$192 million in 1965 to \$1 billion in 1973 (Aoki, 1991: 312-313, Oda & Aoki, 1985: 153). The most important trading partner for Japan in Africa of this period was apartheid South Africa. Although Japan was criticised for expanding trade with South Africa, until the mid-1970's, Japan followed her traditional approach of *seikei bunri* ("separating politics from the economy"), and never formulated a clear government policy to curb trade with the country. The policy of *seikei bunri* was originally devised by the Hayato Ikeda cabinet (1960-1964) to apply to the trade relations with the People's Republic of China in the absence of a formal diplomatic relationship. In the 1960's, Japan applied this policy to foreign relations with some other countries, such as South Africa (Ochiai, 1995: 133).

THE SECOND PERIOD (1973-1989): THE OIL CRISIS AND SEEKING COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY

The oil crisis, precipitated by the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, marked a turning point in Japan's policy towards Africa. The threat of oil embargo by the Arab countries panicked Japan, an island country with little indigenous supply of natural resources. At the time, Japan imported 99.8% of her oil, mainly from the Middle East. In the succeeding depression, Japan's economic growth rate fell sharply from around 11% to minus 2% and inflation rate in Japan was higher for a while than in any other major countries. The oil crisis made foreign policy-makers in Tokyo feel that no country was more vulnerable to the expansion of Third World resource nationalism than Japan. Until the early 1970's, Tokyo had a tacit understanding that Africa was the "backyard" of Europe. The oil crisis forced Japan to build better relations with Africa to secure a stable supply of natural resources (Ochiai, 1995: 132-133).

In 1974 Japanese Foreign Minister Toshio Kimura officially visited Ghana, Nigeria, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), Tanzania and Egypt. This was the first official visit to Africa by a Japanese foreign minister. In his African tour, Kimura pledged to expand Japan's trade with Africa, and to increase her development aid to help Africa's self-reliance. He also pledged to lessen Japan's trade with South Africa and strictly impose economic sanctions against racist Rhodesia and South Africa (*Gekkan Afurika*, 1975).

Although Africa's share in Japan's total trade did not increase, or rather, gradually decreased after the mid-1970's due to such factors as the economic stagnation and political instability in Africa, Japan quickly expanded Official Development Assistance (ODA) to African countries after the oil crisis. Japan's ODA to Africa increased 53.6-fold from \$5 million in 1972 to \$268.2 million in 1982, and further expanded 3.3-fold to \$909.7 million in 1991. Africa's share in Japan's bilateral ODA also sharply increased from 1.1% in 1972 to 18.9% in 1980, when it reached its height. One factor which promoted this rapid expansion of Japan's development aid to Africa was the policy of *sogo anzen hoshō* ("comprehensive security"), officially adopted by the Zenko Suzuki cabinet (1980-1982) as national strategy in 1980. *Sogo anzen hoshō* is the strategy of using diplomatic, economic and cultural initiatives for securing international as well as Japanese peace and security. A main pillar of *sogo anzen hoshō* policy was to extend ODA for strategic purposes, and the policy resulted in promoting the expansion of Japan's aid to resource-rich Africa (Ochiai, 1995: 142-144).

THE THIRD PERIOD (1989 TO PRESENT): AFRICA AS A FRONTIER FOR JAPANESE CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The end of the Cold War and the succeeding international changes marked another turning point in Japan's foreign policy towards Africa. In an informal round-table talk held in 1989, a few months before the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Takashi Onda, Director-General of the Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA), said, "I believe that the year 1989 will be the first year of Japan's diplomacy towards Africa" (*Gaiko Forum*, 1989: 24). It signalled Japanese intention of playing a greater role in African affairs of the coming post-Cold War era.

