



Munich Personal RePEc Archive

## **Japan's foreign aid sanctions policy toward African countries**

Furuoka, Fumitaka

26 November 2007

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/5947/>  
MPRA Paper No. 5947, posted 26 Nov 2007 14:30 UTC

## **Japan's foreign aid sanctions policy toward African countries**

Fumitaka Furuoka  
School of Business and Economics  
Universiti Malaysia Sabah  
Lock Bag 2074  
88999 Kota Kinabalu  
Sabah, Malaysia  
Tel:60-88-320000, Fax:60-88-320360  
Email: fumitakamy@gmail.com

### *Abstract*

*This paper examines Japan's aid sanctions policy toward African countries since new guidelines for Japanese ODA were introduced. There were three cases of positive reinforcement in Africa, i.e. in Madagascar, Zambia) and Guinea. Also, the Japanese government implemented nine negative reinforcements in the region, i.e. in Kenya, Zaire, Malawi, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Togo, Nigeria and Gambia. Although Japan applied positive reinforcement and provided additional foreign aid to assist the political and economic reforms in three African countries, it would be an oversimplification to say that these "positive reinforcement" methods have effectively contributed to the improvement of the political situations in these countries. On the other hand, whether Japan's and other aid donors' measures of the "negative reinforcement" have effectively contributed to the improvement of the political situation in African countries remains as a contentious issue.*

## 1. Introduction

When the Cold War ended, the Japanese government introduced new aid guidelines where it pledged to impose aid sanctions on those aid recipient countries whose governments violated human rights or democratic principles. During the Cold War, Japan seldom showed an interest in, or rather overlooked, the political conditions in aid recipients. Furthermore, there have been instances when Japan's ODA caused a political scandal, as happened in the Philippines during the Marcos regime (Orr, 1993a: 98).

Since the introduction of the new aid guidelines the Japanese government has used its aid power to influence aid recipients not only by employing "negative reinforcement" but also through the use of the "positive reinforcement"<sup>1</sup>. In other words, Japan can choose to impose negative reinforcement (the suspension or a decrease in foreign aid) on recipient countries where undesirable policy changes occur, while positive reinforcement (an increase in foreign aid) would be applied to aid recipients that conduct desirable policies in the light of Japan's ODA Charter (Furuoka, 2006).

This paper examines Japan's aid sanctions policy toward African countries since new guidelines for Japanese ODA were introduced. There were three cases of positive reinforcement in Africa, i.e. in Madagascar (1991), Zambia (1992) and Guinea (1992). Also, the Japanese government implemented nine negative reinforcements in the region, i.e. in Kenya (1991), Zaire (1991), Malawi (1992), Sudan (1992), Sierra Leone (1993), Zambia (1993), Togo (1993), Nigeria (1994) and The Gambia (1994) (see Furuoka, 2005, 2006).

---

<sup>1</sup> "Sekkyoku-teki kanren" is the Japanese official term for "positive reinforcement". "Shokyoku-teki kanren" is the term for "negative reinforcement". *Sekkyoku-teki* and *shokyoku-teki* mean "positive" and "negative", respectively; *kanren* means "linkage"

## **2. Positive Reinforcement in Africa**

### a) Madagascar

In 1989, in Madagascar, the military socialist government led by Didier Ratsiraka won the general election. However, soon after the election, people became disillusioned and started to criticise the socialist regime. As an anti-government movement gained strength, the political situation in Madagascar became shaky. In 1991, the socialist government ceased to rule the country. A referendum for a new constitution was held in August 1991. In November 1991, a plan to hold presidential and parliamentary elections was announced. With the help of the French government, the new constitution was implemented and elections were held. In the presidential election in February 1992, Albert Zafy defeated Ratsiraka and became Madagascar's new president.<sup>2</sup>

To support political changes in Madagascar, the Japanese government donated ¥5.46 million (US\$43 thousand) to purchase portable radios for the election. As *Japan's ODA 1993* noted, "The two-way portable radios donated to the City of Tananarive... proved to be quite helpful in the presidential and parliamentary elections held in that country (Madagascar)" (MOFA, 1993a: 37). In one year, Japan's ODA to Madagascar increased more than three-fold from US\$13 million in 1990 to US\$40 million in 1991 (MOFA, 1995: 402-423).

### b) Zambia

In Zambia, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) was in power for more than 25 years, since that country's independence. Gradually, a one party system was established in the country, and fair elections had not been held. In October 1991, prompted by moves towards democracy in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe,

---

<sup>2</sup> In 1997, Zafy was defeated by Ratsiraka in the presidential election.

general and presidential elections took place in Zambia. The Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) won a landslide victory and a critic of President Kenneth Kaunda and co-founder of the MMD, Frederick Chiluba, was inaugurated as the new president of Zambia. This was the first time since Zambia's independence 27 years before that the power in the country was transferred peacefully (MOFA, 1993b: 146).

