

**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 the Sayonara Luncheon by the African
Diplomatic Corps for H. E. Mr. Abdelwahab Mohammed
ELHIJAZI the Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan on June
13, 2015:**

H. E. Mr. Abdelwahab Mohammed ELHIJAZI the Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan, and

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues, Members of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) present,

Let me first thank and express our gratitude to H.E. Mr. Jacob Dickie NKATE Ambassador of the Republic of Botswana to Japan for organizing this Sayonara Luncheon, in a very short notice, to honor, on this occasion, the solidarity and friendship extended to all the ADC members by H. E. Mr. Abdelwahab Mohammed ELHIJAZI the Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan and to bid farewell on his departure next week, after the successful completion of his mission in Tokyo, where he served since September 6, 2011.

Sudan is in the Nile Basin of Africa bordered by Egypt to the north, the Red Sea, Eritrea and Ethiopia to the East, South Sudan to the south, the Central African Republic to the southwest, Chad to the west and Libya to the northwest. It is the third largest country in Africa with a fast developing economy rich in natural and human resources - endowed with a fertile arable land – known as the breadbasket of Africa. The long history of civilizations of our African continent had their centers and tributaries in the present day Sudan. The history, religion and culture of Sudan is deeply intertwined with all its neighboring countries making it a melting pot of many

indigenous Nubian, Nilotic, Cushitic, Semitic, Hamitic and Bantu heritages and is home to many rich biodiversity of species of plants and animals in different climatic environments – a major tourist destinations of Africa expressed as a historical route crisscrossing Cairo – Khartoum -- Asmara – Addis Abeba - Nairobi – Dar es Salaam – Entebe and other destinations in Southern Part of Africa. Sudan also figures out prominently in Asian countries energy security and mineral resources including Japan due to its crude oil export to the region. In the last decade Sudan has become one of the big destination of FDI and is one of the fast industrializing countries in Africa.

H.E. Mr. ELHIJAZI in his diplomatic carrier has served his country Sudan in different capacities both in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and foreign diplomatic missions of Sudan since 1986: Morocco (Rabat) Mali (Bamako) Algeria (Algiers) Khartoum (Protocol) Belgium (Brussels) Luxembourg Germany (Berlin) and Japan (Tokyo). Ambassador ELHIJAZI, the soft spoken, seasoned diplomat with a focused intervention was a plus in our African Diplomatic Group activities in Tokyo always. His Excellency's contribution and wisdom to ADC's collective diplomacy with Japan through the TICAD process was exemplary. One of our key guides of our collective diplomacy with AUC – Japan Friendship League is going to be missed now. His Excellency, dear wife and children were leading activities in ADC's public diplomacy with parliamentarians and other members diplomatic corps which included charity events, cultural and sports activities. The family represented in Japan very typical characteristics of friendship and hospitality culture of Sudan.

Your Excellency,

On a personal note, Sudan being my second home as an

Eritrean, in good time as well as in difficult time of my life. Your Excellency, allow me to say a few words on this matter. As we all know, Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement was signed in Asmara in 14 October 2006. Under the auspices of the GoE, with no other foreign involvement, except the necessary direct dialogue and efforts of the Sudanese people, a just and successful lasting settlement to the conflict in Eastern Sudan was reached. In the last decade this area has changed from a conflict zone to a promising development area. Western Eritrea and Eastern Red Sea Area of Sudan have opened up their borders to free movement of passengers, people, mail and commodities including but not excluding energy. I believe that the very deeply rooted historical and culture bondage of dialogue, tolerance and reconciliation that happily existed between the two people of Eritrea and Sudan for centuries shall always remain pivotal to the current and future peace, prosperity, progress and regional cooperation of both countries, the Horn of Africa, Red Sea and the Middle East.

Your Excellency,

In occlusion, it is always hard and difficult to say goodbye. But the ADC members and myself consider themselves to be fortunate to have met and worked with a special person like you. We all deeply appreciated your soft-spoken words of wisdom that you so kindly shared with all of us.

As we say Sayonara, Your Excellency and we all the ADC members, it is to remind ourselves that Sayonara are not forever, nor are they the end. They are simply words to say that we will miss you and your family dearly and that we will remember you all fondly. Although we may be separated by time and distance in the interim, nothing will diminish the important role that you have and always will play in our lives and the African issues. We have to keep in touch were ever we

are.

Thank you Ambassador, as a token to commemorate this day,
the ADC would like to present this small memorabilia please,

Thank you