It could be said that Japan's foreign policy in general entered a new phase in the 1990's. *Sogo anzen hoshō*, a slogan popular among Tokyo's policy-makers in the early 1980's, was replaced by a new motto, *kokusai koken* ("contribution to the international community"), invoking a willingness for a more active role in international affairs. The Gulf Crisis, precipitated by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, provoked a national debate on the direction of Japan's diplomatic policy in the post-Cold War world. As a result of such debate, Japan provided a massive financial contribution of \$13 billion to finance the US-led multinational forces and support the "front-line" states in the Gulf region suffering adverse economic consequences. Yet, this action was criticised as "cheque-book diplomacy" within and without the country. The debate on participation of Japan's Self-Defence Forces (SDF) in the UN peace activities was activated during and after the Gulf Crisis, and in June 1992 the International Peace Cooperation Bill was approved by the Diet. In September 1992, under the new law, Japan sent approximately 600 SDF construction unit personnel, 80 military observers, 75 civilian police monitors and 41 civilian election monitors to the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) operations (Tanaka, 1995: 92-97).

To actively contribute to international peace, in May 1993 Japan also sent about

50 SDF personnel to the UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). Initially the Defence Agency and SDF were reluctant to the idea of dispatching SDF to Mozambique, while the Foreign Ministry was bolder. A high-ranking official of MOFA informally told a journalist, “the participation in Cambodia’s PKO alone is not enough for Japan. It is something like graduating from college with minimum requirements. In order to come up to the standard mark in the international community, Japan must participate in at least two UN peace-keeping operations simultaneously” (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 1993). MOFA regarded the dispatch of SDF to Mozambique, one of the poorest African countries with little ties to Japan, as an opportunity to show the international community Japan’s initiative in its *kokusai koken* policy, and moreover, to prove itself worthy of a permanent membership of the UN Security Council. The Prime Minister’s Official Residence, in particular then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono and Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, decided to send SDF to Mozambique mainly because they needed a tangible proof of Japanese commitment to international peace in the G7 Summit, which Japan was to host in July 1993.

In the early 1990’s, the idea of *kokusai koken* greatly influenced Japan’s foreign policy in general, its Africa policy in particular. Tokyo’s foreign policy-makers regarded Africa as a frontier for Japan to contribute to global peace and development. There were two main approaches for Japan to implement its *kokusai koken* policy in Africa: personnel contribution to PKO and more active use of ODA. SDF’s participation in ONUMOZ was the first case of the former, and TICAD was of the latter.

As mentioned earlier, Japan’s proposal to hold TICAD was initially made at the UN General Assembly in New York. It was not at the OAU summit in an African capital city. The fact signifies the great desire for a diplomatic feat on the part of Japan. TICAD was an attempt for Japan to show not only African countries but also the international community its diplomatic commitment towards international affairs.

TICAD AND AFRICAN CONFLICTS

In October 1993 TICAD I was hosted by Japan with the objectives of encouraging African efforts towards political and economic reforms, deepening domestic and international understanding concerning the present conditions in Africa, and supporting African development. At the Conference, the first of its kind for Africa, 48 African countries, 13 donor countries and several international organisations were represented.

The 1993 Tokyo Declaration, adopted at the closure of TICAD I, contained several goals relating to African development such as political and economic reforms based on African initiatives, application of successful development experiences in Asia to Africa, and promotion of South-South cooperation. African conflict issues were paid little attention in the Declaration, and were just briefly touched upon in paragraph 20, “We, the participants of TICAD, underscore the need to establish effective mechanisms for prevention, preparedness, and management of man-made

and natural disasters in general, and to strengthen food security in particular. We therefore welcome the decision of the Organisation of African Unity to establish the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and pledge our support to strengthen the effective functioning of this mechanism.”⁽²⁾

At the General Assembly of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in South Africa in April 1996, the Japanese government proposed to organise TICAD II in Tokyo in 1998. The Preparatory Conference for TICAD II was held in Tokyo in 1997 to review progress made since TICAD I, to identify the main themes, and to set up a preparatory committee to formulate the agenda to be considered at TICAD II. The Preparatory Committee meetings and Regional Workshops were held in several African cities in 1998 to formulate the draft of the agenda. In a series of discussions during the TICAD II preparatory process, it was recognised that peace, security and stability were prerequisites for sustainable development in Africa, and that the agenda should include peace and conflict issues. Also, the participants pointed out that significant progress had been made through intra-regional cooperation in conflict prevention and management in Africa, and expressed the need to strengthen regional, subregional and national capabilities for conflict prevention, management and resolution, in particular to strengthen the capacity of the OAU conflict management mechanism and sub-regional organisations involved in peace activities.⁽³⁾ As a result, the 1998 Tokyo Agenda, adopted at TICAD II five years later, was more concerned with African conflict issues than the 1993 Declaration.

