

UNDP chief: Investing in Africa can benefit Japan

アフリカへの投資は日本の未来への投資 UNDPのクラーク総裁

第5回アフリカ開発会議（TICAD5）で来日した国連開発計画（UNDP）のヘレン・クラーク総裁が6月1日、朝日新聞記者らのインタビューに応じた。1993年の第1回会議から一貫してアフリカ支援の牽引役（けんいんやく）を担ってきた日本。その間、アフリカ大陸は貧困や紛争がまだ課題として残るものの、「最後の巨大市場」と形容されるまでに発展してきた。クラーク氏は従来の支援に加え、日本などの先進国からのさらなる民間投資に期待を寄せている。

By Taro Karasaki

Asahi Weekly

Faced with a domestic market that is **rapidly aging** and is already saturated with goods and services, how do you ensure that your economy **prosper**s in the future?

Helen Clark, administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has some advice: Go to the biggest (and still growing) market in the world — Africa.

“The Japanese economy has not grown as much as it did in an earlier era, and the world is now watching Abenomics to see what the new



クラークUNDP総裁 = 6月1日、横浜市
撮影：高橋友佳理/朝日新聞

approach will deliver,” Clark said, referring to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s policies to encourage Japan’s economic growth.

“Growth of markets is **unquestionably** in developing countries, and Africa is the latest region to ride the wave of growing demand and growing middle class.”

“I would encourage Japanese people to see Japan’s relations with developing countries as part of the answer (to boosting the economy) because ... this is where the new consumers are.”

Clark, who was in Japan to attend the **Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)** June 1-3, spoke with reporters from The Asahi Shimbun and Asahi Weekly about the challenges facing the continent **long viewed in the light of poverty and conflict**.

Clark said that since Japan hosted its first TICAD meeting in 1993, the landscape of African development

has changed considerably. Likening the contrast between the African situation 20 years ago and that of today as “like night and day,” she said that many African nations were eager to get on the fast track to becoming emerging economies.

She raised the example of Ethiopia, which struggled with a devastating famine in the 1980s, and now enjoys one of the fastest rates of economic growth supported by efficient agricultural production.

While poverty and conflict remain as obstacles, particularly in many parts of the sub-Saharan region, Clark expressed optimism that the goals of **eradicating** extreme poverty and **communicable diseases** can be achieved.

The emergence of new donor countries has also accelerated development.

“In general we can say that development cooperation is quite a crowded place. There are many actors from the **global south**. As part-

ners, they are growing in their numbers and the scale and size of what they can do,” Clark said, referring to former aid recipients, such as China, that have become donor countries.

“That means that for the advanced economies to continue to play the role they have in development, they will have to **keep pace with that**.”

In the months leading to the TICAD meeting Clark said she was concerned that Japanese businesses lacked enthusiasm about investing in Africa.

“China for the last few years has been talking of locating possibly 80 million jobs **offshore** in Africa. ... Will Japanese companies see the potential of Africa?”

At the same time Clark said that in order for African economies to truly take off, much work is still needed in building up infrastructure, namely roads, ports and power facilities.

rapidly aging

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Tokyo...(TICAD)

アフリカ開発会議 (TICAD)

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communicable disease(s)

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