

Japan's Resource and Energy Diplomacy in Southern Africa: Botswana as a Conduit

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ABSTRACT

Japan primarily relies on resource diplomacy to address its energy and resource insecurity. The Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011 exacerbated Japan's energy insecurity, and forced it to aggressively explore and extract resources worldwide. The resource-rich Southern Africa has become Japan's target. In January 2008, Japan opened the region's largest embassy, by staff compliment and size, in Gaborone, Botswana, to strengthen its bilateral relations and resource diplomacy. In July 2008, Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) set-up a Geological Remote Sensing Centre in Lobatse; Botswana; its sole centre in Africa. It is Japan's exploration base for minerals and oil in the region. This article examines Japan's energy and resource diplomacy in Southern Africa using Botswana as a case study. It argues that Japan uses Botswana as a conduit to build a business empire for its firms (private and state-owned) in the natural resources sector in the region. The article provides another dimension in understanding Japan-Botswana relations by situating the analysis within the resource and energy security paradigm.

Key words: Resource and Energy Diplomacy, Resource and Energy Security, JOGMEC, Natural Resources, Southern Africa, Japan-Botswana Relations

INTRODUCTION

In 2013, a periodical published by a state-owned Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) suggested that Japan is actively involved in Africa's developmental issues because of the abundance of natural resources in the continent. It explained that Japan explores and extracts Africa's natural resources to augment its unstable energy and resource security sector. It also emphasised that Japan will continue assisting African countries within the framework of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), launched in 1993, to develop their natural resources for the mutual benefit of the two parties (JOGMEC, March 2013). Academic studies on Japan-Africa relations concur that "China's appetite for African raw materials and minerals has sparked a self-conscious attempt by the Japanese government to demarcate its interests" (Cornelissen, 2012:210). Japan-Africa relations only received much attention from academics, and even the media, after the end of the Cold War. It was only after the Cold War that Japan asserted its role in global affairs (Stein, 2008). Until then, there was little to celebrate about its relations with Africa.

The mineral-rich and politically stable Botswana is envied by international investors, which include the Japanese. The then Japanese ambassador to Botswana, Onishi Masahiro, confirmed this in an interview with *The European Times* on 30 March 2015. Ryoichi Matsuyama, Japan's first resident ambassador to Botswana, called Botswana a "paradise" (Nkala, 4 July 2008). The exploration of more minerals in Botswana is on-going, and JOGMEC is involved in this using the latest Japanese technologies (Yajima & Yamaguchi, 2013; JOGMEC, March 2013). Botswana is strategic to the Japanese business interests mainly

because it hosts the headquarters of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Japan's ambassador to Botswana is seconded to SADC (Nkala, 4 July 2008). Importantly, its embassy in Gaborone opened in January 2008, is the largest in the region.

Eight months after this embassy was opened, a fifty-strong Japanese delegation arrived in Botswana to explore business opportunities. This included politicians, business envoys and government officials. It met with the President, government officials and private sector. This prompted one journalist to remark that "Japan has joined the bandwagon of countries that are interested in tapping Botswana's vast mineral and energy resources as the scramble for African natural resources between Asian and Western countries gathers steam" (Benza, 2008). In July 2008, the Japanese embassy in Gaborone facilitated the setting-up of JOGMEC's Geological Remote Sensing Centre in Lobatse, Botswana; its sole centre in Africa. It is a cooperation project with the Botswana Department of Geological Survey, and JOGMEC contributed US\$5 million. In 2013, JOGMEC opened an office in Botswana's capital city, Gaborone. By the end of 2015, JOGMEC had signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with all SADC countries for mineral exploration and development, and human resource training. This was facilitated by the Japanese embassy in Gaborone (Manatsha & Malebang, 2016), which indicates Japan's use of Botswana as a conduit into Southern Africa's mineral wealth. Nonetheless, unlike China, Japan's resource and energy diplomacy strategies in Africa have received less attention from academics.

Thus, this article examines Japan's resource and energy diplomacy in Southern Africa using Botswana as a case study. It argues that Japan uses Botswana as a conduit to build a business empire for its firms (private and state-owned) in the natural resources sector, especially minerals, in the region. The article provides another dimension in understanding Japan-Botswana relations. Manatsha and Malebang (2016) broadly examine Botswana-Japan relations from a historical perspective, and do not specifically deal with JOGMEC's activities in Botswana and the region. Apart from their work, there is no study which examines Botswana-Japan relations in any context. Japan views Botswana as an ideal country for doing business. For this reason, it continuously nurtures its bilateral relations for the long-term economic benefits (*The European Times*, 30 March 2015). This article situates the analysis within the resource and energy diplomacy and resource and energy security debate. It focuses on the role played by JOGMEC's exploration centre in Botswana in advancing Japan's resource and energy diplomacy in the region. Japan's bilateral relations in the region help a great deal in facilitating its access to a stable supply of key natural resources. The article concurs that "Against the conventional perception, Japanese aid was [and still is] mainly motivated by longer rather than shorter economic benefits" (Sato, 2005:67). This is shared by Kitagawa (1990), Ochiai (2001), Hideo (2002), Cornelissen (2012) and Kokietpitak (2012).

This article emphasises the primacy of resource mercantilism in Japan's resource and energy diplomacy strategies. Resource mercantilism refers to the use of state-driven policies and or strategies by a resource dependent state, such as Japan, to enable its firms to secure a stable supply of resources outside its borders (Wilson, 2014). Japan, China and South Korea primarily rely on this strategy (Koiki, Mogi & Abedaiwi, 2008; Rose, 2012; Wilson, 2014). The next section discusses the role of TICAD in Africa's development since 1993.