In response to positive changes in Zambia, "Japan is assisting the new administration, which is facing economic difficulties, in its efforts to move toward democracy and a market-oriented economy. In March 1992, it provided ¥3.5 billion (US\$26.9 million) in non-project grant aid" (MOFA, 1992: 28).

Japan's ODA to Zambia doubled from US\$40 million in 1990 to US\$82 million in 1991. By 1993, it increased by 45 percent and reached US\$116 million, making Japan Zambia's second biggest aid donor. In 1992, Zambia received from the Japanese government a bilateral loan amounting to ¥9.74 billion (US\$74.9 million) to support privatisation and industrial reform projects. In the same year, Japan gave a grant amounting to ¥912 million (US\$7.01 million) for the Kafue bridge reconstruction project (MOFA, 1995: 429-431).

### c) Guinea

In 1990, Guinea's military government pledged to introduce political reforms. The government promised to enact the country's constitution and give rights to the people. The new constitution established a two-party system and universal adult suffrage (MOFA, 1993c: 38-39). Guinea's government also pledged to hold a general election and to peacefully transfer power to a civilian government.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> President Lansana Conte won elections both in 1993 and 1998.

Japan showed support for positive changes in Guinea by providing funds to assist the country's general election. The Japanese government gave non-project grant assistance to purchase equipment necessary for running the election in 1992. However, according to *Japan's ODA 1993*, "As Guinea had postponed the election itself,<sup>4</sup> the counterpart funds (Japanese funds) have not been used yet" (MOFA, 1993a: 37).

Japan's bilateral grants to Guinea increased almost three-fold from US\$7.7 million in 1990 to US\$21 million in 1991, and amounted to US\$24 million in 1992. In 1991, with ODA amounting to US\$98 million, Japan was the second biggest aid donor to Guinea after France (MOFA, 1995: 395-397).

#### d) Tokyo International Conference on African Development

Besides giving bilateral assistance to African countries, the Japanese government organized the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in October 1993. The conference adopted the "Tokyo Declaration on African Development" that urged African countries to learn from Asia's experience. The declaration announced, "We acknowledge some relevance of the Asian experience for African development. The very diversity of successful Asian countries gives hope that lessons can be drawn for African development" (MOFA, 2007).

*The Economist* reported that at the Tokyo conference the debate concerning the lessons from the East Asian development model was intense. "Perhaps the brand of capitalism urged upon Africa by western donors was faulty, ran the implication: Africa should follow the Asian way". The conference became a platform to deliver the voice of

---

<sup>4</sup> The presidential election was held in 1993. The legislative election after having been postponed several times was finally held in 1995.

dissent against Western methods of development. According to *The Economist*, while Western aid is increasingly conditional upon clean and open government, some of the African leaders felt unhappy about this interference. As the journal put it, “Uganda’s President Yowen Museveni told the Tokyo conference that donors should not interfere in Africa’s general development. Foreigners had interfered with Africa for the past 500 years, he said, and its present crisis had been caused mainly by outsiders” (*The Economist*, October, 1993: 35).

### **3. Negative Reinforcement in Africa**

#### a) Kenya

During the Cold War period, Kenya was ruled by a single party - the Kenya African National Union - led by Daniel Arap Moi.<sup>5</sup> In 1991, large pro-democracy and anti-Moi regime rallies broke out in Kenya. The political situation became chaotic and Moi’s regime began to lose its grip on power. The international community, including Japan, was concerned over the worsening human rights conditions in Kenya after the mass rallies erupted. However, the Kenyan government ignored international criticisms and continued to violate human rights. When the situation went from bad to worse, Moi’s government tried to reach a compromise and promised to hold presidential and general elections. After the presidential election at the end of 1992, Moi retained power due to a split in the opposition party that enabled him to win the election with a narrow majority (MOFA, 1993b, 144-145).

During political upheaval in Kenya, Japan in concert with other donor countries took serious measures to improve the political situation in that country. It should be noted

---

<sup>5</sup> Jomo Kenyatta was president of Kenya until his death in 1978. He was succeeded by Moi. In 2002, Moi stepped down following elections and was replaced by Mwai Kibaki.

that in contrast to its independent diplomatic policy toward repressive regimes in Asia, the Japanese government tends to follow other countries' initiatives in Africa. *Japan's ODA 1992* states that to send a clear message to Moi's regime, Japan and other aid donors refused to announce specific amounts of foreign aid for Kenya (MOFA, 1992: 29). As a step further, in 1992, Japan suspended foreign aid to Kenya. According to *Japan's ODA 1993*, "International criticism of Kenya for human rights abuses, corruption, and the delay in economic reforms has been mounting, and donor countries have suspended their aid to finance Kenya's current account deficits" (MOFA, 1993a: 39-40).

