

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 the Occasion of the Sayonara Luncheon for Donald Kaberuka President of the African Development Bank and Mr. Masayuki Tamagawa Head of the External Representation Office for Asia of the African Development Bank (AfDB) on July 24, 2015.

Donald Kaberuka President of the African Development Bank
Mr. Masayuki Tamagawa Head of the External Representation Office
for Asia of the African Development Bank
Excellencies and Dear Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor for me to make this farewell speech on behalf of brothers and sisters of the African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo.

President Kaberuka, we have seen and followed closely the African Development Group Bank as multilateral development finance institution established to contribute to the economic development needs, requirements and programs of each of our countries in Africa growing under your leadership since you came to office in the last ten years.

Mr. Tamagawa, over the period you worked with the African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo, you have become more than just a friend, you were a colleague and co-worker in our collective diplomatic mission of promoting the relations between Japan and Africa.

Therefore, let me say on the onset that your esteemed presence shall definitely be missed by all of us in the African diplomatic Corps as well as by your hardworking staff here in Tokyo. But we all hope that this Sayonara lunch, organized to honor your accomplished missions, brings luck and our collective good wishes for your future.

And since you are leaving us in the hands of competent and valuable people, allow me to express here also the African Diplomatic Corps' collective commitment to continue the same level of cooperation with your successors.

Africa is once more becoming an attraction to geo-political realities of the world for its business opportunities, strategic locations and bountiful resources once more in its history. Is Africa prepared for this opportunities and challenges? Can Africa softland into the global economic fold of realities of seriously divided houses? Can Africa charter its path? Is this century truly an African century? Is this century truly an Asian century? Can a divided Africa or Asia avoid the recipes for doomsday?

Our African continued plea remains as always on the same wave:

1. Will Japan and other Asian economies participate actively in our national and regional development plans in Africa through ODA, Loan or Equity Shares?
2. Will African banks both national and regional i.e. including and not excluding the African Development Bank Group play a major role in facilitating the flow of Japanese and Asian direct investment into African countries?
3. Will African banks both national and regional i.e. including the African Development Bank Group be in a position to offer the African private sector the window of opportunity to access pledged financing through partnership programs like TICAD?

To answer this and other related trade and investment tie-up programs, President Kaberuka, African Development Bank Group, through your wise leadership and guidance has extended its wings rightfully into Asia in general and Japan in particular.

Asian leadership is becoming assertive in the global economy including Africa at present. Asian trade partnership is now every day economic buzzword in this part of the world. Africa is awakened by this reality too. We all agree, the geo-strategic evolution has not achieved any equilibrium to guarantee a safe passage or bulletproof medium to our continent.

Hence, Asian and African century must be anchored with great solidarity and friendship built on a dignified, mutually inclusive regional and national accord since the history of slavery and colonialism is only yesterday when it happened in our continent.

Having said that, let me conclude my remarks by simply stating to President Kaberuka and Mr. Tamagawa, as you have ample

demonstrated through your relentless efforts to the African Diplomatic Corps in the past, to let me take this final opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude and thanks once again for a well-done mission to begin building partnerships and friendship between Africa and Japan in particular and Japan and Asian economies in particular.

Arigato