JAPAN-AFRICA RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF TICAD

In 1993, Japan co-organised TICAD I with the United Nations (UN), UN Development Programme and World Bank. The African Union Commission became a co-organiser much later. TICAD summits, which are held every five years, promote "high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners on issues facing Africa, such as economic development, poverty and conflict" (TICAD V, 2013:2). TICAD I co-organisers "pledged to

reverse the decline in development assistance for Africa that had followed the end of the Cold War” (TICAD V, 2013:3). Japan uses TICAD to export its development model to Africa, and, in turn, access its (Africa’s) mineral wealth and markets. TICAD II, held in 1998, concluded that Africa’s challenges required a focus on poverty reduction and the integration of the continent into the global economy. TICAD III, held in 2003, introduced the human security element as key in tackling Africa’s problems. In 2008, TICAD IV envisaged a “vibrant Africa” and pledged to boost its economic growth, safeguard human security and ensure its attainment. Furthermore, it pledged to consolidate peace and good governance. It gave emphasis on environmental issues and climate change (TICAD V, 2013:3).

In 2013, Japan’s ambassador to South Africa, Yutaka Yoshizawa, stated in his opening remarks at the TICAD V summit, held on 10 May 2013, that through TICAD, Japan has been successful in “raising awareness of Africa when international interest in the continent was declining after the end of the Cold War” (Embassy of Japan in South Africa, 2013). In the same speech, he explained that Japan is “a true friend of Africa”. Yoshizawa also noted that despite the global economic crisis of 2008, and the massive earthquake which devastated Japan in March 2011, the country still fulfilled its financial pledges it had made to Africa at the TICAD IV summit in 2008. Japan doubled its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Africa by 2012 annually. By 2013, it had provided loans worth US\$4 billion and doubled its direct investment to Africa to US\$3.4 billion (Embassy of Japan in South Africa, 2013:1).

Speaking at the same summit, the then UN general secretary, Ban Kimoon, thanked Japan for showing “leadership” by “galvanising international cooperation” towards Africa. In his remarks, Youssou Ndour, Senegal’s minister of Tourism and Leisure, agreed that “Africa enjoys enormous benefits from TICAD” (TICAD V, 2013:8). It was after the TICAD IV summit that Japan’s intervention in Africa shifted from a developmental and humanitarian approach to more “on its economic interests” (Ochiai, 2001:39-40; Sato, 2005:67; Hideo, 2002:42-46; Hirano, 2012:183). The TICAD IV summit was attended by about 3,000 delegates, including forty-one African Heads of State. The Yokohama Declaration (2013-2017) “confirming political commitment towards African development” was adopted, so was the Yokohama Action Plan (TICAD V, 2013:3). After the TICAD IV summit, ministerial follow-up meetings were held annually to evaluate the progress made. The first was in Botswana (2009), Tanzania (2010), Senegal (2011) and Morocco (2012).

Founded in 1992, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) also plays a critical role in Africa’s development. It largely operates within the framework of TICAD. On 10 May 2013, its president, Akihiko Tanaka, revealed that in terms of aid performance, measured in ODA net disbursement, Japan ranks fifth among the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) bilateral donors to Africa. This is equivalent to the aid provided by the African Development Bank. Like other DAC donors, the “Japanese aid to Africa attaches roughly equal importance to economic and production sectors such as transport, energy, agriculture and industry” (Tanaka, 10 May 2013:2). But Japan’s increasing ties with Africa is arguably motivated by its quest for resource and energy security than humanitarian intervention. The next section discusses resource and energy security and resource and energy diplomacy.

RESOURCE AND ENERGY SECURITY, RESOURCE AND ENERGY DIPLOMACY

The International Energy Agency (IEA) defines energy security as “the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price” (IEA, nd). In the twenty-first century, energy has become the key driver to industrialisation and economic stability. There is rising pressure on the resource-dependent nations to secure a steady supply of the much-needed natural and energy resources. For instance, Halada, Shimada and Ijima (2008) paint an

uncertain future about the sustainability of metals in relation to their growing demand. They note that by 2050 “the overall consumption of metals [...] will be five times greater than the current levels” (2008:402). Their study predicts that by 2050 some metals would have exceeded their resource base. Researchers have discussed the strategies used by Japan, China and South Korea to access Africa’s natural resources. In their studies, the primacy is given to the use of resource diplomacy, aid and other incentives to secure a stable supply of natural resources (see Rose, 2012; Alden, 2007; Kim & Gray, 2015). Various defined, resource diplomacy entails the use of “preferential and politically-negotiated relationships (rather than open international markets) to maximise a consumer’s resource security” (Wilson, 2014:24).

Resource diplomacy strategies and or initiatives complement financial assistance/aid. In 2003, China became the first East Asian country to launch a resource diplomacy program. It was followed by South Korea in the same year, and Japan in 2006. But South Korea and Japan had used some form of resource diplomacy in the 1970s following the oil crisis in 1973 (Ochiai, 2001; Hideo, 2002). When the prices of resources plummeted in the 1980s, resource diplomacy took a backstage. The prices rose sharply again around 2000 forcing a vigorous and comprehensive resuscitation of resource diplomacy programmes and strategies. Like China and South Korea, Japan has elevated resource diplomacy to be a key component of its foreign policy (Kokietpitak, 2012; Kikkawa, 2013). In 2007, Japan’s Foreign Affairs minister remarked that “energy security is an indispensable subject area in general discussions about foreign policy” (Wilson, 2014:26). Japan is an energy and resource insecure country.

