

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 Tokyo African Club (TAC) Meeting Friday, July 24, 2015 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Ambassador Norio Maruyama, DG, African Affairs Department MoFA, Ambassador Belmiro Malate of Mozambique and Chair of the TICAD Committee,
Excellencies and Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First let me thank Ambassador Maruyama and MoFA for organizing this important TAC meeting. This meeting further assures the African Diplomatic Corps and myself on the ongoing successful and constructive dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Therefore, let me wish from the onset a successful deliberation for today.

Before I give the floor to Ambassador Belmiro Malate of Mozambique and Chair of the TICAD Committee in the African Diplomatic Corps, allow me make a few remarks.

As we all know there are two important tiers of consultations that have been put in place by the last YOKOHAMA 2013 TICAD V Summit.

The first and most important tier is the Yokohama Action Plan 2013-2017 and the mechanisms put in place for its follow-up are three:

(1) Joint Secretariat (MOFA Japan, African Union Commission, UNOSAA, UNDP and World Bank);

(2) Joint Monitoring Committee (composed of Japanese Government and related governmental organizations, TICAD Co-organizers, Permanent Representatives Committee of the African Union (PRC), African Diplomatic Corps in Tokyo (ADC) and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, International Organizations and donor countries);

(3) Follow-up meetings of annual senior officials and ministerial;

And of course all these exercises lead into Japan Africa Head of States Summit.

The second and other most important tier is of course the continued dialogue between MOFA Japan and ADC to insure that the process of TICAD is in the mutual interest, service and ownership of Africa and African countries as well as Japan in 2013-2017 and it is with this in view that MOFA Japan has continuously been engaged with ADC's TICAD Committee and with all members of ADC through Tokyo African Club (TAC).

Having said that, and now that we know where the next ministerial meeting and Japan and Africa leaders summit are going to be held, it is imperative to collect, process monitor and evaluate information available jointly of the above mentioned areas of activities and look for ways and means to present an improved version i.e. TICAD Nairobi Action Plan, if and when necessary, to the next important summit of our heads of states in Africa in 2016.

With this in view, it is prudent to indicate in this meeting that the Summit in Nairobi Kenya between African Heads of State and Japan must uphold past achievements of course but it must open new and innovative way of creating a new forum of partnership in the given fast geo-political situation unfolding globally too.

It is important to put in mind from now that the Nairobi Meeting is not going to be a follow-up mechanism for Yokohama Action Plan but deliberations and a continued diplomacy on strategic partnership of Japan with African countries, which can include major issues of concern to both Africa and Japan but not exclude UN Reform, peace and security, natural resources, building knowledge based societies, industrialization, infrastructure, governance, education, research capacity, coastal development, fisheries, agriculture, services etc.

In simple words what I am saying is the Japan Africa Nairobi Summit 2016 is not a follow-up meeting of Yokohama Action Plan 2013 – 2017. Therefore, the event and side events must be planned and be organized accordingly from now to make it a success targeting Japan and African countries mutual interest.

Africa envies Japanese success story and economic model of the last 70 years. The next TICAD in Africa must be a stepping-stone for opening the door of an enhanced participation of Japan public and private sector through grant, loan and equity shares to develop the potential of Africa market which is the main source of peace, stability, prosperity and regional cooperation.

In conclusion let me express that the African Diplomatic Corps readiness and commitment to continue as usual to be constructively and enthusiastically engaged to enhance and develop the dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan towards this end.

Thank you,