The Japanese government was non-committal towards including conflict issues as a main theme in the agenda. Keiko Kokubun (1999: 4), an expert of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), an implemental agency of government-to-government technical assistance, who was seconded to MOFA for the preparation of TICAD II and helped in drafting the agenda, wrote, “At first, in terms of the areas of governance and conflict issues, it was not clear what kinds of concrete objectives and actions would be identified in the agenda. However, deep concerns of the Preparatory Committee members over devastating conflicts in Africa pushed the Committee to frame them.” Her statement reveals that at least initially the Japanese government was more or less puzzled over how to deal with African conflict issues within the framework of TICAD.

African conflicts were an area in which Japan had never been actively involved. While, by 1989, Japan had become the third largest donor to sub-Saharan Africa among the member states of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), until the mid-1990's, Japan's involvement in African conflict issues was limited to a few areas of providing humanitarian assistance to such war-affected people as refugees through the UN organisations and sharing the financial burden of the UN peace activities in Africa. Partly because Japan does not have any vital national interests in Africa, and partly because Japan cannot use military means in international relations, Tokyo did not take up any active diplomatic measures towards conflict prevention and resolution in Africa.

However, as a result of strong requests from the participants of the Preparatory Committee and the Regional Workshops, the 1998 Tokyo Agenda came to include conflict prevention and post-conflict development as a basic foundation for African

development, and specified various guidelines for action to be taken by African countries and its development partners for Africa to achieve peace and security. The 1998 Agenda called for African countries to involve themselves in intensifying regional and subregional cooperation and active participation of civil society in peace-building and conflict prevention. As mentioned earlier, the Agenda declared Africa's development partners will take actions such as continued assistance to strengthening the capacity of the OAU and subregional organisations, supporting UN and OAU's efforts to develop an early warning and response system, and taking necessary action to monitor and prevent the export of small arms to potential conflict areas.⁽⁴⁾

TICAD II was a non-pledging conference, and the 1998 Agenda did not detail how to accomplish African development at the policy level. How should Japan provide financial and technical assistance to African regional and subregional organisations? What kind of policy option does Japan have? Which policy option is more appropriate than others from the view point of Japan?

OAU MECHANISM AND JAPAN

The OAU is the first recipient of Japan's assistance towards the efforts of African regional and subregional organisations for conflict response. The OAU, established in 1963, was initially expected to actively contribute to peace and security in Africa. The OAU Charter provided for a Commission on Mediation, Reconciliation and Arbitration to which member states were encouraged to submit their inter-state disputes. However, its facility was hardly ever used, and ad hoc committees consisting of two or three heads of state in effect mediated and facilitated negotiation of inter-state disputes. Although ad hoc committees allowed the OAU an entry point to prevent the escalation of some conflicts, in many cases the OAU's role in conflict resolution was limited. The Charter also provided for a Defence Commission. Within the framework of the Commission, the OAU considered proposals for the establishment of a comprehensive and permanent system for peace-making and peace-keeping. But until the end of 1980's, these proposals had not materialised.

Soon after the end of the Cold War, the OAU summit of July 1990 adopted the "Declaration on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Change Taking Place in the World." In the 1990 Declaration, African leaders pledged themselves to work together towards the peaceful and speedy resolution of all conflicts, and expressed their conviction that the main responsibility for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa lay first and foremost with African states, while welcoming the sympathy, understanding and assistance of others. Following the adoption of the Declaration, the OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim set in motion the process of consultation on the establishment of a comprehensive and permanent mechanism for conflict management, and in 1992 his report was submitted to the OAU summit in Dakar. The 1993 OAU summit in Cairo declared the establishment of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (MCPMR) within the OAU.

