

ACTIVITIES OF THE ODA COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COUNCILLORS

Background of the Resolution

The Special Committee of the House of Councillors (HoC) on Official Development Assistance and Related Matters has actively carried out research on official development assistance (ODA) and other diverse issues pertaining to international aid and cooperation.

Last year, the Committee invited and heard briefings from numerous experts in Japan and abroad concerning various international aid issues confronting Japan today, and Committee members posed questions to the experts and presented their own views. On 13 June, the Committee prepared a set of proposals on a desirable policy for Japan's international aid.

In 2008, Japan will provide a platform for international debate as it hosts the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit and the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV). On this occasion the ODA Committee has decided to begin series of inquiry on Japan's ODA policy toward TICAD IV and G8 Summit. In addition, this year marks the halfway point toward the achievement of the MDGs and the scheduled launch of a new JICA.

Bearing in mind these factors, the ODA Committee invited knowledgeable persons from UN development-related organizations, NGOs, the embassies of African countries in Tokyo, and others as voluntary testifiers and held discussions on such topics as the desirable form of assistance to Africa and of Japan's ODA.

Toward the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit and TICAD IV, the ODA Committee decided to adopt the resolution in order to convey thoughts from the Diet concerning the desirable form of Japan's international aid and to have these thoughts reflected in Japan's ODA policy.

Events on Japan's ODA and the ODA Committee of the House of Councillors in 2008

- February HoC's Dispatch Tour on ODA
- South Asia(4-13 Feb. India and Nepal)
 - Middle East(12-20 Feb. Turkey and Jordan)
 - Africa(2-14 Feb. Cameroon, Ethiopia, South Africa and UK)
- The ODA Committee members visited ODA sites, discussed with volunteers and met key officials of the government to evaluate and clarify the effectiveness of Japan's ODA.
- 20-21 March The Ministerial Preparatory Conference for TICAD IV in Gabon.
- 28 March HoC's inquiry on ODA Budget
- 5-6 April G8 Development Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo
- April-May HoC's series of inquiry on Japan's ODA policy toward TICAD IV and G8 Summit.
- 2 April; Inquiry 1 "Discussion on the HoC's dispatch tour on ODA."
 - 9 April; Inquiry 2 "Views from International Agencies on Japan's ODA."
Witness Mr. Shun-ichi MURATA, Director, UNDP Tokyo Office
Mr. Saburo TAKIZAWA, UNHCR representative in Japan
 - 16 April; Inquiry 3 "Proposals on Japan's ODA policy."
Witness Dr. Yozo YOKOTA, Professor, Chuo Law School
Dr. Toshio WATANABE, President, Takushoku University
Dr. Izumi OHNO, Professor, GRIPS
 - 23 April; Inquiry 4 "Views from NGOs and civil societies on Japan's ODA"
Witness Dr. Minoru OHBAYASHI, Ticad Civil Society Forum
Ms. Sumie ISHII, G8 Summit NGO Forum
 - 14 May; Inquiry 5 "Views from Africa on Japan's ODA"
Witness H. E. Mr. Elly Elikunda Elineema MTANGO,
Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania in Japan
H. E. Mr. Jean Christian OBAME, Ambassador of the Gabonese Republic in Japan
 - 16 May; Inquiry 6 "Question to Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of JICA"
"Adoption of Resolution on the Desirable Form of Japan's International Aid toward the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit and TICAD IV"
- 28-30 May TICAD IV in Yokohama
- 26-27 June G8 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kyoto
- 7-9 July G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in Hokkaido