

Remarks made by H.E. Mr. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps on the Occasion of the 15th Anniversary of the Peace and National Reconciliation Day of Angola on April 4, 2017

His Excellency **Mr. Joao Miguel Vahekeni** Ambassador of the Republic of Angola to Japan

Honorable **AISAWA Ichiro** President of Japan – AU Parliamentary Friendship League

- H.E. Mr. **Takeshi OSUGA** Director General for African Affairs Department of Foreign Affairs of Japan

- Honorable Members of Parliament present, Excellencies and Dear Colleagues

- Ladies and Gentlemen

As you all know, Angola is one of the African countries that have had to wage a long protracted armed struggle to get independence. Even after getting independence in 1975 the Angolans went through a very violent internal civil war and massive foreign military intervention for decades. The civil war in Angola was a part of the Cold War struggle, as both the Soviet Union and the United States, along with their respective allies, became major players in the country.

27-year of war has ravaged the country, more than 500,000 people died and over two million were internally displaced. This war has devastated Angola's infrastructure, and severely damaged the nation's public administration, economic enterprises, and institutions. It was a 27 years of lost opportunity to the Angolan people as well as to our region. The human and material loss incurred as a result of this war is impossible to measure.

The historic peace accord that was entered in 2002 between the Government of People's Republic of Angola and UNITA has ended this dark history once for all.

Therefore let me cease this opportunity to ask all of you to join me by raising your glass to honor this auspicious day, the 15th Anniversary of the Peace and National Reconciliation Day of Angola and to wish on this occasion a continued peace, stability, progress and prosperity to the Republic of Angola and its people.

Kampai!