The MCPMR's objectives are essentially to anticipate and prevent tense situations

from evolving into violent conflicts and, in circumstances where conflicts have occurred, to undertake peace-making and peace-building functions towards the resolution of conflicts. The MCPMR was built around a Central Organ with the Secretary-General and the Secretariat as its operational arm. Furthermore, the OAU Peace Fund was established to support the operational activities of the MCPMR. The fund was comprised of financial appropriations from the regular budget of the OAU, voluntary contribution from member states as well as from other sources within and without Africa.⁽⁵⁾

Since the inception in 1993, the MCPMR has taken several initiatives in the Comoros, by sending ministerial delegations to the country for mediation of Anjouan dispute; in Liberia and Sierra Leone, by supporting the ECOWAS for conflict resolution; in Nigeria, by sending a civilian mission to observe the election; and in Ethiopia and Eritrea, by facilitating the search for a peaceful solution on the border dispute between the two countries. In addition, the OAU has worked towards the establishment of an Early Warning System (EWS) to allow for early political action by the speedy exchange of information in conflict situations.

Japan's assistance to these efforts of the OAU for conflict response has been provided in two ways: financial contribution and intellectual contribution. In 1994, Japan provided \$100 thousand to OAU through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to cover a part of costs for convening a seminar on MCPMR in Cairo. It was Japan's first financial assistance to the OAU's efforts for conflict response. Japan contributed \$1.4 million to the OAU Peace Fund from Fiscal Year 1996 to FY 1999. Out of Japan's financial contribution to the Fund, \$200 thousand was spent for the computer system of the EWS in September 1997, \$130 thousand for an international conference on the dispute in Comoros in December 1997, \$50 thousand for a peace process meeting on the conflict in Burundi in June 1998, \$50 thousand for an OAU seminar on returnee, refugee and internally displaced women and children in October 1998, and \$190 thousand for an OAU mission to observe the election in Nigeria in February 1999 (MOFA, 1999a: 3).

The other type of Japan's support to the OAU's initiative in conflict response is to host a so-called "high-level symposium" on peace and conflict in order to provide the OAU with an opportunity to exchange information with other African organisations, donor countries and international organisations. MOFA calls this type of support "intellectual contribution" to enhancing the capacity of the OAU. In October 1995, Japan co-hosted the "High-level Symposium on Peace and Development: Problems of Conflict in Africa," to which an OAU high official was invited, in collaboration with the UN and UN University in Tokyo. In September 1996, MOFA also co-sponsored a symposium entitled the "High-level Symposium on Conflicts in Africa: Road to Nation-building in the Post-conflict Period" with the UK Foreign Office and Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), a research organisation founded through the initiative of former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida. The UN, UNHCR, ECOWAS, EU, OECD as well as OAU were represented at the 1996 Symposium (Aoki, 1997: 12-15).

To sum up, Japan's assistance to the OAU remains quite moderate, compared with those of other donor countries. Although Japan has constantly made financial contribution to the OAU Peace Fund since FY 1996, the total amount of Japan's

assistance until FY 1999 was less than 20% of that of the US. This is mainly because Japan's assistance to the OAU is allotted from the ODA budget, which has been strictly restrained or even cut due to financial difficulties since the mid-1990's. Japan has never provided direct technical assistance to the OAU. In contrast, for instance, in February 1999 the UK settled on a comprehensive master plan to strengthen the capacity of the Conflict Management Centre, which is an operational section of MCPMR within the OAU Secretariat, and sent several experts to the Centre. Japan, as mentioned above, has used the method to convene symposiums on African conflicts as a form of intellectual contribution. Although these symposiums are useful in the sense that they provide the OAU with opportunities to exchange ideas and to promote cooperation with other African organisations and international organisations, their role in strengthening the OAU's capacity for conflict response is obviously limited and supplementary.

Japan has found it relatively easy and "comfortable" to provide the OAU with assistance because the OAU attaches greater importance to conflict prevention than to conflict resolution. As mentioned earlier, the 1993 Cairo Declaration clearly stated that the primary objective of the MCPMR was the anticipation and prevention of conflicts in Africa and that the OAU would undertake not peace-keeping but peace-making and post-conflict peace missions. The OAU has provided an appropriate counterpart for Japan, whose constitution prohibits use of military means in international relations. The OAU is more than legitimate as the universal and principal regional organisation in Africa.

However, for peace and security in the region, it is vital to enhance African capacity for conflict resolution in addition to conflict prevention. The OAU lacks not only finance and expertise but also the political will to undertake costly and risky peace-keeping functions, and MCPMR, emphasising anticipatory and preventive measures in conflict response, is far from a sufficient condition for *Pax Africana*. On the other hand, African subregional organisations today, particularly ECOWAS, are playing a greater role in conflict resolution than the OAU. In West Africa in the 1990's, ECOWAS dispatched its own peace-keeping forces to civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone and achieved success to some extent.