It imports almost all its crude oil, natural gas, non-ferrous metals and minerals. In 2006, it imported 99.7% of oil, 96.3% natural gas, 100% copper and 97.1% of zinc (Hishida, 2010). Thus, Japan has no choice but to “cooperate in the economic growth of these [resource producing] countries” (Kikkawa, 2013:36) through TICAD. Japan uses its firms to explore and exploit resources overseas for immediate use and stockpiling as well. But, on their own, these firms find it difficult to invest in the resource-rich countries due to excessive resource nationalism, bloated bureaucracies, lack of capital and other logistical challenges. Thus, the support from their government, through bilateral relations and resource diplomacy, is critical (Hirano, 2012; Kikkawa, 2013). The rising demand for natural resources exposes resource-dependent countries to resource and energy insecurity. In Asia, for instance, apart from Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam, all countries are net importers of oil. This situation raises concerns over the “future of geopolitical risks linked to resource nationalism” (Feldhoff, 2011:36). It is for this reason that resource-dependent countries have adopted resource and energy security strategies. The Japanese, South Korean and Chinese resource diplomacy strategies are mainly state-led/mercantilist and anti-market/anti-liberal. These are designed to “secure access to foreign resource supplies on a more privileged basis than international market alone would provide. The strategy aims ensure control over resources supplies by having national firms that own projects at the site of production” (Wilson, 2014:16).

The mercantilist strategy primarily relies on the use of resource diplomacy and aid. Japan, for instance, uses TICAD as a diplomatic tool to deepen its “involvement in sectors-particularly resource based ones- deemed of strategic significance” (Cornelissen, 2012:203). By initiating, nurturing and cementing cordial bilateral relations with resource-rich countries, resource-dependent states’ aim is to win “special access deals from host governments that can smooth the way for resource investments” (Wilson, 2014:24). In view of this, the mercantilist strategy and resource diplomacy are inseparable. The relationship is quite obvious in this era where resource-producing nations continuously adopt resource nationalism policies.

Under the mercantilist approach, the Japanese government finances its firms so that they can have competitive advantage (Hishida, 2010; Nakashima *et. al.*, 2015). To guarantee these firms’ success, the Japanese government imports from them (in what is called ‘equity resources’). Lacking in transparency, continuity and stability, the state-led/mercantilist

strategies result in the ‘balkanisation’ and ‘politicisation’ of resources. Contrary, the liberal/market-led resource and energy security strategies depoliticise resource security. Here, governments rely on the international market to secure resources. The liberal strategy argues that “properly-functioning international resource markets carry advantages associated with their efficiency, stability and transparency” (Wilson, 2014:17). In a nutshell, resource mercantilism has led to the East Asian economic giants focusing more on the grooming of “certain resource-producing states as special and preferred suppliers, rather than looking to open transparent international markets” (Wilson, 2014:27). The next section looks at the evolution and mandate of JOGMEC in the context of Japan’s energy and resource security.

JOGMEC’S EVOLUTION AND MANDATE

The Japanese government launched JOGMEC on 29 February 2004. It falls under the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). JOGMEC’s formation was part of the structural reforms carried out by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s administration (Kikkawa, 2013). It was formed through the merging of Japan National Oil Corporation (JNOC), established in 1978, and the Mining Metal Agency of Japan (MMAJ), established in 1963. Until 1978, JNOC was called Japan Petroleum Development Corporation (JPDC). JPDC was established in 1967 “To ensure a stable, inexpensive supply of oil to Japan” by providing the “necessary funding and liability guarantees for overseas oil exploration” (<http://www.jogmec.go.jp/english/about/about003.html>). In 1972, JPDC added natural gas to its scope, and after assuming the name JNOC, it recommended the stockpiling of oil.

JOGMEC’s mandate is “to secure a stable supply of natural resources and energy to Japan, contribute to the industrial development of Japan and enrich the lives of all the Japanese people, through various activities involving oil, natural gas, non-ferrous metals and minerals” (Hishida, 2010:2). It is divided into the department of finance, the division of oil and gas, the metals section, and the stockpiling unit (Hishida, 2010). JOGMEC has offices in cities like Gaborone, London, Moscow, Abhu Dhabi, Beijing, Jakarta, Sydney, Vancouver, Washington, Houston, Mexico city, Lima, and Santiago (Hishida, 2010). Its Gaborone office is the first and only one in Africa. This state-owned corporation plays a critical role in Japan’s energy and resource security and resource diplomacy strategy. For instance, after a successful exploration of minerals and other natural resources, JOGMEC transfers its equity interests primarily to a Japanese firm, and provides financial and technical support to the firm. The firm extracts the minerals and or resources which are then shipped back to Japan.

In November 2016, Japan’s parliament passed a bill to allow JOGMEC “to participate in purchases of foreign oil and gas companies by Japanese firms or buy into foreign state-owned oil companies on its own” (Obayashi & Sheldrick, 2016). Japan is worried about resource nationalism in resource-rich countries. Thus, this bill responds to this uncertainty by allowing JOGMEC to “provide more financial muscle for Japanese companies to compete for global energy assets” (Obayashi & Sheldrick, 2016). In addition to oil, coal and gas, JOGMEC targets rare metals, “a generic name for metallic elements that exist in only scant quantities in the earth’s crust or that are difficult to extract” (Kikkawa, 2013:37).

Rare metals are used in the production of steel products, aircrafts, automobiles, electric and electronic devises, and ships. Japan badly needs them for its industries. In July 2009, METI prepared Japan’s strategy for ensuring stable supplies of rare metals. It identified critical challenges in relation to their acquisition, such as scarcity, resource nationalism and stiff competition (Kikkawa, 2013). The strategy proposed the acquisition of rare metals overseas and their stockpiling. It suggested the use of resource diplomacy strategies in this regard. For instance, it emphasised the vitality of strategic diplomatic relations with resource-producing nations. It strongly recommended the use of the ODA tools for the “construction of

infrastructure around mines, cooperation through programs such as technological transfers and collaboration on environmental preservation that demonstrate Japan's strengths" (Kikkawa, 2013:38). This is what Japan is doing in Southern Africa as this paper shows. The next section discusses the impact of Fukushima nuclear disaster on Japan's energy security.