In 1993, Japan lifted the use of negative reinforcement when the Kenyan government made efforts to accommodate the international community and improved the political situation.<sup>6</sup> Since then, Kenya has been a major recipient of Japan's ODA in Africa. From 1993 to 1995, Japan was the top aid donor in Kenya. Japan's bilateral grants to Kenya increased from US\$57 million in 1993 to US\$78 million in 1994, and reached US\$93 million in 1995 (MOFA, 1997: 336-337).

However, Japan's provision of foreign aid to the abusive regime in Kenya has drawn strong criticism from international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), especially Amnesty International, that have repeatedly expressed concerns over the human rights violations under Moi's regime. Amnesty International's report expressed grave concerns about human rights condition in Kenya (*Asahi Shinbun*, June 26, 1997).

---

<sup>6</sup> After the election, the leader of the opposition party was appointed chairman of the anti-corruption committee. The Japanese government considered this step a sign of improvement and, in 1993, decided to give a bilateral loan amounting to ¥8.2 billion (US\$73 million) to support Kenya's export program. Following Japan's example, in November 1993, other donor countries lifted the suspension of aid to Kenya. In addition, in 1994 Japan dispatched a high level mission to Kenya as part of a technical co-operation program (MOFA, 1993a: 40).

International NGOs demanded that Tokyo suspend foreign aid to Kenya. Furthermore, when in August 1997 anti-Moi demonstrations escalated again, some demonstrators criticised Tokyo for supporting an undemocratic ruler (*Sankei Shinbun*, August 9, 1997). Japan ignored the demonstrators' demands to stop aid to Moi's regime. According to *Sankei Shinbun*, "The Japanese government maintained that President Moi was not a dictator, thus it was unnecessary for Japan to suspend aid to Kenya" (*Sankei Shinbun*, September 12, 1997).

b) Zaire

Zaire is another African country that for a long time was ruled by a military junta led by Mobutu Sese Sako.<sup>7</sup> His party - the Popular Movement of the Revolution - was the only party that existed in the country, others being banned. In 1990, the government restored a multiparty system. However, despite the establishment of the National Conference, in September 1991 large-scale riots broke out in Zaire (MOFA, 1993b, 145-146).

The outbreak of violence and lootings led many foreign civilians to flee Zaire where public safety was severely deteriorating. The Japanese embassy in Kinshasa was closed. It should be noted that this event - not the fact that the country's human rights conditions had deteriorated - was cited by the Japanese government as the reason why it suspended foreign aid to Zaire. As *Japan's ODA 1992* put it, "Riots have erupted, public order has deteriorated, and Japan has consequently had to pull out its embassy. As a result, aid to that country has become difficult to implement in practice and thus has been suspended" (MOFA, 1992: 29).

---

<sup>7</sup> Zaire's name was changed to the Democratic Republic of Congo when Laurent Kabila replaced Mobutu in 1997.

At the same time, the Japanese government announced that it would use the ODA Charter as the guidance to decide whether it should lift the use of negative reinforcement in Zaire. *Japan's ODA 1992* stated, "Japan will give overall consideration to the four ODA guidelines and the state of public order in that country when studying whether to resume aid to that country" (MOFA, 1992: 29).

Before Tokyo completely halted aid to Zaire, Japan provided ¥2,117 million (US\$14.1 million) in foreign aid to that country in 1990. Since the introduction of negative reinforcement, Japan has provided to Zaire foreign aid of an emergency and humanitarian nature only. The amount of grant aid to Zaire in 1995 was ¥68 million (US\$635 thousand); it remained at a low level of ¥61 million (US\$656 thousand) in 1996 (MOFA, 1997: 103).

#### c) Malawi

In Malawi, the title of "President for life" was given to Hastings Kamuzu Banda. His party - the Malawi Congress Party - ruled the country throughout the Cold War. With changes in the international political arena, Malawi's population started to demand more democracy in the country's politics. However, Banda's regime tried to suppress this trend for democratisation and resorted to serious abuses of human rights. This drew criticisms from aid donor countries. Since there were no improvements in Malawi's domestic situation, a donor countries' consultative group meeting was held in May 1992, where it was decided to suspend aid to Malawi to finance balance of payment deficits in donor countries. Due to aid sanctions, the Malawi government promised to hold a referendum to decide the country's political system. In June 1992, the referendum was held peacefully under international monitoring and voter approved reforms. A new constitution that guaranteed a multiparty system was adopted. In the

first multiparty elections in Malawi in 1994, Bakili Muluzi defeated Banda and became the country's president (MOFA, 1993c: 96-97).

