

Remarks by H.E. Mr. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) on the Seminar on the Initiative for the Promotion of Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation between Africa and Japan 26 January JICA 2015 Ichigaya Building Seminar Room 600

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Let me begin my remark by thanking and expressing my gratitude to the invitation extended to me to make a brief remark as a Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo on this important seminar being held for the promotion of science and technology cooperation between Japan and Eritrea in the TICAD process organized by Japan Science and Technology Agency, African Diplomatic Corps, Nagasaki University, Osaka University and Tohoku University.

First, as we are all aware in the TICAD process, Japan is providing assistance to higher education with some focus on science and technology in some African countries. These process aims to support through Japanese experience African higher learning institution utilizing several layers of cooperation: mainly by 1) strengthening learning and teaching infrastructures, 2) upgrading laboratories & workshop facilities, 3) developing research capacity, 4) upgrading library, and 5) upgrading staff and teachings. There is no doubt that such efforts will definitely help students in Africa to be key players in the promotion of innovation and competitiveness in their development and labor market imperatives of their respective countries.

Secondly, Kosen (Colleges of Technology) which is five year engineering education starting from 15 years old youth – were established in Japan in 1961, in response to a strong demand from the industrial sector to foster engineers who sustained the high Japanese economic growth at that time. Most of the students got employment given their pertinent management and skill level of contribution in the different sectors of the economy.

The overall GDP growth is currently very positive in our region too. Despite the global economic slowdown, growth in Africa has remained robust in 2014 and expected to reach 5.5% in 2015. Strong demand from natural resources developments, information technology expansion, industrialization, governance, skill and higher education, research and expansion of transport & tourism networks and services are not also sparse in every country in Africa today. Therefore, I believe the transfer of knowhow, capital and technology promotion to African countries from the successful experience of Kosen Japan is timely in the TICAD process to improve the business climate in Africa too.

ICT infrastructure development, industrialization, governance, higher education in science and technology, boasting research capacity in agriculture, health, natural resource management and services is an essential ingredient to regional peace, stability, prosperity and cooperation. Creation of youth employment opportunities cannot be postponed in the continent of Africa too.

With this small note let me thank you again and it is a great honor for the African diplomatic corps and myself to hear with an open mind Nagasaki, Osaka and Tohoku Universities scientific findings that resulted from cooperation with three universities in Africa.