These peace activities by African subregional organisations are recently attracting more attention of Tokyo's foreign policy-makers. In March 2000, the "International Symposium on the Roles of Subregional and Non-governmental Organisations in Conflict Prevention and Peace Initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa" was held in Tokyo under the joint auspices of MOFA and the Institute for International Policy Studies (IIPS), a private research institution founded by former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone. The OAU and three African subregional organisations, i.e., ECOWAS, Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC), were represented at the 2000 Symposium. The Symposium, the first of its kind organised by the Japanese government on African subregional organisations, clearly demonstrated Japan's growing interest in African subregional organisations, particularly their roles in conflict response.

Conflict response by ECOWAS and Japan's policy options to support its initiative in future merit examining, as it is the most active African subregional organisation in conflict response in the 1990's.

ECOWAS' CONFLICT RESPONSE AND JAPAN

Although ECOWAS was established in 1975 as an economic community in West Africa, it was also initially expected to work as a multilateral framework that would contribute to subregional peace and security. Shortly after the official establishment, ECOWAS member states signed the "Protocol on Non-Aggression" and the "Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence" in 1978 and 1981, respectively. In particular, the latter was a multilateral security pact in the sense that it provided that, if necessary, ECOWAS would establish the Allied Armed Forces of the Community for collective intervention in inter-state and intra-state conflicts. However, the 1981 Protocol existed only on paper until the end of the 1980's.

Civil wars occurred in Liberia in 1989 and in Sierra Leone in 1991. ECOWAS dispatched a subregional peace-keeping force called the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to the civil wars. Initially established for the peace-keeping operation in Liberia, the deployment revealed that the ECOMOG was not a peace-keeping force. For instance, ECOMOG was dispatched without a cease-fire agreement by all the warring parties and, soon after the intervention, ECOMOG shifted its role from that of peace-keeper to peace enforcer, and became a main combatant without any authorisation by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government. Nigerian presidency actually came to dictate ECOMOG's missions and strategies in Liberia. In the case of Sierra Leone, the situation was much worse. Soon after the occurrence of the 1997 military coup, Nigeria, the subregional hegemon in West Africa, sent troops to Sierra Leone without first informing the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat. During the conflict, neither the ECOWAS Chairman (apart from the Nigerian president) nor the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat exercised any authority and control over the Nigerian-led ECOMOG in Sierra Leone. The troops were answerable not to ECOWAS but only to their own countries, although they operated in the name of ECOMOG (Bundu, 1999: 15-16). The ECOMOG operations in Liberian and Sierra Leone gave rise to much controversy over its legality, neutrality, fairness, mode of deployment, composition, and command and control of operations (Ochiai, 1999: 35-49).

As these problems were also recognised by ECOWAS member states themselves, they decided to establish an effective mechanism in order to resolve the problems and to consolidate the collective management of subregional security. In December 1999, the "Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security" was signed. According to the 1999 Protocol, the main objective of the Mechanism was to prevent, manage and resolve internal and inter-state conflicts within ECOWAS. The Mediation and Security Council was empowered to decide issues of subregional peace and security on behalf of the ECOWAS Authority. Also, an Early Warning System (EWS) was to be built, with the subregion divided into four zones where each Zonal Bureau was to collect information on security matters. These Bureaux would channel their reports to an Observation and Monitoring Centre at the headquarters in Abuja. Furthermore, it was decided that the ECOWAS would establish a renewed ECOMOG as a standby force, wherein prearranged national contingents would be ear-marked and trained for deployment on short notice.⁽⁶⁾

Western countries including the US provided financial and military assistance to conflict resolution by the ECOWAS in the 1990's, but Japan never provided assistance to ECOWAS directly. This is partly because Japan was sceptical about the capacity and neutrality of ECOWAS in conflict response, and partly because MOFA had no appropriate scheme in its ODA budget to disburse assistance to ECOWAS. However, following the involvement by the ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone and its efforts for putting together the 1999 Protocol, Tokyo is increasingly interested in the role of ECOWAS as a new multilateral actor contributing to conflict prevention and resolution in West Africa.