Japan used negative reinforcement in Malawi and together with other aid donors suspended foreign aid to cover its balance of payment deficits.<sup>8</sup> The Japanese government stressed the fact that regarding the aid policy toward Malawi it committed itself to work closely with other aid donors. As *Japan's ODA 1993* stated, "Japan will weigh the advisability of resuming aid in concert with the international community" (MOFA, 1993a: 40). Furthermore, *Japan's ODA 1996* points out, "At the Consultative Group for Malawi in May 1992, Japan and other donors expressed their concern with the slow pace of Malawi's democratisation and its repressive policies, which are inimical to human rights, and took measures to suspend new assistance for international balance of payments support" (MOFA, 1996: 103).

Japan's ODA to Malawi has remained at a low level since 1992, when it amounted to US\$23 million. In 1993, Japan's aid to Malawi was US\$24 million. However, in 1994, when Tokyo decided to lift negative reinforcement, the amount of aid increased more than four-fold and reached US\$100 million (MOFA, 1997: 340-341).

#### d) Sudan

In Sudan, more than a dozen years of political instability caused by changes of governments through *coup d'etats* brought the country economic hardship and civil war. In 1989, an Islamic fundamentalist group - the National Islamic Front (NIF) - led by Omar Hassan al-Bashir staged another *coup d'etat*. After the *coup*, the NIF gradually

---

<sup>8</sup> The Japanese government decided to lift negative reinforcement in Malawi and provided bilateral loans for entrepreneurship development and a drought recovery program (MOFA, 1994a: 57).

increased its strength and presence in the country's political life. The NIF succeeded in gaining enough power to control Sudan and reinforce a one-party system (MOFA, 1993b, 133-134).

In December 1992, in response to the worsening human rights conditions in Sudan, the United Nation's General Assembly adopted, with the overwhelming support of all countries, including Japan, a resolution expressing grave concern about violations of the human rights of the victims of disasters, ethnic minorities, and personnel of international humanitarian aid organisations (MOFA, 1993b, 133-134).

Serious human rights violations were observed in Sudan's southern city of Juba. Japan and other countries have repeatedly urged Sudan to take remedial measures, but to no avail. So, in accordance with the ODA Charter, Japan stopped all aid to Sudan, except emergency and humanitarian aid (MOFA, 1996: 102).

Japan's bilateral grants to Sudan decreased from US\$2.53 million in 1991 to US\$1.40 million in 1992, and decreased further to US\$1.00 million in 1993. Technical co-operation declined from US\$392 million in 1991 to US\$144 million in 1992, and was almost halted in 1993 (MOFA, 1997: 69).

There are critics who condemn Western countries' intervention in Sudan. For example, Mohindeen argues that Sudan is labelled a terrorist state by Western countries that impose sanctions. He claims that what the West really fears is the Islamic orientation of the Sudanese government and its commitment to eliminating Western hegemony in that region. According to Mohindeen, if Sudan succeeds in establishing a genuine democratic political system based on Islam, it will have a revolutionary impact on those

Muslim countries in Africa that are currently ruled by ruthless dictators and hereditary rulers whose regimes owe their survival to Western support and patronage (*New Straits Times*, July 22, 1996).

e) Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, a single party - the All People's Party (APP) - controlled the country during the Cold War period. In August 1991, in response to a new international political situation, a referendum for a new constitution was held and a multiple party system was approved and introduced in that country. However, in December 1992, after a *coup d'état* led by Captain Valentine Strasser, a military government seized power. President Joseph Saidu Momoh was ousted and the democratisation process was halted. Various human rights abuses, such as suppression of the mass media, arrests, detentions and executions became rampant (MOFA, 1993c: 56-57).

In 1993, the situation improved after Sierra Leone's military government announced its intention to release political prisoners and transfer power to a civilian government within three years.<sup>9</sup> In 1994, Sierra Leone announced a plan to establish the Interim National Electoral Commission to supervise the general election (Furuoka, 2006).

Despite international criticisms, the human rights situation in Sierra Leone did not improve. The Japanese government repeatedly expressed its concern over the human rights condition in that country. In May 1993, when the promised changes in the political situation did not materialise, Tokyo suspended aid to Sierra Leone. An exception was made for aid of an urgent or humanitarian nature. In October 1993,

---

<sup>9</sup> In January 1996, President Strasser was ousted after a *coup d'état* led by Brigadier Maada Bio. The elections were held in February and Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was elected president.

following the announcement of the transfer of power in Sierra Leone, Japan lifted aid sanctions (MOFA, 1994: 57).

In 1992, Japan's ODA to Sierra Leone remained at a marginal level of US\$3.8 million. In 1993, it amounted to US\$4.1 million. When aid sanctions were abolished, Japan's aid increased more than two-fold and reached US\$10.3 million in 1994 making Japan Sierra Leone's top aid donor (MOFA, 1996: 357-358).

f) Togo

In Togo, the military government led by Gnassingbe Eyadema banned all opposition parties. When new political thinking came in lieu of the Cold War mentality, the Togo government legalised opposition political parties and Eyadema agreed to share power with a transitional government. The National Conference appointed Joseph Kokou Koffigoh as Prime Minister of the transitional government. In 1992, a referendum was held, and the voters approved a new constitution that reduced presidential powers. In August 1993, most of the opposition candidates withdrew from the presidential election allowing Eyadema to win a landslide victory (Furuoka, 2006).

