

**- STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ESTIFANOS AFEWORKI, AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF ERITREA TO JAPAN, AT THE TICAD VI MINISTERIAL MEETING TOKYO, JAPAN, 6-7 OCTOBER 2018.** Mr. Chairman,

All protocol observed,

In my brief statement today, I would like to focus on and highlight issues of integration of resources and efforts to face current challenges that need to be tackled in the Horn of Africa. The Peace and Friendship Treaty recently signed in Jeddah between Eritrea and Ethiopia is a historic milestone in the region. Mutual respect, cooperation, tolerance, and understanding, which are essential for sustaining regional peace, are now ready to take off in the Horn Africa, Nile Basin countries, and the Middle East.

It is important for the TICAD co-organizers to embrace and collaborate closely with the Horn of Africa leaders' ideals, as well as accompany the new page of history availed by the current process, which aims to build trust, peace, stability, prosperity, and economic integration in the region. There is no question that this new chapter of history and the powerful winds of change will positively impact regional and international security arrangements, now and in the future. The strategic importance of the Horn of Africa, comprising Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, and Kenya, has long been understood to Europe, the Middle East, the United States, Russia, India, China, Japan, and beyond. I will not dwell in detail on this and other related historical and geo-political influences in this meeting.

But one thing that needs to be mentioned is that the region, including my country, Eritrea, is fully capable of offering important opportunities, including a strategic location, rich resources, business, and other mutual benefits to Japan's private and public sector. It is sufficient to state here that this region is a part of Africa, where the great Nile River flows, dotted with rich heritage sites from historical civilization centers. It also has a long coast facing the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Indian Ocean, inhabited by more than 360 million people. Furthermore, it is the origin of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and many other indigenous beliefs. It is home to 746 ethno-linguistic groups, which strive toward and deserve equal opportunity. This region is also blessed with abundant skilled youth and natural resources.

Therefore, genuine support by Japan to the strategic public and private partnership efforts of the region, especially in the areas of quality infrastructure and services development, is key to the

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future economic growth of more than a quarter of a billion people.

Hence, we call for cooperation from and support by the TICAD process towards these goals, which are cardinal and timely in this important Ministerial follow-up meeting of TICAD VI.

Items on the Horn of Africa's to do list are too many to note at this particular time, but a focused contribution towards the development of the strategic trade corridors of the region and concrete support on the SDGs, are necessary, as are continued efforts by the WHO, GLOBAL FUND, and GAVI health programs through the TICAD process.

This is an opportune period for foreign direct investment, know-how, and technology from Japan to flow into our region. It is an ideal time to cooperate and engage in business with our region. Eritrea looks forward to constructive engagement with Japan on this new endeavor.

Thank you.