THE IMPACT OF FUKUSHIMA NUCLEAR DISASTER ON JAPAN'S RESOURCE AND ENERGY SECURITY

The Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, caused by a massive earthquake, had the debilitating effects on Japan's and global energy security (Hayashi & Hughes, 2013a, b; Nakashima *et. al.*, 2015). This is vital when analysing Japan's resource and energy diplomacy. In the 1960s, Japan primarily relied on oil (77%) for its energy needs (Feldhoff, 2011), and her key sources were countries in the Middle East. After the 1973 oil crisis, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), formed in 1960, imposed an oil embargo on Israel, the United States and its allies, including Japan (Hideo, 2002). This forced Japan to introduce nuclear power and the liquefied natural gas (LNG)-fired power (Hayashi & Hughes, 2013a). After the Fukushima nuclear disaster, Japan Nuclear Regulation Authority instructed all nuclear power plants to shut down for maintenance reasons. It required them to undergo "stress tests to evaluate their capacity to withstand conditions such as earthquake and attacks before reopening" (Doukas & Makhijani, 2015:2). The Fukushima Daichi Nuclear Power Station closed its last reactor in May 2012. In February 2011, just before the disaster, nuclear power supplied about 31% of Japan's electricity. In May 2012, this had fallen to 0% (Hayashi & Hughes, 2013a:86). In 2010, Japan had revised its Strategy Energy Plan and "decided to increase dependency on nuclear power for electricity to about 53% (electricity generation base) by 2030" (Hayashi & Hughes, 2013a:86). The plan also recommended the construction of fourteen more nuclear plants, but this was abandoned after March 2011.

Japan relies on imported fossil fuels to generate thermal power. In 2010, it imported 99.6% of petroleum, 96.3% of LNG and 100% of coal (Hayashi & Hughes 2013a:91). In 2013, fossil fuels accounted for 87% of the total electricity generated in Japan. This was split between LNG (43%), oil (14%) and coal (30%). Hydro power was 8%, while nuclear power was negligible (Doukas & Makhijani, 2015:2). The Fukushima nuclear disaster forced Japan to heavily rely on the LNG imported from Qatar, Oman, Malaysia, Australia, Russia and Brunei. Some supplies come from Yemen and Peru, where Japan had purchased LNG on a spot-basis in 2010 (Hayashi & Hughes, 2013). In 2014, Japan was the third largest net importer of oil and the number one importer of LNG globally (Feldhoff, 2011). It engages in limited domestic production of oil and gas. Japan has "a total energy import dependency rate of 80 per cent leaving the country highly vulnerable to the potential of supply disruptions" (Feldhoff, 2011:38), as happened in 1973 and with the current crises in the Middle East.

Since March 2011, Japanese firms, supported by JOGMEC, have secured exclusive rights to explore and develop fossil fuels overseas. Some have acquired equity interests in LNG projects in Australia, Canada and the United States (JOGMEC, 2014). From January to April 2012, the total investment by Japanese firms in oil and gas acquisitions overseas totalled US\$8.4 billion "which is almost the total for all of 2011" (Hayashi & Hughes, 2013a:96). The Japanese government hugely invests in fossil fuels production through JOGMEC, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI), JICA and the Development Bank of Japan. From 2013 to 2014, it provided US\$38 billion in public finance, translating to an annual average of US\$19 billion. Vast amounts went to overseas projects, with JBIC providing US\$703 million to local firms in this period. In 2015, JOGMEC's national subsidies to the firms engaged in the exploration and development of oil and gas totalled US\$736 million (Doukas & Makhijani, 2015:2).

The Fukushima nuclear disaster forced Japan to revise its 1950 Mining Act for the first time. This helped it to prioritise, solicit and select firms which focus on specified minerals deemed “important for the national economy and for which a stable supply is strongly acquired” (Kikkawa, 2013:41). Before the revision, the Japanese government awarded tenders on the first-come-first-serve basis without strictly assessing the applicant(s) capacity to carry out the exploration and production. As planned, the revision favours major oil and metals exploration companies, such as INPEX Cooperation, Japan Petroleum Exploration Company, JX Holdings Inco., and Sumimoto Metal Mining Company. These firms receive financial and technical assistance from JOGMEC (Kikkawa, 2013:33). The nuclear disaster also forced Japan to suspend its talks on nuclear power agreements with Brazil, India, South Africa, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates in July 2011 (Feldhoff, 2011). The next section looks at the Japanese business interests in Southern Africa.

JAPANESE INTERESTS AND INVESTMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Japan External Trade Organisation contends that the Japanese businesses’ interests in Africa are motivated by the desire to extract abundant natural resources (Cornelissen, 2012). In Southern Africa, the Japanese investment is more diversified than elsewhere in Africa (Ampiah, 2010). This is mainly because this region is rich in natural resources and is politically stable compared to other regions in Africa. For decades, Japan has regarded South Africa as an important trading partner. It has been attracted to this region by “the particular structure of the regional economy and the existence of specific economies of scale” (Cornelissen, 2012:205). In 2013, JICA worked with the Development Bank of Southern Africa to capacitate the region’s Development Finance Institutions (DFIs). It was hoped that the success of this project would enable future Japanese aid to be channelled through the DFIs for regional development (Embassy of Japan in South Africa, 10 May 2013).

