

## **Japan tries to differentiate its African investment projects from China's**

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Japan's strategic policy on Africa has shifted from government aid to promoting private-sector investment. Its unofficial agenda seems to be to differentiate Japan's economic cooperation from that of China, which has long surpassed Japan as a massive business investor in the continent's rapidly growing economies.

At the G20 summit in Osaka in June, Tokyo drafted a document calling for "quality infrastructure investment" and attached it to the Osaka joint declaration that was endorsed by the G20 leaders. The paper urges the G20 countries, including China, to attach importance to the fiscal sustainability of a recipient country when extending loans for infrastructure projects.

The Osaka declaration also urges member countries to pay attention to transparency, environmental friendliness, resilience against natural disasters and social inclusiveness, which observers say all may make Japan's pricier "quality" infrastructure projects more competitive than those promoted by China.

More than 3,700 Chinese firms are reportedly doing business in Africa and about 1 million Chinese are living there, while Japanese firms have offices at just 800 locations. About 8,000 Japanese live in Africa.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/30/national/politics-diplomacy/ticad-closes-effort-japan-differentiate-african-investment-projects-chinas/>