

Remarks Made by H. E. Mr. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) in the Sayonara Luncheon held in honor of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mauritania His Excellency Mr. Yahya NGAM, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Liberia Her Excellency Ms. Youngor Sevelee TELEWODA, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ghana His Excellency Mr. Sylvester Jude Kpakpo PARKER-ALLOTEY, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Senegal His Excellency Mr. Cheikh NIANG on February 5, 2018.

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues,

First of all let me express our gratitude and thanks, on behalf of the African Diplomatic Corps and myself, to our dear sister Ambassador Mutiti of Zambia for organizing this luncheon of today. Her Excellency will not be here today; Therefore, I will also be the MC for this luncheon of today. Ambassador Mutiti has delegations from home visiting Tokyo and has asked me to convey her apologies.

This is the first time for the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) to hold a Sayonara Luncheon for four dear friends at the same time. Your departure leaves a big hole to our cultivated brotherly/sisterly friendship as well as in our collective endeavors and efforts to promote the strategic interests of Africa and our country's in Japan.

Ghana, Liberia, Mauritania and Senegal are among the founders of Pan-Africanism and the philosophy behind the common destiny of Africa. As true sons of these great nations, let me first and foremost congratulate all for the very successful missions accomplished by Your Excellencies and Dear Colleagues in Japan. Your various efforts to enhance and create strong bilateral relations during your tenure here in Tokyo with Japan shall definitely impact Africa and respective countries.

As you all know, we are here, gathered in this sayonara luncheon today, to honor and bid farewell, our dear brothers, sister and colleagues:

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mauritania His Excellency Mr. Yahya **NGAM** who has served in Tokyo since 30 Aug 2010,

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Liberia Her Excellency Ms. Youngor Sevelee **TELEWODA** who has served in Tokyo since 7 Apr 2011,

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ghana His Excellency Mr. Sylvester Jude Kpakpo **PARKER-ALLOTEY** who has served in Tokyo since Dec 22 2014, and

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Senegal His Excellency Mr. Cheikh **NIANG**, who has served in Tokyo since 22 Dec 2014,

As is usually said in our Sayonara Luncheon – in diplomacy and in all other related practical livelihood there is time to come and time to go. But in diplomacy a departure from a post of a sister or a brother is only momentary. The friendship that we have mutually built together stays where ever we might be assigned next. Therefore, today's Sayonara Luncheon organized before Your Excellencies departure, is just an expression of friendship and to seize the occasion to thank and express our gratitude for the support Your Excellencies gave to our collective diplomacy and friendship shared with all of us present with you here today.

This is a time once again to assure Your Excellencies on the departure that we i.e. those remaining behind - shall continue the collective endeavor to work for peace, stability, prosperity, cooperation and unity of the people of Africa. We will put all our collective effort to keep these objectives as the main pillar of engagement with Japan in our collective diplomacy throughout the TICAD process.

With this short statement, and in the interest of time, I would like to call now brothers and sisters to raise their glass with me to join for a toast - for the good health - best wishes to Ambassador NGAM, to Ambassador TELEWODA, to Ambassador TELEWODA and Ambassador NIANG and their Excellences' family members. In conclusion, I would like to ask Ambassadors to kindly come forward and make their farewell remarks. Ambassador Mutiti has also asked me to convey to Your Excellency that ADC's memorabilia gift would be handed in person individually later due to shortage of time.

Kampai!!