Japan was seriously concerned about these negative developments in Togo and, in 1993, suspended in principle aid to that country. From 1993 to 1995, Japan's ODA to Togo remained at a marginal level decreasing from US\$3.4 million in 1993 to US\$1.7 million in 1994, and further diminishing to US\$0.7 million in 1995 (MOFA, 1997: 357-358).

g) Zambia

In Zambia, President Kenneth Kaunda controlled the country since its independence in 1964 and throughout the Cold War period. In 1990, Kaunda expressed an intention to

restore the multiparty system. In the following year, he declared the abolishment of the socialist policy and established a national conference. Presidential elections were held and Frederick Chiluba of the opposition party - the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) - won the election and became the country's new president (Furuoka, 2006).

Although a peaceful transfer of power took place after the election, the former president attempted a *coup d'etat* in 1993. Chiluba declared a state of emergency; human rights conditions deteriorated to the concern of the international community. Following other aid donors' initiatives, Japan used negative reinforcement and cut her foreign aid to Zambia for the balance-of-payment deficits support (MOFA, 1995: 54).

#### h) Nigeria

In Nigeria, a military government led by Ibrahim Babangida controlled the country and prohibited political parties. In 1989, the ban was lifted and two parties were permitted to contest in the election. In 1990 and 1992, local government elections and legislative elections were held. In July 1993, the Social Democratic Party's (SDP) candidate, Moshod Abiola, won the presidential elections. However, Babangida annulled the results of the election and installed an interim government led by Chief Ernest Shonekan. The political chaos that followed was ended by a military *coup d'etat* led by General Sani Abacha.<sup>10</sup> After the *coup*, Shonekan was ousted and Nigeria returned to military rule (MOFA, 1993b, 150-151).

Human rights abuses in Nigeria have been wide spread since the military seized power.

---

<sup>10</sup> Abacha held power until 1998. His successor, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, promoted the transition to a civil regime. The presidential election was implemented peacefully in February 1999. General Olusegun Obasanjo won the election and became the new president of Nigeria.

The military junta dissolved the Nigerian parliament, banned political parties and political meetings. Tokyo considered these events a setback to the democratisation process and kept a close watch over the situation for signs of improvement. However, no tangible initiative designed to return the Nigerian government to civilian rule was offered. In March 1994, Tokyo suspended in principle aid to Nigeria, except aid on humanitarian grounds (MOFA, 1997: 70).

Japan's bilateral aid to Nigeria declined from US\$50.4 million in 1992 to US\$15.0 million in 1993, and was halted completely in 1994. Technical co-operation increased slightly from US\$7.0 million in 1992 to US\$8.5 million in 1993, before decreasing to US\$3.15 million in 1994 (MOFA, 1997: 70).

#### i) The Gambia

The Gambia is an exceptional African country where a multiparty system has been implemented since the country's independence in 1965. The liberal-democratic political system of government was maintained with the People's Progressive Party (PPP) in power. However, in July 1994, a military *coup d'etat* led by Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh was carried out and the military seized power (MOFA, 1993c: 36-37).

After the military *coup d'etat*, Japan in principle suspended foreign aid to the Gambia, except humanitarian and emergency assistance. Since then, as *Japan's ODA 1996* put it, "Japan is monitoring developments closely to determine whether specific moves are being made toward the restoration of democratic process" (MOFA, 1996: 103).

Japan's ODA to the Gambia decreased from US\$11 million in 1994 to a marginal level of US\$2 million in 1995. In 1995, Tokyo halted bilateral grants to the Gambia, but

continued providing grants for assistance for democratisation and grassroots projects, which amounted to ¥29 million (US\$31 thousand) (MOFA, 1996: 337-338).

It should be noted that Japan suspended or reduced her foreign aid to the repressive regimes in Africa without attempting to use foreign aid as a diplomatic tool to influence political situation in the region. The Japanese government responded to the deterioration of political situation in African countries by implementing negative reinforcement. For example, Japan promptly suspended foreign aid when *coup d'etats* occurred in several African countries, i.e., in Sierra Leone (1992), Zambia (1993), Nigeria (1994) and The Gambia (1994). Also, Japan suspended foreign aid to Zaire (1991) and Sudan (1992) at the time when those countries were undergoing serious political and social turmoil. Despite military conflicts in Zaire and Sudan, Japan did not attempt to employ her foreign aid as a tool to resolve those conflicts (Furuoka, 2006).

