

Remarks by H.E. Mr. ESTIFANOS Afeworki, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps in Tokyo on the Sayonara Luncheon hosted by the African Diplomatic Corps on the Departure of H.E. Dr. Charles MURIGANDE Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Rwanda in Tokyo April 2, 2015

Your Excellency,
Dr. Charles MURIGANDE Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Rwanda,

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues,

First of all, allow me to express that it is a great honor and privilege to extend, on behalf of the African Diplomatic Corps present here and myself, our profound gratitude and appreciation for your active contribution and support to our collective diplomacy during your mission in Tokyo since October 4, 2011.

Under your wise, experienced, practical leadership and guidance, the TICAD committee has been revamped before two months in view of starting preparation for TICAD VI which is tentatively planned to be held in January or Mid 2016.

The ADC last meeting held on January 26, 2015 has also agreed on the general orientation for preparing the “ADC proposal for TICAD VI” and has made division of labor and drawn a tentative time line for its activities towards this end.

A task group composed of two Ambassadors from each regional group of Africa i.e. Eastern Africa: Djibouti and Kenya; Central Africa: Cameroon & Congo; Northern Africa:

Morocco and Tunisia; and Southern Africa: Angola and South Africa has also been assigned by ADC to improve and support the effectiveness and efficiency of this preparation.

Based on the same decision, diplomats appointed from the same missions mentioned above were given 3 to 4 weeks to make a survey of the existing information which can be provided by the different stakeholders of TICAD V including from the African Union Commission and prepare “ADC proposal for TICAD VI”; to be considered by ADC for adoption as a zero draft by March; and full consultation to be completed by April 10, 2015.

ADC plenary was then expected to review and send the final zero draft proposal of ADC to the African Union Commission on April 15, 2016.

It was not pleasant news; of course, ADC is now being forced to change horses in the middle of the stream by Your Excellency’s sudden departure. But, I would like to inform and assure Your Excellency in my capacity as a Dean of ADC and on behalf of our new chair of the TICAD Committee H.E. Mr. Belmiro Jose MALATE Ambassador of the Republic of Mozambique that we shall do all in our capacity to make this transfer of responsibility as smooth as possible and to accelerate the preparation of TICAD VI. ADC shall remain seized and in constant engagement with Japan in the preparation that you have started already for the successful Summit of Africa Japan leaders to be held in 2016.

Secondly, allow me to say a few words seizing this Sayonara Luncheon on the friendly country of Rwanda which is strategically located in the Great Lakes. 1994 Rwandan Genocide is fresh in our memories. It is a clear example of a failure of humanity and geopolitics in the modern age. Colonial and neocolonial forces played with fire on the weakness of a young nation state of Rwanda 1994. Forces of

governance who used political legitimacy for ethnic objectives caused massive loss to the people of the country and its economy. Forces of evil used ethnic identities against legitimate citizens of Rwanda. A red light crossed by these evil forces in Rwanda must be a lesson to all peace-loving African nation states and people. Rwanda has come of age through this difficult experience of genocide. Therefore, I believe, that Rwandans deserve unreserved support to the self-effort of rebuilding and rehabilitation of their nation.

Your Excellency and many Rwandans have given up their career in support of these noble efforts. You chose to be a soldier instead of Your Excellency's, bright future in mathematics, to serve the building of a vibrant and just nation to its citizens. Let me take this opportunity to wish Your Excellency and all Rwandans success in the difficult odyssey of serving and building a strong nation, which is rising-up against all odds from the ashes and destruction of genocide.

Your Excellency,

As it is always said, there is time to come and time to go in the different missions of diplomacy, and to wrap up my brief sayonara remark, let me wish Your Excellency and family all the best for the future.

I ask all Excellencies and Dear colleagues present to raise their glass and join me to wish His Excellency and family good health and success.

Kampai!!