

**Remarks made by H.E. Mr. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Head of the Delegation to the Ministerial Preparatory Meeting for TICAD VI Banjul, the Islamic Republic of Gambia from 16 to 17 June 2016:**

**H.E. Honorable Mrs. Neneh Macdouall-Gaye, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of The Gambia**

**H.E. Mr. Masakazu Hamachi Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan**

**Co-chairs**

**Honorable delegates**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

Let me first express our gratitude and thanks for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to our delegation by the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Gambia.

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Summit holding in Africa represents a new approach, i.e. a quantitative and qualitative change, to the policy and implementation of the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) provided by Japan to our continent and our countries, through this unique collaboration process, initiated by Japan since 1993.

TICAD is often described as one of the successfully implemented vehicle of cooperation in Africa because of its human centric approach to development assistance. Since 1993, my country has benefited through this cooperation, which targeted our education, health, infrastructure, agriculture and fisheries development programs in the past. I would like to express, ceasing this opportunity, our gratitude and thanks to Japan for its generous contributions to the self-effort of our daunting tasks and challenges of nation building.

But, as we all know, our continent has entered currently into an era of investment as opposed to traditional aid.

It is with this backdrop of the TICAD maturity that we welcome, once again, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Japan into the development and utilization of our rich natural and human resources. Eritrea realizes the importance of this qualitative change and the contributions it can make in the imperatives of peace, stability, prosperity, cooperation and integration of our region.

Hence, Eritrea welcomes this qualitative change of the TICAD process and assures its continued readiness to work together with all the co-organizers, public and private sector of Japan, towards our mutual success in this important meeting of Banjul Gambia today.

Bearing in mind the future impact of these partnerships in our continent we look forward to the successful holding of the TICAD VI Summit in Nairobi Kenya this August.