

**Statement made by H.E. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) in Tokyo on the Luncheon held in honor of H.E. Mr. Sid Ali KETRANJJI, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Algeria and outgoing Vice Dean of ADC to Japan on January 14, 2015.**

**Your Excellency Mr. KETRANJJI, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Algeria,**

**Your Excellencies and Dear Colleagues, Heads of Missions of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) in Tokyo,**

Today we are all gathered here in this Sayonara Luncheon, to honor and bid farewell, our Vice Dean, a dear friend and colleague, to all brothers and sisters of the African Diplomatic Corps members in Tokyo, H.E. Mr. Sid Ali KETRANJJI Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Algeria to Japan.

The Ambassador has served Algeria and the continent of Africa with a distinguished leadership, wisdom and diplomatic skill marked with a very eminent performance of solidarity and friendship which was highly appreciated and valued by all the members of the African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo for a period of 9 years since December 12, 2005.

Algeria is one of the gateways of Europe to Africa. Therefore, building a strong and secure Algeria: diplomatically, politically, economically and socially is of vital importance to the development and stability of Africa as well as to Europe and the of the rest world. It was great honor for all of the ADC members here to see and witness H.E. Mr. KETRANJJI skillfully navigate his country's diplomatic ambitions and challenges during his mission in general and the collective diplomacy he relentlessly exerted to promote the strategic importance of Africa in our collective diplomacy with Japan in particular.

Your Excellency,

Allow me on this occasion to remember a few of the most valued history of Algeria in the African continent. The heroic Algerian struggle for freedom from the colonial powers from 1954 to 1962 was a great inspiration to the whole continent of Africa. It is not

an exaggeration but a fact of history, when I say that Algeria spearhead the African fight against colonial occupation which became a good example of success story in the continent for generations to emulate and follow. Many, in and outside of the continent - including freedom fighters from my own country - have looked up, and many even traveled to Your country, especially in the 60th and 70th for protection, inspiration and to learn from the lessons of the victorious struggle of freedom and dignity of the Algerian people. As we all know, Nelson Mandela, the freedom father of South Africa, received his first military training by the Algerian Liberation Army in Algeria in 1961. The soul of many American and African leaders in the black movement of emancipation had its roots in Algeria.

Allow me to remember also on this occasion, in brief, how the unfortunate border war that broke up between the brotherly people of Eritrea and Ethiopia which entailed three round of Ethiopia's huge military offensives against Eritrea from 1998 to 2000 - with hundreds of thousands of casualties and the displacement of one million people from both sides came to an end. Ethiopia and Eritrea signed the final and binding comprehensive Peace Treaty in Algiers on December 12, 2000. This is a clear demonstration and one among the many good examples of the commitment of your country in peace, stability, cooperation and prosperity of Africa. Algeria under the leadership of President Abdelaziz Boutiflika succeeded in negotiating this historic peace agreement where others failed.

Your Excellency,

In the TICAD process we all the ADC members collectively lobbied for the inclusion of the then OAU, now the AUC to participate as co-organizer in the TICAD process, Your Excellency is leaving in 2015: with this very important organization of Africa sitting in the front row chair representing the vision of the founding fathers, member states and most of all Your Excellency's honest and outspoken stand in support of pan Africanism and unity in our collective diplomacy. As a true son of Algeria, Your Excellency can proudly claim and add this proudly with the many successes and achievements in your diplomatic career.

As we always say, in the life of diplomats, there is always time to come and time to go, therefore, Your Excellency, in this Sayonara luncheon, on behalf of the excellencies and dear colleagues present, as well as those who did not make it today due to the long holiday season, and myself, let me wish Your Excellency and your family, especially your best half, Mrs. KETRANJI, a continued health, success and prosperity in the future; and best wishes in your next assignment.

Thank you so much for helping Africa stay on its course of freedom and dignity in our engagement of diplomacy with Japan. We all have benefited from your wisdom and experience.

And with this small note, I would like to call upon excellencies and dear colleagues to join me to raise their glass for this, Sayonara and Kampai!!