In Southern Africa, Zambia, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are the highest recipients of Japanese ODA. Nonetheless, South Africa remains Japan’s strongest trading partner in Africa. In 2011, it was the 25th largest importer of Japanese goods and 29th Japan’s export partner worldwide (Ampiah, 2010; Cornelissen, 2012). In 2012, “Japan was South Africa’s third largest export destination and the fifth largest share of imports” (Embassy of Japan in South Africa, 10 May 2013:4). The main items traded between the two countries are platinum and automobiles. South Africa holds 88.9% of the world’s platinum reserves. Platinum is used for cleaning up vehicle emissions. Japan is the leading automobile producer and the largest importer of platinum globally (Hirano, 2012:191). In 2010, there were forty-seven registered Japanese companies in South Africa followed by Nigeria with only twelve. These companies have generated about 150,000 jobs in South Africa (Embassy of Japan in South Africa, 10 May 2013:3-4).

During the apartheid era, Japan’s trading relations with South Africa “compromised its position on the issue of minority rule in Africa” (Ampiah, 2010:415). Ironically, Japan was a member of the Afro-Asian Community which strongly opposed minority rule in Africa. The Anti-Apartheid Committee in Japan demonstrated against the Japanese government’s trade relations with apartheid South Africa. Entangled in this dilemma, Japan used a dubious dual policy dubbed *seikei-bunri* (the separation of politics and economics) (Nel, 2005). It was the brain child of the Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida (1948-1954). Japan also used influential African leaders such as Kenneth Kaunda and Julius Nyerere “to assuage African sentiments on the question of [its] booming trade relations with apartheid South Africa” (Ampiah, 2010:417). These leaders helped to shape the world’s opinion in favour of Japan.

After the TICAD IV summit in 2008, the Japanese Mission for Promoting Trade and Investment for Africa visited twelve countries in southern, east, central and west Africa. Under

TICAD IV, Japan had pledged a US\$2.5 billion fund to assist Japanese firms to invest in Africa (Gouede, 2008:2). In addition to South Africa, Botswana and Namibia are also major destinations of Japanese investment in the region (Gouede, 2008:4). In all the visits undertaken by the Japanese Mission for Promoting Trade and Investment for Africa in 2008, JOGMEC was represented. The first team, which was the largest, composed of seventy people and was led by Takamori Yoshikawa, a senior vice minister of Economy, Trade and Industry. It visited Botswana, Mozambique, Madagascar and South Africa in September 2008. This team included twenty-one prominent Japanese private companies. It held meetings with the private sector and government officials. It also visited sites of strategic economic importance to Japan, including the JOGMEC's centre in Botswana (Ampiah, 2010).

To create an enabling environment for the Japanese investment in Southern Africa, JICA has been involved in promoting regional transport network. It has financed the Chirundu bridge, which connects Zambia and Zimbabwe over the Zambezi river. JICA is also partly financing the Kazungula bridge project connecting Zambia and Botswana over the same river. JICA financed the one-stop border post project on the Botswana-Namibian border. It has also been engaged in the post-war reconstruction in Angola and Mozambique in the 1990s and the DRC since 2000s (Embassy of Japan in Botswana, 2015; Embassy of Japan in South Africa, 2016). JOGMEC too sees Southern Africa as an "extremely promising area for various metals resources, especially platinum" (JOGMEC, March 2013:7). A major setback has been that these metals are concentrated in few countries. This means that "sovereign risks may have hindered resource investment of Japanese investors" (JOGMEC, March 2013:7). China used to supply Japan with rare metals, but now finds itself in a dire need of the same as a 'global manufacturing house'. It was in this context that in November 2007, the Japanese minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Akira Amari, visited South Africa and Botswana to sign MoU "for the implementation of joint investment projects for platinum production and exploration for rare earth elements" (Hirano, 2012:194). This gave birth to the JOGMEC's Geological Remote Sensing Centre in Botswana. In a nutshell, Southern Africa and Botswana are vital to Japan's resource and energy security.

BOTSWANA: JAPAN'S STRATEGIC PARTNER IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Botswana-Japan bilateral relations commenced in 1966 when the former attained independence from Britain. Botswana opened a resident embassy in Tokyo in 2007. Before then, its embassy in Beijing, China, serviced Japan. But Japan only opened a resident embassy in Gaborone in January 2008. Before then, its embassy in Pretoria, South Africa, serviced Botswana. A history of Botswana-Japan relations is discussed by Manatsha and Malebang (2016), and recounting it is pointless. This section explains why Japan considers Botswana a strategic partner for its resource and energy diplomacy in the region, especially using JOGMEC's Geological Remote Sensing Centre in Lobatse.

In 2010, Botswana's President, Ian Khama, visited Japan and met with Prime Minister Naoto Kan. They discussed various issues, and later issued a joint press statement. In part, it reads: "In order to boost economic relations between Japan and Botswana, both sides shared the view on the importance of expanding cooperation in the development of mineral resources, including rare metals" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan [MoFA], 18 October 2010). Khama and Kan appreciated JOGMEC's activities in Botswana as something which benefits the two countries. Khama said that Botswana appreciates the Japanese assistance to it and Africa. In 2013, the Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, pledged US\$320 million to address conflicts and disasters in Africa. At the TICAD V summit in 2013, Japan pledged US\$32 billion to assist Africa to achieve its developmental needs. Botswana appreciates "Japan's unwavering commitment to help develop the continent and uplift the living standards of the people of

Africa” (Republic of Botswana, 2013). For decades, Botswana has received generous assistance and support from Japan (Manatsha & Malebang, 2016).

