

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ESTIFANOS  
AFEWORKI AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF ERITREA TO  
JAPAN AT BUISNESS SIDE EVENT OF THE TICAD VI  
MINISTERIAL MEETING TOKYO OCTOBER 5 2018**

(All protocol in order)

Good afternoon,

Thank you for the introduction,

It is a great honor for me to address this important meeting aimed at “Leveraging Africa’s business opportunities: A call for the Japanese business sector” on behalf of the African Diplomatic Corps and my country Eritrea.

On the onset, I would also like to take the opportunity to express to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and UNDP, my deep-felt gratitude and thanks for the invitation.

Policy dialogue on the TICAD pillars of cooperation has evolved slowly but surely through the years since its inception in 2003 from humanitarian assistance level – through bilateral and multilateral means – to a new stage of the necessity of establishing concrete mechanism to help make African countries one of the primary economic, social and cultural destinations of Japan in the world. I am sure this meeting of today will serve as a vehicle to expose and provide the potential of African countries to the Japanese and international investors.

The 38 African countries represented here in Tokyo are of the opinion and are ready to exchange ideas and opinions on ways and means of creating a business tie-up - on a continued basis - until TICAD7, which will be held in Yokohama next year.

At this particular period, a concrete involvement of KEIDAREN and KEIZAY DOYUKAI is necessary, with a view to strengthen strategic business partnerships towards increased trade and investment between our countries and Japan, in order to engage the private sector especially SMEs, with the African Diplomatic Corps here in Tokyo.

I take this opportunity to call upon KEIDANREN and KEIZAY DOYUKAI to establish this linkage with us as soon as possible. We expect TICAD7 to be a forum to conclude and concretize new business

tie-ups by our leaders as a result of these prior mutual exercises that we are suggesting to be made here in Tokyo.

The Government of Prime Minister Abe of Japan has applied in TICAD VI Nairobi Summit several means to encourage the private sector to expand business in Africa but the outcome - though promising - is still minimal in volume - given the huge investment and trade opportunities availed in Africa.

It is also imperative at this time for the private sector of Japan and Africa to look into existing policies and available instruments of trade and investments in terms of building ideal atmosphere (room for improvement) in the production of goods and services including but not excluding in stages of production, packing, transportation, market access to/from African countries and Japan.

On another important note, I would also like to highlight here in this important business meeting 2018 Jeddah Peace and Friendship Treaty made by Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The strategic importance of the Horn of Africa is significant to Europe, Middle East, United States, Russia, India, China, and Japan and beyond. The Horn of Africa is a major part of the continent where the great River Nile flows dotted with civilization centers and tributaries, which predate mankind modern history, are located. It is facing the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. It is trade corridor to Europe – Asia and Africa and home to more than 360 million people. Water, gas, oil, rare metals, precious metals, base metals, uranium, industrial and agricultural chemicals, construction materials, skilled youth etc. are the economic ingredients in clear abundance in this region.

The historic peace treaty entered between Eritrea and Ethiopia is a definite paradigm shift and change in Africa now. Its impact and dividend to the economic growth of the Middle East, Horn of Africa, Nile Basin countries and beyond is obvious and historic.

This is an opportune time for FDI, know-how and technology to flow into this region. Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan peace, stability, prosperity and cooperation are already happening. We look forward to a concrete participation of the private and public sector of Japan through the TICAD process in all our endeavors.

Thank you, and best wishes for a successful deliberations