

# Africa NOW #128

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### pp. 3-17      **Special Topic: Report on the 30th anniversary of Africa Japan Forum**

Since its establishment in March 1994, the Africa-Japan Forum (AJF) has been working to link people of Africa and Japan respectfully, fairly, and equally. Currently, through policy recommendations or advocacy, research and studies in fields such as global health, food and agriculture, living-together and collaboration with African residents in Japan, and much better understanding of Africa, AJF is expanding its network of people and organizations involved with Africa. This issue of “Africa NOW” presents a special feature titled “Report on the 30th Anniversary of the Africa-Japan Forum”. This special feature includes remarks from the commemorative speech and two panel discussions held in November 2024 to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of AJF, titled “Africa and Japan: 30 Years of Connecting People and the Future.”

### pp. 3-6      **Commemorative speech: Ghana and Japan: Thoughts and reflections between two roots by Yano David**

The commemorative speech was given by Yano David, titled “Ghana and Japan: Thoughts and reflections between two roots.” Born in Ghana and grown in Japan since the age of 6, Yano began visiting Ghana at the age of 21. Yano talked about his experiences in Ghana, his relationship with his mother who returned to Ghana, and his activities in establishing schools in Ghana. Furthermore, he states that the children in Ghanaian schools have developed a sense of connection to the damage caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake through interactions with Japanese people, even though the earthquake occurred in a distant country. He expressed his hope that, despite differences in culture, religion, and nation, people can build good relationships and live together in harmony.

### pp. 7-12      **Panel discussion 1: The changes brought about by citizen ties by Takeuchi Shinichi, Inaba Masaki, Tsuyama Naoko, Makino Kumiko**

Panel Discussion 1, “The changes brought about by citizen ties,” was moderated by Makino Kumiko, with Shinichi Takeuchi, Masaki Inaba, and Naoko Tsuyama serving as panelists. Takeuchi, a professor at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, spoke about the program to invite international students from Africa. Inaba, co-chair of AJF and director of the global health department, spoke about global health initiatives such as AIDS issues. Tsuyama, vice chair of AJF, spoke about anti-apartheid movements and initiatives to improve living conditions and education in South Africa, as well as the activities of AJF’s African Kids Club. They shared their own experiences and activities. Each panelist spoke about their activities to connect with the people of Africa and work together to address issues, as well as what they learned from those activities.

### pp. 13-17      **Panel discussion2: Youth Initiatives and the future by Ueda Yoshiki, Kashiwakura Kissa Leila, Karakawa Mei, Kwarteng Eunice**

The panelists for Panel Discussion 2, “Youth Initiatives and the Future,” are Yoshik Ueda, Kissa Leila Kashiwakura, Mei Karakawa, and Eunice Kwarteng (who also serves as moderator). Ueda’s father was an activist in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, and now he is involved in the Palestine solidarity movement. Kashiwakura, whose father is from Mali and mother is Japanese, is a judicial apprentice aiming to become a lawyer (as of November 2024). Karakawa, whose parents are Japanese, is aiming to become a nurse and is involved in the activities of African Kids Club Kansai. Kwarteng, whose parents are from Ghana, works as a staff member at AJF, handling activities such as the African Kids Club. Based on her experience living in poverty as a provisionally-released person, she supports high school students who are released provisionally.

### pp. 18-19      **In the process of rebuilding my relationship with Africa by Maleek Aysa Fumie**

This is the 18th installment of “African Kids Club’s Relay Essay.” Maleek Aysa Fumie married a Ghanaian man in 1999 and now has a 24-year-old daughter. Her family was against her marrying a black man from Africa, so she had a hard time finding a place to live in and felt lonely while she was in pregnancy and raising her kid. Furthermore, her husband was often stopped and questioned by police officers in Japan. Exhausted by these difficulties, she revealed her painful reality in a blog called “Aya’s Days” 20 years ago and received sympathetic comments from readers. At the same time, she began to hate “Africa” which she

had been believing to be the root of all her suffering. However, now that her daughter has experienced the positive influence of living in Ghana during her junior and high school years, she is beginning to reconcile herself with Africa. She is doing so by studying Africa and Ghana and participating in Africa-related events.