Strategically located, the Japanese embassy in Gaborone enables Japan to vigorously explore more economic and business opportunities and strengthen political and bilateral relations in the region. As noted earlier, it is the largest embassy, in staff and size, in the region. In March 2015, the Japanese ambassador to Botswana, Masahiro Onishi, stated that “*Japan and Botswana share a belief in freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and Japan cherishes Botswana as a reliable partner in southern Africa*” (*The European Times*, 30 March 2015 [italics in the original]). Onishi was impressed that “*Botswana is a peaceful country that has avoided civil war and offers very favourable conditions for business*”. He added that “*Japanese companies would greatly benefit by doing business in Botswana*” (*The European Times*, 30 March 2015). In 2012, Botswana’s then ambassador to Japan, Jacob Nkate, had appealed to the Japanese business community to look for business opportunities in Botswana (Nkate, 2012). Botswana has avoided the worst form of resource nationalism, which obtains elsewhere in Africa. It prefers long-term partnerships with mining companies. This has worked well for the country and investors (Jefferis, 2009).

In 1966, Botswana’s first President, Seretse Khama, stated that “Botswana is a poor country and at present is unable to stand on its own feet and develop its resources without assistance from its friends in the outside world” (Carter & Morgan, 1980:14). In 1977, Japan developed its first interest in Botswana’s mineral wealth by attempting “to establish a consortium of potential investors to work on the soda ash and brine deposits” (Kalley, Schoeman & Andor, 1999:96). Botswana is rich in minerals such as gold, diamond, copper and nickel, soda ash, coal, rare metals and methane gas (Yajima & Yamaguchi, 2013).

As a global power, “Japan has utilised economic wealth for national strategies in international relations, and [this] has been reflected in her Africa policy” (Ochiai, 2001:38). As at March 2015, imports from Japan to Botswana totalled US\$3.3 billion, while exports from Botswana to Japan amounted to only US\$1.8 billion. The main imports from Japan are automobiles and semiconductors (finished products), while the main exports from Botswana are polished diamonds (raw products) (Embassy of Japan in Botswana, March 2015). Japan is one of the world’s largest importers of diamonds, while Botswana is the world’s leading diamond producer by value. Komatsu, a Japanese company, has signed a business deal with Debswana, Botswana’s leading diamond mining company, to supply it with industrial trucks.

In April 2015, the Japanese ambassador to Botswana visited the Debswana Jwaneng mine and was ecstatic to find the Komatsu industrial trucks in use. Jwaneng diamond mine is the richest diamond mine in the world by value (Jefferis, 2009). In 2013, the Government of Botswana announced that a Japanese company had expressed interest in the construction of a sulphuric acid plant at the Bamangwato Concession Limited Mine in Selebi Phikwe in central Botswana (*Botswana Daily News*, 6 February 2013). Sadly, this mine was shut down by the government in October 2016 owing to its long-standing unprofitability. Some Japanese companies were/are also interested in the production of coal bed methane and the processing of coal into liquid products (*Botswana Daily News*, 6 February 2013). These opportunities were identified by Japan’s embassy in Gaborone and the Botswana embassy in Tokyo.

Japan also uses high-level official visits to pursue its resource diplomacy in Botswana. For example, in February 2013 the Japanese senior vice minister of Foreign Affairs, Masaji Matsuyama, visited Botswana. Matsuyama emphasised that Japan would continue to enhance cooperation with Botswana in the mining and energy sectors (*Botswana Daily News*, 1 March 2013). Still in 2013, the Japanese vice minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, vice minister of Foreign Affairs, and five parliamentarians visited Botswana on various official assignments. In February 2013, Botswana became the first and only African country to adopt the much criticised Japanese Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting Terrestrial (*Botswana*

Daily News, 30 July 2013). In June 2013, President Khama assured the Japanese Prime Minister that “Botswana tries to support Japan’s efforts to spread the use of the Japanese system” (MoFA, 2013). In May 2013, Botswana’s minister of Minerals, Energy and Water Affairs (MEWER) visited Japan and discussed issues related to his portfolio (MoFA, 2013).

In June 2013, a team from Botswana Investment and Trade Centre travelled to Japan to promote the country to the Japanese investors. Giving a brief on the trip, Botswana’s then minister of Trade and Industry, Dorcus Makgato, said that about thirty-five Japanese companies showed interest in investing in Botswana. She noted that Botswana appeals to the Japanese because of its political stability, positive credit ratings and the rule of law. She confidently concluded that “because of positive image of Botswana; there are plans and considerations by Japanese companies for expansion of African business to Botswana” (Seitshiro, 7 July 2013). Most Japanese companies were said to be interested in the mining and energy sectors, and agriculture. In the mining sector, the minister specifically mentioned rare metals, copper, iron ore and coal. Importantly, she reiterated that the “mining rights to minerals discovered by JOGMEC would be transferred to Japanese mining companies” (Seitshiro, 7 July 2013). Botswana under President Ian Khama was closer to the Japanese than the Chinese. Japan took this noble opportunity to advance its interests in the country by establishing JOGMEC’s exploration centre; its sole centre in Africa, as shown below.

JOGMEC’S CENTRE IN BOTSWANA: JAPAN’S CONDUIT INTO SOUTHERN AFRICA’S MINERAL WEALTH

JOGMEC’s activities in Africa intensified after its centre was established in Lobatse, Botswana, in July 2008. JOGMEC’s centre in Botswana is a product of an agreement between the governments of Botswana (represented by MEWER) and Japan (represented by METI). Its main goal “is to carry out geological analysis in entire Southern African countries, cooperating with the government technical staff of SADC countries” (JOGMEC, March 2013:6). In short, this centre is Japan’s exploration base in the region and Africa as a whole. It ‘freely’ transfers the latest Japanese technologies, such as geological remote sensing, to all the SADC countries. It does so through short training courses, workshops, seminars and joint-researches. This centre has already detected rare metals, methane gas and other minerals in most SADC countries as shown below. JOGMEC’s success guarantees Japan “preferential access” to extract minerals in the region (Cornelissen, 2012:208). This was also confirmed by Botswana’s then minister of Trade and Industry, Dorcus Makgato (Seitshiro, 7 July 2013).

