

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 Tokyo Africa Club (TAC) meeting held on July 24th 2017:

Ambassador Takeshi Osuga, Director General, African Affairs Department MoFA,
Excellencies, Dear Colleagues and participants

The objective of Africa's Agenda of integration is to attain a widely shared economic growth and social stability. This has become the main pillar of cooperation between Africa and Japan, as it was clearly indicated and underlined in the TICAD VI Nairobi Declaration. Developing critical infrastructures such as communication systems, power, roads, railways, air transport and ports is, with out any question, the priority of the priorities in Africa Agenda 2063. They are major challenges, and are therefore, placed at the top of the development agenda of the cooperation between Japan and Africa in the TICAD VI as well as with other development partners.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has signed with Japan a Letter of Intent to launch the Africa – Japan Energy Initiative (JAEI). Japan stands ready to provide up to US\$ 6 billion in both concessional and non-concessional finance for a variety of energy operations in Africa. The agreement was signed on the sidelines of the African Union Summit at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa on 3 July 2017. This is a clear signal displaying Japan's commitment to implement PM Abe's pledge of US\$ 30 billion to Africa's development in TICAD VI (2016 – 2019). Therefore, let me, on the onset, extend congratulations, on behalf of our group members present here and myself, to Japan for launching this successful new initiative to Africa in this TAC Meeting today.

Having said that and in line with TICAD VI commitments made, let me take this opportunity, in my capacity as Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) and Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan to share with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan three points for consideration in the context of the Ministerial Follow-up

Meeting, which will take place in Maputo Mozambique from 24 to 25 August 2017.

1. **Capacity building in the health sectors:** Many African countries, including my country Eritrea, have been committed to improving the health care system and have been making progress towards meeting the MDGs and SDGs goals in the health sector such as:

- a) Many of our countries are making a focused effort on prevention and control especially in the area of communicable and infectious diseases, reproductive health, combating nutrient deficiencies for children under five and mothers; and national programs are underway aimed at immunization of children against antigens,
- b) Development of vaccines against malaria is giving positive signs that need to be sustained effectively. The use of the long insecticide treated nets supplied by Japan has been a proven effective ways to prevent malaria,
- c) As well known, poor health in most of our countries is also associated with lack of access to clean water supply and sanitation. Clean water is a major challenge to the rural and urban dwellers of our countries, and
- d) Other related activities

Therefore, it is the African Diplomatic Corps' (ADC) expectation that capacity building in the health sector is to be underlined with more focused program of implementation in the TICAD VI Ministerial Follow-up Meeting in Maputo Mozambique on the above-mentioned endeavors. We believe consultations with key stakeholders in this sector including and not excluding our national health and public works institutions with Japan are critical component to the efficient progress on the ground of such programs in 2017 – 2019. The contribution of Japan in dealing with the Ebola crisis in Guinea and Liberia was an outstanding record to further guide the enhancement of cooperation initiative.

2. **Capacity building in social stability sectors:** Many African countries, including my own country Eritrea, have been committed to the eradication of poverty, disease and ignorance

programs. Our continent has been making progress with the cooperation of development partners towards meeting the MDGs and SDGs goals in the economic, health and education sector.

We believe consultations with key stakeholders in this sector including but not excluding our national institutions and Japan are critical component to the efficient progress on the ground of such programs in 2017 – 2019 to address the different mechanisms of support through the TICAD VI implementation plan projects to:

- a) Increase equitable enrollment in basic education through the construction of low cost but durable classrooms and ancillary facilities,
- b) Target interventions aimed at girls and other disadvantaged children,
- c) Improve the quality of basic and secondary education by extending teacher training and professional support on science and mathematics education,
- d) Develop technical skills and technology training by expanding existing technical schools and establishing new ones,
- e) Support education sector capacity to deliver better quality education,
- f) Promote development of viable micro and small enterprises,
- g) Create income-generating opportunities for the youth by enhancing the productive capacity of traditional farmers, herdsman, fishermen, and
- h) Other related activities

3. **Promoting Investment from Japan to our countries:** TICAD VI clearly recognized the importance of agriculture, livestock and fisheries in enhancing national food security, and its role in adding to export earnings, support of industrialization and help to national programs. I believe enhanced consultations with key stakeholders in this sector including but not excluding our national institutions of agriculture, fisheries, marine resources and Japan are also critical component to the efficient progress of the implementation programs outlined in TICAD VI in 2017 – 2019 especially those targeting increase in:

- a) Water availability,
- b) Farm productivity for prompting production of high value crops, vegetables and fruits
- c) Reorientation in agricultural, livestock, fisheries extension, research programs to respond to farmers, herdsman, fishermen priority needs and demands,
- d) Provision of increased credit facility to support modernization of the agricultural sector and support to the small-scale enterprises, and
- e) Other related activities

Last but not list an enhanced FDI movement to our countries through equity; share and loan participation by the private sector of Japan in our economic development programs is not only imperative but also remains to be the main litmus paper and locomotive engine of TICAD VI.

Thank you,