The author believes that Japan should actively support ECOWAS in order to prevent the 1999 Protocol from becoming a pie in the sky and to contribute towards subregional peace and security in West Africa. To support the ECOWAS in conflict response, Japan has two policy options: financial contribution and technical contribution.

Financial Contribution

It is preferable that Japan makes a financial contribution to ECOWAS. MOFA has considered providing financial assistance to ECOWAS and a few MOFA officials informed the author that a contribution of \$100 thousand to ECOWAS would be realised in FY 2000 for the first time. However, there are a few problems on Japan's donation to ECOWAS.

First, Japan's donation to African multilateral organisations including ECOWAS restricts spending for any military purposes because it is allotted from the MOFA's ODA budget. As discussed earlier, for example, the OAU has used Japanese donation to the Peace Fund for non-military purposes such as holding seminars and purchasing computers, by receiving authorisation of disbursement from the Japanese government in advance each time. Since the OAU attaches greater importance to conflict prevention than to conflict resolution, the non-military restriction on Japanese donation is not a serious problem. However, the ECOWAS has already played an important role in conflict resolution in West Africa. While ECOWAS is preparing an EWS for conflict prevention, both the framework and lessons for the design of the ECOWAS Mechanism were based on the experiences of ECOMOG. Conflict resolution functions such as the joint military operation of ECOMOG will continue to be one of the most important pillars in the ECOWAS Mechanism. To positively contribute to strengthening the ECOWAS, Japan would need to consider formulating a new budgetary scheme of providing it with a financial contribution available to be spent on military operations. The author suggests an establishment of a Special Fund for African Peace in addition to funding the ECOWAS, which will be distinct from the ODA budget and will give African multilateral security organisations including ECOWAS a good access to appropriate financial assistance.

Secondly, however, Japan should be more vigilant of how her financial contribution to ECOWAS is spent. The activities of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone were problematic, such as the Nigerian dominance in its composition, the resultant lack of neutrality, the weak legal basis for intervention and the lack of involvement of ECOWAS member states and the Executive Secretariat in the management of its

operations. Upon providing financial assistance to the ECOWAS, the Japanese government should push ECOWAS to work harder towards increased legality, transparency and accountability of the Mechanism. As an example, the author proposes to assist ECOWAS on condition that it adopts a detailed code of conduct for the implementation of the Mechanism in harmony with the UN Charter. Even after donation, the Japanese government should scrutinise each spending request from ECOWAS, and also continuously monitor its activities.

Technical Contribution

Japan has never provided African countries with any direct technical support including military assistance to enhance African capacity for conflict response. In contrast, the US, for instance, has promoted its own training programmes such as the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) and the Pentagon's Joint Combined Exchange Training programme (JCET) for enhancing African capacity in peace-keeping. Within the ACRI framework, the US independently trained more than 4,000 African soldiers by September 1999. The author believes that Japan can provide ECOWAS with the following forms of technical assistance to enhance its capacity for conflict response.

First, Japan can play a role in promoting multilateral security dialogues among ECOWAS member states. While ECOWAS has functioned as a multilateral security framework in the subregion, multilateral security dialogues among ECOWAS members remain immature. There are still persistent tensions and distrusts between individual member states and between Anglophone and Francophone states, and they have often negatively affected civil wars in West Africa. Japan has been actively involved in the process of multilateral dialogues on the security of the Asia-Pacific region such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Japan's National Defence Academy (NDA) has sponsored international seminars on defence science and invited faculty members of military academies of the Asia-Pacific countries. Also, the National Institute for Defence Studies (NIDS) has annually organised the Asia-Pacific security seminars to promote mutual understanding in the field of defence as part of its confidence-building measures among military officers from the region. The author proposes Japan to take an initiative in providing ECOWAS countries with an opportunity to promote multilateral security dialogues for mutual understanding and confidence, as Japan has ample involvement in the multilateral security dialogues in the Asia-Pacific region. MOFA has already organised some international symposiums on African conflicts and invited administrative personnel from African and international organisations. The author suggests that MOFA also organise an ECOWAS security forum or seminar in cooperation with the Defence Agency and invite West African military personnel, such as faculty members of military training institutions, command staff on various levels, and commanding officers of various units. This will help mutual confidence in the subregion.

