

**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 Dinner held in Honer of H.E. Mr. Norio MARUYAMA Foreign Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan Hosted by H. E. Mr. Mohamed El Amine Bencherif Ambassador of Algeria at His Residence on June 22, 2017**

H.E. Mr. Norio MARUYAMA Foreign Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

H. E. Mr. Mohamed El Amine Bencherif Ambassador of Algeria

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues

Honorable guests present

Good evening,

Ambassador Bencherif,

Please accept from the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) and myself heartfelt deep gratitude and thanks for hosting this dinner in honor of Ambassador Maruyama. Your kind initiative is highly appreciated by all of us present here today. Algeria is a vanguard of the historic struggle for independence, dignity and decolonization of our beloved continent of Africa. It is a great honor for all us to be here during the Romodam and Yifter in the home of this great country and people to honor our good friend Ambassador Maruyama.

Ambassador Maruyama,

Japan's economy was reduced to dust during World War II. Japan is the second prosperous country in the world now. Emerging economies of Africa has many lessons to learn from Japan's success story. Because of this, for other mutual geo-political and bilateral consideration, our leaders and the public at large in Africa see the constructive engagement with Japan through the Tokyo International Cooperation for Africa Development (TICAD) process as continued dialogue and vehicle to deepen and strengthen understanding and our mutual interest.

Many Africa countries used to export food during the 60<sup>th</sup>. The average GDP, per capita of African countries was higher than the Asian countries from 1960<sup>th</sup> to mid 70<sup>th</sup>. Many African countries are importing food and GDP per capita of many of our countries in Africa is far lower than in Asia currently. Therefore, success stories of the economies of Asia are a beacon of hope for most of countries in Africa to emulate and an experience to learn from.

The African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) consider ourselves to be fortunate to have met and worked with a very special personality like you (in your former capacity as Director General of the Department of African Affairs) in enhancing and deepening the existing strategic partnership between Africa and Japan in general and the successful conduct of TICAD VI in Nairobi in particular – the first of its kind organized in the continent of Africa.

As a result of the effort of Japan and Africa, under your guidance and leadership capacity in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan pledged approximately USD 30 Billion, TICAD VI Nairobi for a period of three years from 2016 – 2019. Out of this USD 10 Billion shall be disbursed for developing quality infrastructure under Private Public partnership (PPP), for building resilient health systems and for laying the foundation for peace and stability by providing: vocational training for 50,000, by increasing private sector activity HRD - i.e. training for 30,000 people in industrial activities, 10,000 on intellectual property and 20,000 in mathematics and science teachers in Africa. We the 38 diplomatic missions of Africa in Tokyo look forward and are ready to work very closely with MoFA, JBIC, JETRO, JOGMEC and other public and private agencies of Japan to make the implementation of this projects successful in our countries.

Therefore, Mr. Ambassador, we all deeply value and appreciate the wisdom and hard work that you so kindly shared with all of us present with you here today - in this successful process.

Although we may be separated because of your new assignment, nothing will diminish the important role that Your Excellency have and that will always play in our lives and into the African Japan mutual issues of interest which you served during your carrier for a long time.

To conclude, on this special occasion of Yiftar evening, let me wish Your Excellency and family good health, peaceful life and prosperity. We all hope and wish success to Your Excellency's new and as usual very challenging assignment, once again.

Thank you