**p. 20      Global Funds suffering from lack of funds due to reductions in foreign aid by Inaba Masaki**  
The Global Fund, an international organization that provides funding for AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria control measures, as well as health systems, in developing countries, is facing a funding shortfall for its seventh grant cycle, which is set to begin in 2024 and end in 2026. For this initiative, \$15.7 billion in funding had already been pledged by countries around the world in 2022. However, led by the United States, which suspended almost all foreign aid almost simultaneously with the inauguration of the Trump administration, many donor countries have not provided funds as planned. As of May 2025, 43% of the total funds pledged in 2022, amounting to \$6.8 billion, have not been paid to the Global Fund. In response to this situation, the Global Fund is reducing its funding for projects in each country and revising its priorities accordingly. These reductions have caused deep concern among the communities involved and civil society.

**p. 21      AJF Food Seminar Series"Bananas: More than just fruit" by Hirouchi Kaori**  
This is a report on the 5th session of the seminar series "The World Seen through Food," hosted by the AJF Study Group. In this session Sato Yasuaki, Associate Professor at Nagasaki University's School of Global Humanities and Social Sciences, explored the cultural and historical significance of bananas. Originally from Southeast Asia, bananas are believed to have reached Africa before the Common Era. In various regions of Africa, bananas have been widely used in traditional dishes and everyday meals, -boiled, mashed, grilled, fried, or made into sweets or beverages, and even fermented into alcohol. Beyond food, banana plants serve as raw materials for decorative items, baskets and others, reflecting their broad utility across cultures.

**p. 22      Talk about one's own book: James K. Sterns, *The war that doesn't its name: The unending conflict in the Congo/ 50 chapters to learn about the Democratic Republic of Congo* by Takeuchi Shinichi**  
Shinichi Takeuchi introduced James K. Sterns' book, *The War That Doesn't Have a Name: The Unending Conflict in the Congo* (*Namae wo Iwanai Senso: Owaranai Kongo Funsou* in Japanese), which he supervised and translated, and the book he edited and wrote, *50 Chapters to Learn About the Democratic Republic of Congo* (*Kongo Minsyu Kyouwakoku wo Shiru tamenno 50 syo* in Japanese). The war that doesn't have a name: The unending conflict in the Congo details the process or development by which the conflict continued even after the major war in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (1996-2002) ended, while developed countries attempted to build peace, and presents a framework for understanding this conflict. 50 chapters to learn about the Democratic Republic of Congo provides a comprehensive overview of the Democratic Republic of Congo from various perspectives, including its nature and geography, history, culture and society, livelihoods and economy, politics and international relations, and relations with Japan.

**p. 23      In memory of Haraguchi Takehikj by Makino Kumiko, Murata Haruse**  
A memorial to Haraguchi Takehiko, a member of the AJF and honorary researcher at the Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO), who passed away on May 9, 2025. Makino Kumikoi, vice chair of AJF and a researcher of IDE-JETRO, introduces Haraguchi's books, "Abidjan Diary: Dialogue with West Africa" (IDE, 1985) and "Tribes and the State: Their Meaning and the Reality of Côte d'Ivoire" (IDE, 1996). She also writes that Haraguchi was a genius at observing people, with an endless curiosity about humanity. Murata Haruse, a member of AJF, notes that Haraguchi's appeal stems from the clarity of his research results and his human perspective on his subjects. She remembers interviewing Haraguchi about Laurent Gbagbo, the third president of Côte d'Ivoire. Haraguchi spoke about Gbagbo as if he were an old friend.

**Back cover    Afterword ('Hitotsu no musubime to shite' in Japanese) and a record of AJF's activities**