#### **4. Evaluation of Japanese Aid Sanctions in Africa**

Japan applied positive reinforcement and provided additional foreign aid to assist the political and economic reforms in Madagascar, Zambia and Guinea. However, it would be an oversimplification to say that these positive reinforcement methods have effectively contributed to the improvement of the political situations in these countries. The political situation in Zambia deteriorated after the election in 1991. In Guinea, the military junta continued to control the country. Only in Madagascar, have there been some positive developments after the election in 1992 when the newly elected government discarded the socialist ideology and pledged to establish a system based on human rights and democracy (MOFA, 1993b, 151-152). However, the major factor behind Madagascar's transformation to a more democratic system was the efforts of the French government that stressed the political conditions in the former French colonies

(Aoki, 1998: 6).

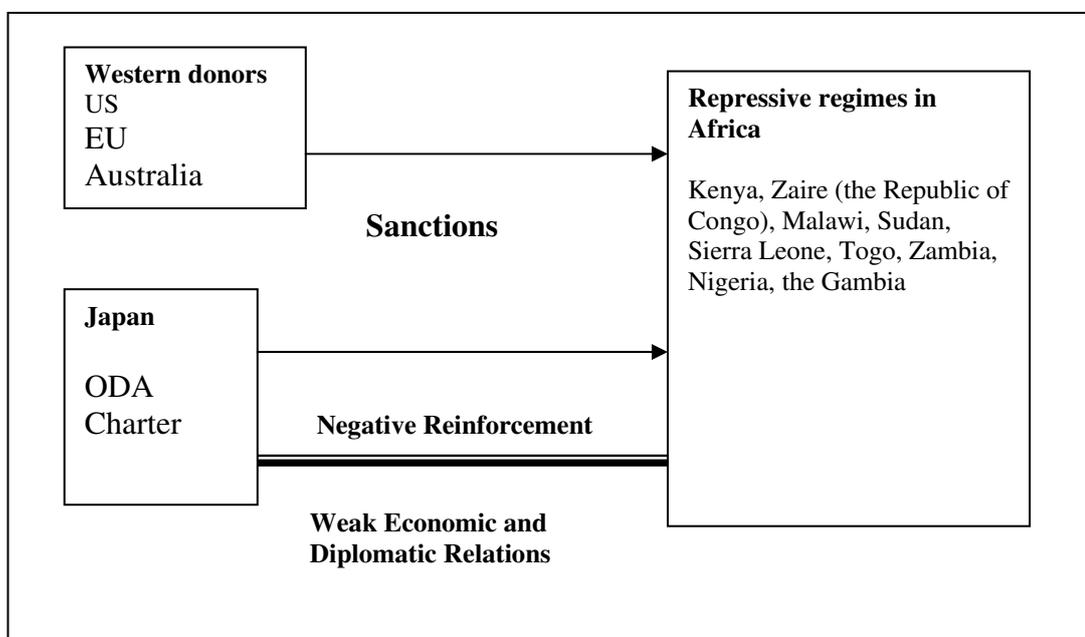
Japan contributed to development in Africa not only by giving foreign aid. The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) was an attempt by the Japanese government to show an alternative development model to African countries. Some Japanese policymakers are sceptical about Western attempts to induce development and democracy in Africa. For example, a top Japanese diplomat, Director of the African Division (II) of the MOFA, Kiyokazu Ota, argues that Japan should recognise an “African way of democracy” and refrain from applying Western standards to African countries (*Gaiko Foramu*, August/September, 1998: 26).

Some Japanese scholars share this point of view. A researcher from a government think-tank maintains that African countries should embrace the “African way of democracy”. He argues that if, as in some Asian nations, African countries adopt authoritarian political systems to develop their economies and such systems contribute to the advancement of the nation’s welfare, the authoritarianism can be justified (*Gaiko Foramu*, August/September, 1998: 26).

According to Stein (1998: 45), the Japanese government, especially the MOFA, is particularly critical about the feasibility of the “Structural Adjustment Policy” advocated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). He claims that after a high-ranking African official criticised the social dimension of the adjustment policy, the MOFA asked UNCTAD (United Nations Conference for Trade and Development) to reassess applying the lessons from Asian development to Africa.

At least three questions arise concerning the relevance of the TICAD. First, Asian

countries had been developing in a specific international environment that T.J. Pempel called the “Developmental Regime”. Western countries supported East Asian countries by providing them with vast amounts of foreign aid and importing their production. However, a unique “Asian Development Model” cannot be easily transferred to other regions. As Pempel (2000: 82) put it, “It is highly unlikely that potential emulator will have anything like the favourable international conditions that were enjoyed by these countries (East Asian countries)”.



**Figure 1 Negative Reinforcement in Africa**

Second, after the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the region faced a serious economic setback. Despite the fact that during the Tokyo conference in 1993, delegates were sufficiently impressed by the successful economic performance of East Asian nations, African leaders might not any longer be interested in learning from Asia. The fundamental question remains: are the lessons from Asia really relevant for African

countries?

