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This issue of Africa Now features an interview with Dr YOSHIDA Masao, which was conducted on 12 July 2017, under the title of "A researcher on African affairs who commits himself to civic movements." In this interview, YOSHIDA talks about his first encounter with Africa and his subsequent academic career as a researcher on African affairs, as well as his commitment to civic movements which went beyond narrow academism, including the anti-apartheid movement, activism of the Africa Japan Forum, research and advocacy activities for debt cancellation for poorer countries and around the controversial ProSAVANA development project in northern Mozambique. He talks about two events in particular, which are (1) Nelson Mandela's first visit to Japan in 1990, for which YOSHIDA was the secretary general of the Nelson Mandela Reception Committee of Japan, and (2) his participation in the African Symposium, which was held simultaneously with the first TICAD in 1993, as a keynote speaker from the Japanese side. The symposium led to the formation of the Africa Japan Forum (AJF) in the following year, and YOSHIDA became the first president of the Forum. We believe this interview will provide food for thought on the significance for academic researchers to get involved in civic movements, and how research and activism can interact for making difference.

Here's an eulogy for Muzi Nkosi who passed away in February 2018, written by MIYAMOTO Taisuke. MIYAMOTO concerned with the project for independent-living centered on disabled persons in the community in South Africa. Mr Nkosi had led the movement of disabled persons for long. Miyamoto explained the outcome of disabled persons' movements initiated by Mr Nkosi himself who suffered an injury to his cervical cord from the shooting incident at 19. On the other hand, he also talked about how and why the Sowet Independent Living Center rebuilt together with his disabled friends was threatening to be taken over by other disabled leaders immediately after he died.

FURIHATA Hiroaki who supports the projects for forming the Independent Living Center in Gauteng Province, South Africa through the JICA Partnership Program. He emphasizes that the Independent Living Center aims at disabled persons' "Independent choice and Independent decision, and that the trend toward enabling disabled persons to live independently in the community, as set out in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which came into effect on May 2008, has been often seen internationally. He also says that reconstruction of Independent Living Centers, establishment of independent group homes, and administrative hiring of disabled persons are under way, cooperated with disabled persons' movements in South Africa which has a network of contacts with officials.

HOSHI Tomoko has been an owner of Kicheko ('*sound of laughter*' in Swahili), a fair-trade shop mainly selling at events or over the internet since April 2015. When she encountered baskets of WomenCraft who started to find opportunities for female refugees to obtain cash income in Ngara Refugee Camp in Tanzania, she set about selling those baskets. In addition, she writes columns explaining groups of production of fair-trade goods in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya having business with Kicheko.