

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Estifanos Afeworki Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) at the Online discussion Via Zoom between TICAD committee(ADC) and UNIDO ITPO Tokyo Plus IDDA Coordinator, AFR February 9, 2022

- Thank you, Ambassador ELLOUMI, for your kind introduction,
- Ms. Matilda Muweme, IDDA, AFR: UNIDO's coordinator,
- Mr. Yuko Yasunaga, Head ITPO Tokyo UNIDO
- Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Konichiwa!

As we all know, Japan and Africa diplomacy on the TICAD process is indeed very important. TICAD6 was held in Africa in 2016 in Nairobi Kenya and TICAD5 was held in Yokohama Japan in 2013. In these two important summits, there was a qualitative change in the TICAD process. Economic diplomacy was taken as a central strategic priority - as clearly demonstrated and announced by the 60 billion USD pledges made by the Government of Japan towards this endeavor in the outcome and decisions of these two important conferences.

From what we all witnessed in this period of close to one decade, among the various initiatives of cooperation undertaken the UNIDO's model **Programme for Country** aimed at industrial development has been seen gaining traction and scoring some degree of success in various African countries. The program is currently supporting actively the national development agendas of Egypt, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Morocco, Senegal, Tanzania and Zambia. This programme which is clearly supporting to help these African countries achieve their national industrial development goals must be applauded.

Hence, it is prudent to underline briefly here and request, on behalf of the African Diplomatic Corps, in this important meeting of today with IDDA II AFR and ITPO UNIDO Tokyo, for the TICAD8 co-organizers to look for ways and means of expanding this program to the rest of the African countries because it is in the benefit of their national industrial development programs, Japan's and other developed economies too.

The tasks outlined in Agenda 2030 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Industrial development programs also outlined in Agenda 2063

of the African Union can benefit greatly from an inclusive mutual continued active energy and resources diplomacy between our African countries, Japan and other developed economies.

African countries are definitely gaining rapid economic development and surely becoming one of the significant drivers of world economies because of their rich natural resources. Hence, building economic partnerships with our African countries is not an option but a must during this era.

The litmus paper for the success of the TICAD process remains to be the degree of commitments and participation of Japan's and other major economies, through all available facets of grants, loans, equities or shares, in the promising future of our African countries.

The African Diplomatic Corps looks forward to work closely with IDDA II AFR and ITPO TOKYO UNIDO to narrow the gap between political rhetoric and the economic realities on the ground. As we all know, political considerations though important are not the main tools of industrialization, trade and investments.

Last but not least, let me take this opportunity to wish you a successful deliberation in this meeting, and

Thank you,