

**Remarks made by H.E. Mr. Tewelde Kelati Minister of Marine Resources of the State of Eritrea on Artisanal Fisheries and Fisheries Data Collection Workshop**

**8 Oct. 2016 Conference Hall MMR, Massawa**

Good Morning,

First of all let me welcome Mr. Sugiyama and other JICA officials and Dear Colleagues to this important workshop with the Ministry of Marine Resources of Eritrea that is being held today. From the onset, let me also wish success to this important meeting and deliberations of today.

The Government of Japan, in response to the Government of Eritrea's requests, has dispatched two missions on the fisheries sector in the last two years. Our Ministry is pleased to know that these two missions found in their findings that the economic development, the young fisheries and aquaculture industry in Eritrea promising.

TICAD V Yokohama in 2013 as well as TICAD VI Nairobi in 2016 which was held this past August has put fisheries as the main pillar of cooperation between Japan and African countries. Blue Economy cooperation has also been highlighted as one of the primary targeted cooperation In this plan.

As you well know, the Embassy of the State of Eritrea to Japan has continuously been coordinating to build a bridge of cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan and our Ministry of Marine Resources of Eritrea.

I have also exchanged with H.E. Mr. Koya NISHIKAWA Ex-Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan message of goodwill and intentions to cooperate on December 2014.

I hope these and other subsequent high level meetings with President Isaias of

Eritrea and other officials held here in Asmara and Tokyo in 2014 and 2015 have also paved the way and built enough trust for our future cooperation of building mutual partnerships on this important component of our economies to grow.

On the invitation and coordination of H.E. Mr. Estifanos Afeworki Ambassador of Eritrea to Japan, a fisheries survey mission was conducted by two Japanese experts from Overseas Agro-Fisheries Consultants Ltd. From 24 to 28 September 2014. In this mission, taking into account relevance, practicality and possibilities of projects that can be taken by the Government of Japan for financing, priority areas have been identified in fisheries and aquaculture cooperation to help in this important process of understanding.

Therefore, subsequent to the above mentioned efforts, it has been agreed by both sides to kick start once again the technical cooperation in the sector of fisheries and other related marine activities.

A master plan study for fisheries, aquaculture and management with the participation of experts from JICA, MMR and other stakeholders was also agreed to be conducted to serve as a base line in this cooperation. This will of course involve, as we all know, analysis of the existing situation, market, ecology, fish stock studies and experimental operations to enhance and develop the capacity of the sector i.e. to make it conducive for short and long term tie-ups with Foreign Direct and Local Investments.

These continued endeavours will definitely contribute into creating economic development and to furthering employment opportunities in Eritrea.

It is the Ministry of Marine Resources hope and wish that today's workshop and deliberations will also incorporate the Government of Eritrea's prioritized assistant request to the Government of Japan of 2015 i.e. The Project to the Expansion and Improvement of the College of Marine Science Technology in the Port of Massawa.

It is also hoped after study is completed, a final master plan on the selected sub-sector will be drawn. Based on pilot projects agreed and implemented on ground - a mutually agreed parallel activities will be carried out to build the needed capacity of the sector towards a sustainable resource management, fishermen and aquaculture development projects as a sub-components of the study.

In conclusion, let me say and state in brief here that the Ministry of Marine Resources of Eritrea is of a strong believe: that in view of the long and short term interest and in line with the natural give-and-take relationships that shall exist for many years to come in areas of trade, investment, tourism and other mutual interest partnerships programs between our friendly countries, FDI from Japan Is targeted to participate in the rehabilitation and rebirth of the fisheries sector of our country.

Thank you and wish you success once again,