

**PRESS STATEMENT BY THE EMBASSY OF THE STATE OF ERITREA TO JAPAN ON THE DECISION MADE BY THE CABINET OF JAPAN TO OPEN A NEW MISSION IN ASMARA ON DECEMBER 21, 2020:**

Japan-Eritrea relations date back to the “Italian Colonial Administration of Eritrea”. Japan and Eritrea had very active trade and investment since that period. Diplomatic relations between Japan and “Italian Colonial Administration of Eritrea” were established in September 1936.

Local and Japanese experts from Nippon Mining revealed major sulfide deposits occurring in the areas of Embaderho, Adi Rassi, Debarwa, Adi Nefas, Weki and other areas in Eritrea in the early seventies. Japanese companies made several investments in leather, cotton, house-wares, aluminum and other small and medium manufacturing enterprises in Eritrea in the late sixties and early seventies.

Japan started the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) for Africa in the early 1970’s. The first yen-loan agreement in Africa was signed with Ethiopia in May 1973. This period coincides with the beginning of Nippon Mining and investment activities in Eritrea. Master plan for the development of Port of Massawa and Assab in Eritrea was completed by Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency(OTCA) in February 1974.

The Embassy of the State of Eritrea to Japan was opened in Tokyo on 11 July 2003. Japanese Cabinet have decided to open the Embassy of Japan in Asmara on December 21, 2020.

Eritrea being a trade corridor between Africa and the commercial centers of the Red Sea, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean; it is incumbent on the country to explore ways and means in joining efforts with Japan to maintain stability and ensure prosperity in the Horn of Africa. Japan being also one of the biggest economies of the world; it is imperative for the country to explore ways and means to join efforts with Eritrea to maintain stability and ensure prosperity in the Horn of Africa especially in the Red Sea trading route.

Hence, the Government of Eritrea welcomes the decision of the Japanese cabinet to open an Embassy in Asmara. This decision will definitely enhance, strengthen and benefit the friendly relations between both countries.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
December 21, 2020