Another point to consider is that Asian countries stressed economic development as the ultimate target for a nation. East Asian countries with strong propensities for promotion of economic development could be defined as “developmental states”. According to Peter Evans (1995), the developmental states tend to act as coherent entities to deliver the collective good. Such developmental states tend to be immersed in dense networks of groups and classes that can become allies in the pursuit of the societal goal, which is “economic development”.

In “developmental states”, authoritarian regimes are justified for the sake of development. Chalmers Johnson (2000: 53) gave the following answer to the question as to whether the developmental state is democratic, “If one means by democracy some form of state accountability to the representatives of the majority of citizens combined with respect for the rights of minorities, the answer is probably no”. In other words, there is a danger that African countries might be tempted to justify authoritarian rule by adopting the “Developmental State Model” argument.

Japan has weak economic and diplomatic ties with African countries. Because of that the Japanese government is not concerned about hurting Japan’s interests by employing negative reinforcement in Africa, and when aid sanctions are to be applied to improve the political situations in African countries, the Japanese government collaborates with other aid donors (see Figure 1). For example, Japan together with other donor countries cut foreign aid for the balance of payment deficits in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. The Japanese government further introduced negative reinforcement in Togo, Zaire, the Gambia and Nigeria following aid sanctions by the European Union against these

countries (Eyinla, 1999: 86).

Kaoru Okuizumi draws attention to the fact that Tokyo promptly suspended aid to Kenya in 1991, when human rights abuses were at their worst. Even after Japan and other donors resumed aid in November 1993, Tokyo continued to stress that future assistance depended on Kenya's efforts to improve its human rights record. As Okuizumi (1995: 395) put it, "Unlike China and Indonesia, Kenya is neither a major source of natural resources nor a significant trading partner and thus contributes little to either Japan's natural resource or market security".

Soderberg points out that Tokyo acted in accordance with other donors when in 1992 it did not hesitate to take strict measures against Malawi and Sierra Leone. According to her, it was done because economic and diplomatic ties between Japan and the two countries were very weak. "With Sierra Leone, Malawi... there is more flexible (aid policy) as both the diplomatic and trade relations are of negligible importance" (Soderberg, 1996: 143).

The Japanese government is very keen to preserve Japan's status as a leading aid donor. Because of this, the government is often reluctant to cut foreign aid to Japan's major aid recipients. Okuizumi maintains that Japan suspended aid to Zaire and Sudan without hesitation because this measure would not significantly lower Japan's total aid flows and weaken her status of being a leading aid donor. According to him, when in 1991 human rights violations occurred in Indonesia, Zaire and Sudan, 9.7 percent of Japan's total ODA went to Indonesia, 4.7 percent was distributed in Sudan and only 0.2 percent of total foreign aid was given to Zaire. Okuizumi argues that withdrawing or decreasing aid to major recipient countries, such as Indonesia, runs contrary to Japan's goal to

maintain top donorship. Therefore, “Aid programmes in Sudan and Zaire were suspended while those in Indonesia were not” (Okuizumi, 1995: 398).

Whether Japan’s and other aid donors’ measures have contributed to the improvement of the political situation in African countries is a contentious issue. Thus, there has been no obvious improvement in the political conditions in Sierra Leone, Zaire (the Democratic Republics of Congo) and Sudan. In Sierra Leone, Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Paul Koromah established a military junta and anti-government forces have been active in the country. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, there has been a serious conflict that involved foreign military forces from Uganda and Rwanda. In Sudan, in 1999, after a serious power struggle Omar Hassan al-Bashir declared a state of emergency, dissolved the assembly and suspended parts of the constitution (Furuoka, 2006).

In Togo, an undemocratic leader, Gnassingbe Eyadema, stayed in power for thirty years. Despite Japanese and other donors’ sanctions there have been no signs of improvement in the country’s political situation. To some extent, sanctions did not work in Togo due to the French government’s support for Eyadema’s regime (*The Economist*, July 4, 1998: 40).

In Zambia, President Frederick Chiluba was expected to steer the country to the path of democracy. Aoki (1998: 18) points out that although the democratic situation has improved after the presidential election, under Chiluba, corruption was rampant and people started to show dissatisfaction with the regime. He warns that aid donors should not be too optimistic about the political situation in Zambia. In a similar vein, an international journal reported in 1999 that Chiluba’s zeal for privatisation programs was

soon dampened by corruption that was becoming a great break on progress (*The Economist*, June 26, 1999: 23-25).

There have been no positive changes in the Gambia since Japan suspended foreign aid in 1994. A major African journal reported in 1998 that despite international condemnation, violations of human rights continued under the Jammeh regime. Besides, there had been growing frictions between the government and the Muslim community and political opponents of the government were harassed (*The New African*, December 1998: 20).