Secondly, the author suggests Japan to indirectly contribute to building a more stable security environment in West Africa by establishing bilateral defence exchanges such as exchange of students and defence studies. Japan has long been involved in such exchanges with Asia-Pacific and Western countries on various lev-

els. Since Japan accepted Thai students into NDA in 1958 for the first time, a total of 521 students from the US, UK, China, Germany, France, Australia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Singapore as of May 1998 have studied at NDA and SDF staff colleges. Furthermore, NIDS has regularly exchanged progress in defence studies with the defence-related research bodies of Russia, South Korea and Southeast Asian countries (Defence Agency of Japan, 1998: 159). However, Japan has never been formally involved in bilateral defence exchanges with West African countries. Japan does not even station any defence attachés in sub-Saharan Africa. In contrast, under a bilateral defence exchange agreement with Nigeria, South Korea has regularly accepted Nigerian military personnel into the training institutions, and has sent its personnel to the Command and Staff College and the National War College in Nigeria, where a number of West African personnel are provided with education and training. The author proposes Japan to enlarge the geographical scope of defence exchanges and commence bilateral defence exchanges with ECOWAS member states, in particular Nigeria, a subregional military power. Japan's involvement in bilateral defence exchanges with West African countries will be expected to indirectly contribute to peace and security in the sub-region.

Thirdly, the author believes that Japan could deliver some technical assistance to the ECOWAS in the control of small arms and light weapons. In October 1998, the "Declaration of a Moratorium on Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa" was adopted by ECOWAS member states. The moratorium was agreed upon for the initial three years from November 1998, which may be extended. The Programme for Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) has been stipulated to support the moratorium. Since uncontrolled accumulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons have fuelled conflicts in West Africa, the adoption of the 1998 Declaration was epochal. Japan has played a leading role in small arms control by chairing the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms (established by the UN General Assembly in April 1996), which has prepared a report on the ways and means to prevent and reduce the excessive accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons. While Japan's first major involvement in arms control occurred with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, ratified in 1976), until the 1970's, Japan's arms control policy was mostly admonishment by invoking the horrors of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Drifte, 1990: 60-61). In a sense, Japan's open commitment to the control of conventional arms in the 1990's signalled a maturation of its arms control policy. Japan should examine appropriate measures to support the ECOWAS' efforts for the moratorium on small arms in addition to providing financial contribution to a PCASED Fund or a UNDP Trust Fund, established to support prevention and reduction of the proliferation of small arms.

CONCLUSION

In August 1999, a policy paper titled "Japan's Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance" was officially announced by the Japanese government. The paper manifested the will to play an active role in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction in developing countries, as "conflict prevention, conflict

resolution and post-conflict peacekeeping and reconstruction represent crucial challenges to the global community.”⁽⁷⁾ Also, in March 2000, Japanese ambassadors to Africa recommended that “Japan, as a friend of Africa, should actively be involved in African conflict and development issues, based on the fundamental ideas endorsed at the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II) to support African self-help efforts” (MOFA, 2000). Thus Japan’s Africa policy-makers are increasingly interested in conflict and development issues in the region, to explore ways to make good use of development aid, particularly in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.

Japan’s approach is laudable in that it is more or less in harmony with the present trend within the aid-donor community to regard conflict issues as one of the most important foundations for African development. However, the author believes that Japan should take a bold step ahead to actively contribute to peace and security in Africa, where Japan would provide African organisations such as ECOWAS with a certain financial and technical assistance to enhance their capability of conflict resolution in addition to conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. For this, MOFA should partly break away from the economic cooperation orientation, which has dominated its Africa policy leading up to TICAD, and should become security-oriented with active cooperation from the Defence Agency, SDF, NDA and NIDS. Simply increasing development aid for supporting Africa’s self-help efforts for conflict response is not enough. In order that Japan plays a leading role in realising the TICAD goal to strengthen African structures and capacity for conflict response, Japan needs to go beyond the economic cooperation-oriented framework of TICAD diplomacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS I would like to thank the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), Tokyo, Japan, for financially supporting this research.

