



ULUSLARARASI TÜRK-AFRIKA KONGRESİ

INTERNATIONAL TURKISH-AFRICAN CONGRESS

Afrika'da Ekonomik Büyüme, Gıda Güvenliği ve Herkes İçin Sağlık

Africa Economic Growth, Food Security and Health For All



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8TH INTERNATIONAL TURKISH - AFRICAN CONGRESS

“Food Security”, “Economic Growth” and “Health for All” in Africa

(16 - 17 April 2013, Accra - Ghana)

Turkey’s declaration of “Action Plan for the Opening Policy towards Africa” in 1998 accelerated Turkey’s relations with African countries. Within this framework, “Development of Economic Relations with African Countries” strategy was adopted in 2003; Turkey declared 2005 as “Africa Year” and obtained “observer status” in African Union. Turkey was declared as the strategic partner of African Union in 2008 and became a member of Africa Development Bank. Turkey opened 19 new embassies in Africa between 2009 and 2012.

Turkey gives great importance to maintenance of peace and stability in Africa. Important developments in terms of economic relations and trade volume have been maintained with African countries in the recent years. Trade volume has increased six-fold to 20 billion dollars. 500 Turkish doctors and more than 100 medical personnel had worked in more than 20 African countries between 2007 and 2010.

Within this framework; more than 280,000 citizens from various African countries have been undergoing medical examination and Turkish doctors have performed cataract and dental surgeries on 53,000 African patients. Besides Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency and Turkish Red Crescent supported African countries with food, medicine, etc. Turkey also provided African students with scholarships to support their education either in Turkey or in their own countries.

African countries appreciate Turkey’s activities in the continent by supporting Turkey in international platforms. Also due to development of relations between Africa and Turkey, Africa’s share in Turkey’s foreign trade is increasing. In order to increase Turkey-Africa relations further in the upcoming term, three major issues have become prominent: Economic Growth, Food Security and Health for All.



Economic Growth

In the second half of 20th century there were more civil wars and territorial warfare in Africa than any other continent in the world. This prevented newly decolonized African countries to achieve economical, social and humanitarian development and sustain necessary growth. Instability in continental level; prevented government institutions and private sector to develop and restricted investment or any other economic activity.

In order to secure sufficient growth in African countries; encouraging competition among medium and small scaled businesses, mobilizing the masses, preventing unfair distribution of income, developing human resources and economic reforms are needed. The current cooperation areas between Turkey and Africa need to be deepened, extended and new areas of cooperation should be provided so that Turkey can sustain its economical growth which it has achieved in the last ten years and Africa can overcome the difficulties in economic growth.

Sub-Saharan countries have achieved a growth trend of 5% in the last ten years which is promising. But the factors that are risk full for the growth trend should be decreased and this growth trend should be transformed into a “Development Process”. Sustainable development should be applied to progress of food security and health in African countries.

Food Security

Hunger and poor nutrition are the main two obstacles to human development. Both hunger and poor nutrition are threats to human life and they prevent the basic elements of human development. In order for food security to be provided, individuals; should be able to reach qualified and sufficient food without interruption, store food properly, have adequate information about basics of nutrition and child care, and have purchase power for food and access to medical services. According to 2012 statistics; over 1 billion people -240 million of them from Sub-Saharan Africa- have been living below breadline.

Main obstacles to food security in Africa are; AIDS, climate changes, environmental degradation, conflicts and warfare, rapid population growth and budget deficits. All of these make life miserable for an average African. Although many countries have been successful on preventing hunger within the framework of U.N’s Millennium Development Goals; the situation with regards to hunger is getting worse day after day in Sub-Saharan Africa.



In order to maintain food security in Africa, agricultural productivity should be increased. Low level of education and expensive manure and seed prices make it necessary to invest on agricultural education, seed improvement and fertilizer industry in Sub-Saharan countries. Family Planning and education of girls are vital issues with regards to food security. Rapid population growth increases need for food in Sub-Saharan Africa. Besides low level of education among girls due to gender discrimination decreases agricultural productivity and threatens food security.

Improvement in status of women would increase agricultural production, development of food security and preventing poverty. Therefore participation of women in production and women health should be taken into consideration on investments and aid projects that aim Africa.