On 21 March 2009, former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda (2007-2008) visited JOGMEC’s centre in Lobatse, Botswana. Botswana’s then minister of MEWER, Ponatshego Kedikilwe, officially welcomed him. Kedikilwe said that the visit was meant to cement relations between the two countries. He noted that JOGMEC’s centre will promote mineral exploration in Botswana. Kedikilwe also announced that the centre will train geologists from the SADC region (Kedikilwe, 2009). In November 2011, the centre organised a seminar on promoting Japanese technologies in mining exploration. The Japanese embassy in Botswana facilitated it (*Sunday Standard Reporter*, 28 November 2011). In 2013, the SADC member states urged JOGMEC to continue with its activities (JOGMEC, 16 May 2013). By 2016, over 600 geologists from the SADC countries had participated in the JOGMEC’s activities such as training, field surveys and satellite image analysis (JOGMEC, 19 February 2016).

Japan’s Resource Acquisition Policy lists Platinum Group Metals (PGMS) as critical to the country’s economy, which is mainly driven by the automobile and electronic industries. In 2007, Japan’s minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Akira Amari, visited South Africa and Botswana to strengthen bilateral relations. His visit laid a foundation for JOGMEC’s future activities in the region (JOGMEC, 5 March 2009). Thus, the launch of a “New Joint PGE-NI-

CU Exploration” between JOGMEC and PMGS in South Africa in March 2009 emanated from Amari’s visit. Until then, no Japanese firm held interests in platinum exploration and production in the region. In this joint venture, JOGMEC provides financial and technical support, and would transfer its interests to a qualifying Japanese firm if the exploration yielded positive results. This would secure a stable supply of platinum to Japan (JOGMEC, 5 March 2009). In 2011, following JOGMEC-PGMS Ltd joint venture, JOGMEC invested heavily in the exploration and development of PGMS initially promoted by ITOCHU Corporation, a Japanese firm. ITOCHU had initially partnered with Ivanplants Limited, a Canadian firm. JOGMEC-PGMS Ltd project is located north of Bushveld Complex in South Africa, a home to “more than 80% of the world’s platinum resources and accounting for over 70% of global platinum production” (JOGMEC, 7 August 2011:1).

In August 2010, JOGMEC provided equity financing to INPEX Corporation, a Japanese firm, to explore oil in the DRC. In the same month, INPEX obtained an approval from the DRC government. It then formed an affiliate company called INPEX West Congo Petroleum, Ltd, on 23 August 2010, to undertake this project (JOGMEC, 25 August 2010). JOGMEC committed itself to cover 75% of the exploration expenditure incurred by INPEX West Congo Petroleum, Ltd. JOGMEC fully supported this project because it “is expected to enhance Japan’s E & P [exploration and production] activities in Central African region, as well as reinforce Japan’s energy security when successful” (JOGMEC, 25 August 2010:1). In June 2013, Malawi’s then President, Joyce Banda, discussed investment opportunities with JOGMEC’s executive director, Hideyuki Ueda, during the TICAD V summit. JOGMEC was already in Malawi conducting rare metals exploration in Mulanje, Thyolo, Lake Chilwa and Mangochi. Malawi’s minister of Industry and Trade, Sosten Gwengwe, was happy with JOGMEC’s activities in his country. Gwengwe said that the JOGMEC’s centre in Botswana transfers skills to the Malawian geologists. In his remarks, JOGMEC’s director, Hideyuki Ueda, explained that “Our motivation to come into Malawi is not only to exploit the resources but also train local engineers and geologists that would contribute positively to the growth of their own economy” (Etter-Phoya, 11 June 2013). The agreements between JOGMEC and the governments of South Africa, Malawi and the DRC fit neatly in the resource and energy diplomacy framework, where political and diplomatic routes are used to pave ways for future investments (see Rose, 2012; Wilson, 2014; Kim & Gray, 2015).

In a quest to access the region’s mineral wealth, JOGMEC’s centre in Botswana and Japan’s METI organised a resource-centred seminar in Lusaka, Zambia, on 21 June 2013, titled “Sustainable Development of Zambia’s Mining Sector”. In his opening remarks, the Japanese ambassador to Zambia, Akio Egawa, noted that at the TICAD V summit, Japan “reaffirmed its plan to provide capacity building for 1,000 Africans in the natural resource industry, including the expansion of training conducted by JOGMEC Geological Remote Sensing Centre in Botswana” (Embassy of Japan in Zambia, 21 June 2013). JOGMEC organised another seminar in February 2014 in Cape Town, South Africa, on “Japan’s Initiatives for Promotion of African Resources Development”. Toshimitsu Motegi, Japan’s minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, was the keynote speaker. About one-hundred professionals, largely from Africa, attended. JOGMEC and JICA made comprehensive presentations. This seminar was a follow-up to the Japan-Africa ministerial meeting for resources development held in Tokyo on 18 May 2013. Except for Madagascar, all SADC countries participated (JOGMEC, 17 February 2014). Japan’s strategies respond to “China’s appetite for African raw materials and minerals”, which “has sparked a self-conscious attempt by the Japanese government to demarcate its interests” (Cornelissen, 2012:210).

