

The Africa – South Korea Partnership Framework



Established during the first Korea-Africa Summit on November 8, 2006 in Seoul, Korea, the Africa-South Korea Forum was convened with the African Union at the second meeting of the body, which was also held in Korea between November 24-25, 2009.

The 1st Forum was attended by five African Presidents from Benin, Congo (Brazzaville), Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania and Ministers from 25 African countries. The Chairperson of the Commission was invited as a guest but was unable to attend. Three years after the first Seoul meeting, South Korea proposed to host, in Seoul in 2009, the 2nd Korea-Africa Forum. On the occasion of the 2nd Forum, the AU Commission was integrally involved and agreed to follow the Banjul format as amended, which is limited to Ministers only.

While the initial intent was to hold an Africa – South Korea Cooperation summits every 3 years, the meeting in 2009 is the most recent. In addition to the Summit, a Ministerial Review Conference was to meet every third year in the period between Summits. Other institutional structures include an Africa-Korea Cooperation Joint Task Force Meeting comprised of senior officials meeting, which is to take place twice in between Summits.

South Korea over the past four decades has demonstrated incredible growth and global integration to become a high-tech industrialized economy. In the 1960s, GDP per capita was comparable with levels in the poorer countries of Africa and Asia. In 2004, South Korea joined the trillion dollar club of world economies, and is currently the world's 12th largest economy with a GDP of \$1.13 trillion, and a population of 49.8 million.

South Korea's system of close government and business ties, including directed credit and import restrictions, made its rapid growth and economic success possible. The government promoted the import of raw materials and technology at the expense of consumer goods, and encouraged savings and investment over consumption. Today, the nation is the world's 7th largest exporting country and a global leader in the manufacture of semiconductors, wireless telecommunications equipment, motor vehicles, computers, steel, ships, and petrochemicals.

The action plan of the 2nd Korea-Africa Forum involved the following scope of cooperation:

- Development Cooperation
- Trade and Investment
- Peace and Security Cooperation
- Agriculture and Rural Development
- International Cooperation
- Public Health Services
- Education and Vocational Training
- Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development
- Green Growth Initiative
- Industrial Development



The second South Korea-Africa Forum was held in 2009, and the basic plan for development cooperation with Africa for 2009-2012 was announced. The plan called for doubling assistance for Africa by 2012 compared to 2008. Korea planned to invite 5,000 trainees from Africa through 2012, to join World Friends Korea's dispatch of 1,000 overseas volunteers, and greatly expand cooperation projects. It also pledged improved assistance for green growth in Africa with the Korea-Africa Green Growth Initiative 2009-2012.

Although promoted as a continental program, the basic plan for development cooperation with Africa for 2009-2012 was in fact the Korea bilateral cooperation program for Africa. To date, the partnership remains more focused on bilateral projects. On a bilateral basis, assistance for Africa in 2009 totaled KRW 68 billion (USD 53.31 million) and accounted for 19.1% of the total cooperation project spending. This assistance represented an increase of 12% over 2008 in terms of Korean won, following an increase of 150% over 2007. It was provided to 43 countries. The relatively small increase in 2009 was due to the very large increases in the previous years after the announcement by the Korean government in March 2006 of the Korean Initiative for African Development. Tanzania received KRW 10.2 billion, 5% of the total amount of KOICA's assistance for Africa, followed by Egypt, Kenya, and Senegal.