Donor organizations and development agencies to Africa emphasize on integration of agriculture, food and health sectors. Food security does not solely depend on production increase; it also depends on determining potential markets, effective use of water resources (irrigation and drinking water), increasing education opportunities, supporting producers, engaging civil society to food security, development of social justice and accountability, improving infrastructure, analyzing and conducting regional integration opportunities, benefiting from informatics and communication technologies, maintaining gender equality and development of human resources.

TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency) –operating in Africa as Turkey’s institutional instrument- has been in a technological cooperation with friendly nations of Africa in order to improve their human resources and institutional capacity. TIKAs has carried out educational and consulting activities which Turkey has more experience than African countries. These activities have been supported with various donations. TIKAs also has funded infrastructural projects (irrigation and transportation), built hospitals and schools and restored historical and cultural structures. At the same time, TIKAs has supplied humanitarian aid.

Turkey increased its economical and social aids to Africa especially to the sectors like health and education. Turkey’s development projects for Africa between 2005 and 2010 mostly aim at improvement of social infrastructure. It is impossible to think food security separate from health. Therefore Turkey tries to cooperate with African countries to develop the concept of “Health for All”.



Health for All

Protection of human health and improving welfare are necessary for social and economical development. Due to population growth, proliferation of chronic diseases and new expensive treatment methods; health expenses are increasing and every country needs guidance on managing health services. Growing demand for high quality but economically sustainable health services makes development policies necessary.

Efficiency growth in the field of health can only be provided with coordination of education, housing, food and employment policies.

Countries which fail in financing health services, funding people who need expensive medical care and efficient use of resources cannot be successful in other fields. In order to increase the quality of health care, World Health Organization reports suggest; maintenance of enough resources, limitation of government’s direct role in financing health services, improving efficiency, development of egalitarian policies and transportation, motivation of medical personnel and prevention of corruption.

Inequality in health system is at the highest level in Africa. Problems in health sector threaten not only people who do not have access to proper health care but all of society. In order to prevent these problems governments have taken several measures but they are insufficient.

Applied macroeconomic policies emphasize on technical details rather than development which causes limitation of investments on health sector. An egalitarian health care system should be provided for all to benefit from it.

Prioritizing policies in market economy and private sector at global and national levels prevent egalitarian policies in health sector. Most people even in South Africa do not have access to proper health care which is considered economically better than most African countries. The precautions are insufficient against diseases like AIDS which associate with Africa and these diseases are globally threatening.

It is impossible for health policies to reach their goals only with macro-level governmental policies. Therefore it is necessary for governments to coordinate with local authorities and carry out integration activities at individual level. In order to provide better healthcare for its citizens; countries which are insufficient in health services, need to find suitable partners in the international arena. Especially in order to finance their healthcare systems, African



countries should benefit from the opportunities that are provided by TIKA and Turkish Red Crescent.

Turkey has been successful in providing proper and sustainable health care services for its citizens in the last couple years. It can share its experiences with African countries in order to contribute to the Turkey-Africa relations. In the last couple of years, although the aids to African countries in health sector have been increasing, there has not been any progress with regards to health services. Therefore this issue should be handled at local and global levels and Turkey can contribute to health sectors of African countries.

“Turkey-Africa Partnership, First Ministerial Level Reviewing Conference” was carried out in Istanbul on 16th December 2011. In this conference ministers from African countries appreciated the candidacy of Izmir to “New Routes to a Better World/Health for All” Expo 2020 and emphasized the importance of “Health for All” concept for African countries.

8th International Turkish-African Congress with its concepts “Economic Growth”, “Food Security” and “Health for All” aims to contribute to the partnership between Turkey and African countries. The Congress also intends to offer strategic values by creating an intellectual capacity and consciousness for both sides.

Main Theme

“Food Security”, “Economic Growth” and “Health for All” in Africa”

Sub-Themes

African Economies: Opportunities and Risks

Food Security and Agricultural Policies

Energy, Water Polices and Food Security

Perspective of TIKA

Health for All and EXPO 2020 Vision

Perspective of Turkish Red Crescent

Social Policies and Contributions of Civil Society