On 30 July 2014, JOGMEC and Mozambique Mining Exploration Company signed an Implementing Program on cooperation for human resource development in the coal industry. This followed a memorandum of cooperation for natural resources development signed by

Japan's METI and Mozambique's Ministry of Mineral Resources in February 2012. A joint statement was also signed by the two ministries. It included a five-year plan for developing Mozambique's coal industry. It also provided for the training of Mozambicans in Japan and the Japanese experts to work in the Mozambican mining sector (JOGMEC, 1 August 2014). JOGMEC's surveys have discovered about 20 billion tons of coal reserves in Tete Province in Mozambique. As per its mandate, JOGMEC is heavily investing in Mozambique's coal sector to secure a stable supply to Japan. Its surveys have also discovered large quantities of gas field in the coast of Mozambique. JOGMEC has financed Japan Mitsui & Co. to develop it. From 2018, JOGMEC expects the natural gas from Mozambique to "become one of the most important energy resources in Japan" (JOGMEC, March 2013:4). All these strategies and agreements are the hallmarks of a resource mercantilist approach used by Japan, China and South Korea to evade competition associated with open, liberal and market-oriented international markets (Hishida, 2010; Wilson, 2014; Kim & Gray, 2015).

JOGMEC's centre in Botswana, METI and the department in charge of the management of strategic resources in Madagascar organised a seminar on 21 August 2014, entitled "Sustainable Development of Mineral Resources in Madagascar". At the seminar, JOGMEC and Madagascar's minister of Mines signed a MoU "to promote bilateral relations and further investment in Madagascar's mining sector by Japanese companies" (JOGMEC, August 2014). The MoU also provided for the training of Madagascar's geologists on remote sensing and geographic information system at the JOGMEC's centre in Botswana. In September 2015, JOGMEC's centre in Botswana and the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development of Zimbabwe (MMMD) signed a MoU after five-years of intense negotiations. It was signed after Zimbabwe's then minister of mines, Walter Chidakwa, and JOGMEC's president, Hirobumi Kawano, met and widely discussed the issue on the side-lines of Japan-Africa mining and resource seminar held in Tokyo in May 2015. The JOGMEC-MMMD MoU provides for cooperation in mineral exploration, technical support and human resource training. The latter entails the training of geologists at JOGMEC's centre in Botswana.

Zimbabwe was the last country in the region to sign a MoU with JOGMEC. By convincing Zimbabwe, JOGMEC dubbed this an "important milestone" (JOGMEC, 11 September 2015:1). Under President Robert Mugabe (1980-2017), Zimbabwe had the toughest resource nationalism policies in Africa, such as the Indigenisation Policy. Because of resource nationalism in many African countries, Japan uses its diplomatic tools and aid (sometimes via its embassies and consulates) to ease access to natural resources by its firms. It offers assurances where political uncertainties, security risks and rigid bureaucracy make doing business tough as it was in Zimbabwe (Darracq & Neville, 2014:5).

JOGMEC became the first firm to scout for platinum (PGMS) in Botswana. It has embarked on geological surveys across the country, such as the one in the Francistown area in 2013. In Francistown, it discovered "the geological units [which] are important targets for platinum, gold, nickel, and copper in mineral exploration" (Yajima & Yamaguchi, 2013:143). JOGMEC has also entered into a three-year joint venture with Discovery Metals Limited (DML), an Australian firm, to explore for rare metals in Dikoloti in north-eastern Botswana. DML already had a mining licence to operate in Botswana. JOGMEC paid DML US\$ 2.67 million to acquire 60% of the possible output from the project. The surveys have yielded deposits of rare metals (Staff Writer, 20 January 2010). JOGMEC and DML are also working on the Lobatse Manganese Project in southern Botswana. This joint venture focuses on other commodities too. JOGMEC contributed 600,000 Australian dollars towards the exploration expenditure for it to acquire "67% aggregate equitable interest" in the project (*Mining & Travel Review*, 13 October 2014). A JOGMEC study has revealed the availability of 3.3 billion tons of untapped coal in Botswana (JOGMEC, March 2013). Other studies have been carried out elsewhere in the region, and the results are impressive. These few examples are an indication

that Japan uses Botswana as a conduit to access Southern Africa's mineral wealth. Indeed, Botswana is a reliable and strategic partner to Japan as affirmed by Japan's former ambassador to Botswana, Masahiro Onishi, in 2015 (*The European Times*, 30 March 2015).

CONCLUSION

Japan's quest to secure a stable supply of natural resources for its energy and industrial needs, especially after the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, has forced it to aggressively scout for minerals in Southern Africa. To fulfil this task, it had to identify a strategic location for its Geological Remote Sensing Centre to explore the much-needed resources. In this regard, the Botswana government acceded to Japan's request to set up the JOGMEC centre in the country. This only centre in Africa was established in July 2008 and is located in Lobatse. The mineral-rich Southern Africa has benefited immensely from the studies and surveys conducted by JOGMEC as argued.

Moreover, JOGMEC's centre in Botswana has assisted countries in the region to address technical and financial constraints in the mining industry. JOGMEC's activities fit neatly in the Japanese resource diplomacy strategy. For instance, these include the politically negotiated agreements, trainings, joint surveys, financial aid and technical support. All these are done outside the international resource market-oriented framework. The agreements are done at government to government level. In most cases, the Japanese embassies in the region have been actively involved. In summation, "Supporting overseas resource development activities in order to stably secure overseas mining resources has extremely important significance for Japan's economic security" (Kikkawa, 2013:36).

This article provides some direction for further research into Japan's resource and energy diplomacy in each country in the region. It provides an overall framework, and does not deal with specific cases in detail. Even with Botswana, there is a need to closely interrogate the activities of JOGMEC. The article calls for further research focusing on Botswana-Japan economic relations. This article and that of Manatsha and Malebang (2016) provide a foundation to specific researches on Japan-Botswana relations.

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