NOTES

- (1) *African Development towards the 21st Century: The Tokyo Agenda for Action*, adopted at the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development on 21 October, 1998, par.31.
- (2) *Tokyo Declaration on African Development: Towards the 21st Century*, adopted at the First Tokyo International Conference on African Development on 6 October, 1993, par.20.
- (3) MOFA, *Co-chairs’ Summary Report of the Preparatory Conference for the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development*, 10-11 November 1997, Tokyo, par.18-19, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad2/ticad24.html> (as of May 2000); MOFA, *Co-Chairmen’s Summary of the First Preparatory Committee Meeting for the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development*, 2-3 March 1998, Dakar, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad2/ticad25.html> (as of May 2000).
- (4) *The Tokyo Agenda for Action*, par.31.
- (5) OAU, *Declaration of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government on the Establishment within the OAU of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management*

and Resolution, adopted in June 1993, par.15, 17, 18, 23.

- (6) ECOWAS, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace-keeping and Security*, signed on 10 December, 1999.
- (7) *Japan's Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance*, announced by the Japanese government on 10 August, 1999, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/mid-term/1999/approach.html> (as of May 2000).

REFERENCES

- Aoki, K. 1991. Japan and Africa: Beyond the fragile partnership (in Japanese). In (H. Oda, ed.) *Afurika no seiji to kokusaikankei*, Politics and International Relations in Africa, pp. 310-337, Keisoshobo, Tokyo.
- 1997. A report on the high-level symposium on conflict in Africa: Road to nation-building in the post-conflict period (in Japanese). *Africa Report*, 24:12-15, March.
- Bundu, A. 1999. Beyond peace-keeping. *West Africa*, 6-12 December, pp. 14-17, 20.
- Defence Agency of Japan 1998. *Defence of Japan 1998*. The White Paper translated by the Japan Times, The Japan Times, Tokyo.
- Drifte, R. 1990. *Japan's Foreign Policy*, Routledge, London.
- Gaiko Forum* 1989. Conversazione: Thinking Africa now (in Japanese). 9: 22-36, June.
- Gekkan Afurika* 1975. Foreign minister Kimura's visit to Africa (in Japanese). 15(2): 6-11, 31, February.
- Kokubun, K. 1999. TICAD II in retrospect and remaining challenges (in Japanese). *Africa Report*, 28: 2-5, March.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) 1999a. *OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution* (in Japanese). Internal Paper (the First Africa Division, the Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau), 26 October.
- 1999b. Message by foreign minister Yohei Kono on the first anniversary of the second international conference on African development. *TICAD NEWS*, 3, November, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad2/news/vol3.html> (as of January 2000).
- 2000. *Meeting of Japanese Ambassadors to Africa 2000: Recommendations by the Ambassadors*, announced on 1 March.
- Nihon Keizai Shinbun* 1993. Aiming to speak up in international affairs (in Japanese). European Edition, 27 March, p. 2.
- Ochiai, T. 1995. Japan's relations with sub-saharan Africa: 1960-93. *Journal of Behavioral and Social Sciences*, 1995(1): 127-155.
- 1999. The root of ECOMOG: the tradition of "armies on loan" in Africa (in Japanese). *Africa Kenkyu*, 55: 35-49.
- Oda, H. & K. Aoki 1985. Japan and Africa: Beyond the fragile partnership. In (R.S. Ozaki & W. Arnold, eds.) *Japan's Foreign Relations: A Global Search for Economic Security*, Westview Press, Boulder and London, pp. 153-168.
- Takemi, K. 1999. *African Development in the New Millennium and the Role of Japan*. Policy speech delivered at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, on 5 May, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ssv9905/role.html> (as of June 2000).
- Tanaka, A. 1995. The domestic context: Japanese politics and U.N. peacekeeping. In (S.S. Harrison & M. Nishihara, eds.) *U.N. Peacekeeping: Japanese and American Perspectives*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., pp. 89-105.

----- Accepted *April 10, 2001*

Author's Name and Address: Takehiko OCHIAI, 2-25-6, *Tsurumaki-minami, Hatano, Kanagawa 257-0002, JAPAN. E-mail: ttochiai@sd5.so-net.ne.jp*