

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 Tokyo on the Occasion of the Official visit of the new President of AfDB, Dr, Akinwumi Adesina March 24th and 25th 2016:

Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB),

And distinguished members of the delegation,

Mr. Tadashi Yokoyama, Head of the External Representation Office for Asia, African Development Bank,

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all take the opportunity, on this occasion, to welcome, on behalf of the African Diplomatic Corps and myself, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina and his top-level Bank team, which is on a working visit to Japan, Korea and China from March 24-29, 2016.

We all hope and are confident that during your current working visit to Japan, the team has engaged successfully with top government officials of this country and business corporates on mutual relevant issues concerning the current development challenges of our continent. While here in Tokyo, it is a great honor for the African Diplomatic Corps and myself to meet with you and your team during this luncheon and would like to extend our thanks and gratitude for that as well.

Mr. President,

As you all know, the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) will take place in **Nairobi**, Kenya on 27-28 August 2016. The African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo has been working hand in hand and very successfully with Mr. Masayuki and his predecessor Mr. Tamagawa, Heads of the External Representation Office for Asia African Development Bank, to put our continent's priorities into the agenda of the business community of Japan.

Our group is also in the process of working very closely and continuously with the co-organizers of TICAD VI to help in structuring the outcome of the coming Nairobi summit to reflect the common Africa position of Agenda 2063, (the first ten-year implementation plan), i.e. to address industrialization, health, water, sanitation and social stability of our continent. AfDB's proactive continued support to this endeavor is recognized and highly appreciated by the African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo.

We are informed that during your current presidency, the Bank Group and the Government of Japan have agreed to work together to promote private investment in our continent in meetings held in Abidjan, HQ of the AfDB.

Africa is representing the world's highest economic growth arena in the world today. Africa has now entered into an age of investment as opposed to just

traditional aid. There is an increasing move towards leveraging aid for greater trade and investment and towards supporting small and medium sized enterprises, which are the backbone of African economies. AfDB's recent agreement with the Government of Japan on this cardinal issue resonates with the efforts and continued dialogue that our group has been making with the business community here in Japan

In our collective efforts here, we have recently reviewed past plans and commitments of the TICAD process. This included the Enhanced Private Sector Assistance (EPSA) Initiative of Japan to support implementation of the AfDB's Strategy for Private Sector Development. We believe the current enhancement of this initiative can greatly contribute to the different programs of our national and sub-regional development programs of our continent.

Realizing the cardinal role that investment could play in our African countries' development imperatives, the AfDB through the EPSA initiative of Japan can be a key catalyst, to encourage investment and corporates to play an active constructive, and when needed a proactive role in the development and utilization of the continent's natural resources, expanding exports, fostering transfer of technologies and SME's development, agriculture, fisheries and marine resources, manufacturing, tourism, infrastructure, transpiration, other services and free zones.

Last but not least, on the sideline of TICAD VI, Kenya is preparing with the co-organizers for a side event to help in enhancing the understanding of Africa's business potentials by corporates of Japan, which includes exhibition and business fora to be held in Nairobi for the first time, with a view of creating a better Africa-Japan business partnership.

The African Diplomatic Corps looks forward to AfDB's continued cooperation and support on this event's success as well as in the coming TICAD VI successful conduct in Africa.

Thank you,