

Sunday, May 6, 2012

Japan to give Morocco ¥10.8 billion

Kyodo

RABAT — Japan extended about ¥10.8 billion in low-interest yen loans to Morocco on Friday to help the country upgrade sewerage systems in regional areas, with Foreign Minister Koichiro Genba and Moroccan Economics and Finance Minister Nizar Baraka exchanging notes to that effect.

Genba, who is visiting the North African nation, said during separate talks with Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane and Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Minister Saad-Eddine el-Othmani that Japan will continue to support Morocco's democratization, including efforts to reduce regional disparities and develop industries, according to Japanese officials.

Genba and el-Othmani agreed to start preparatory talks for a bilateral investment agreement as well as to cooperate in the Tokyo International Conference on African Development ministerial follow-up meeting scheduled to be held Saturday in Marrakesh and enhance cooperation over aid to Africa, the officials said.

Genba also sought cooperation from Morocco, currently a nonpermanent member of the U.N. Security Council, on issues related to North Korea, and el-Othmani responded positively, they said.

Earlier Friday in Casablanca, Genba met with King Mohammed VI and agreed to accelerate cooperation in the field of solar energy while confirming their aim to strengthen the two countries' economic partnership by expanding investments from Japan.

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