## **5. Conclusion**

There were three cases of positive reinforcement in Africa, i.e. in Madagascar (1991), Zambia (1992) and Guinea (1992). Also, the Japanese government implemented nine negative reinforcements in the region, i.e. in Kenya (1991), Zaire (1991), Malawi (1992), Sudan (1992), Sierra Leone (1993), Zambia (1993), Togo (1993), Nigeria (1994) and The Gambia (1994).

Although Japan applied positive reinforcement and provided additional foreign aid to assist the political and economic reforms in three African countries, it would be an oversimplification to say that these positive reinforcement methods have effectively contributed to the improvement of the political situations in these countries.

On the other hand, Japan has weak economic and diplomatic ties with African countries. Because of that the Japanese government is not concerned about hurting Japan's interests by employing negative reinforcement in Africa, and when aid sanctions are to be applied to improve the political situations in African countries, the Japanese

government collaborates with other aid donors. Furthermore, whether Japan's and other aid donors' measures have contributed to the improvement of the political situation in African countries is a contentious issue. For example, there has been no obvious improvement in the political conditions in Sierra Leone, Zaire and Sudan.

## References

- Aoki, Kazuyoshi (1998). "Afurika Shokoku no Minshuka to Sono Kadai" (Democratisation of African Countries and Its Issues). *Kokusai Mondai*, No.460, 2-20.
- Arase, David (1993). "Japanese Policy Towards Democracy and Human Rights in Asia". *Asian Survey*, **33**(10), 935-952.
- Evans, Peter (1995). *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Eyinla, Bolade M. (1999). "The European Union and the Application of Political Conditionality in Sub-Sahara Africa". *African Journal of International Affairs and Development*, **4**(2), 67-95.
- Furuoka, Fumitaka (2002). "Challenges for Japanese Diplomacy After the End of the Cold War". *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, **24**(1), 68-81.
- Furuoka, Fumitaka (2005). "Human Rights Conditionality and Aid Allocation: Case Study of Japanese Foreign Aid Policy". *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, **4**(2), 125-146.
- Furuoka, Fumitaka (2006). *New Challenges for Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Policy: Human Rights, Democracy and Aid Sanctions*, (Kota Kinabalu, UMS Press).
- Inada, Jun'ichi (1995). "Jinken Minshuka to Enjo Seisaku (Human Rights, Democracy and Aid Policy)". *Kokusai Mondai*, No. 422, 2-17.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) (1996). *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook*. Washington, D.C.: IMF.
- Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) (2007a), *Foreign Trade by Country and Region*, <http://www.jetro.go.jp>, [accessed on November 26, 2007]
- Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO)(2007b), *FDI Outflow from Japan by Country/Region*, <http://www.jetro.go.jp>, [accessed on November 26, 2007]
- Johnson, Chalmers (1982). *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Keizai Koho Senta (1997). *Japan 1998: An International Comparison*. Tokyo: Keizai Koho Senta.
- Lincoln, Edward J. (1993). *Japan's New Global Role*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1992). *Japan's ODA 1992*. Tokyo: Association for Promotion of International Co-operation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1993a). *Japan's ODA 1993*. Tokyo: Association for Promotion of International Co-operation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1993b). *Gaiko Sheisho 1993*. Tokyo: MOFA.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1993c). *Afurika Benran (Outline of African Countries)*. Tokyo: MOFA.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1994). *Japan's ODA 1994*. Tokyo: Association for Promotion of International Co-operation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1995). *Japan's ODA 1995*. Tokyo: Association for Promotion of International Co-operation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1996). *Japan's ODA 1996*. Tokyo: Association for Promotion of International Co-operation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (1997). *Japan's ODA 1997*. Tokyo: Association for Promotion of International Co-operation.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (2007), *Tokyo Declaration of African Development*, <http://ww.mofa.go.jp>, [accessed on November 26, 2007]

Okuizumi, Kaoru (1995). "Implementing the ODA Charter". *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics*, **27**(2), 367-406.

Orr, Robert M., Jr. (1993a). *Nihon no Seisaku Kettei Katei: Taigai Enjo to Gaiatsu (Japan's Policymaking Process: Overseas Aid and Foreign Pressure)*. Tokyo: Toyo Keiza Shinposha.

Orr, Robert M., Jr. (1993b). *Domestic Dimensions of Japanese Foreign Aid*. Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Malaysia.

Pempel, T. J. (2000). "The Developmental Regime in a Changing World Economy", paper presented at the International Conference on the Japanese Model, March 29-30, 2000, Nikko Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.

Soderberg, Marie (1996). "Japanese Aid As a Foreign Policy Tool", in Bert Edstrom, ed., *Japan's Foreign and Security Policies in Transition*. Stockholm: The Swedish Institute for International Affairs and Centre for Pacific Asia Studies.

Stein, Howard (1998). "Japanese Aid to Africa: Patterns, Motivations and the Role of Structural Adjustment". *Journal of Development Study*, **35**(2), 27-53.