

**Speech by Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Kozo TAKEDA,
at the Stakeholders Sensitisation Meeting on TICAD**

13th August 2019

It is my great pleasure to be with you today at this Stakeholders Sensitisation Meeting in preparation for the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) 7 hosted by Civic Commission for Africa (C-CfA). I would like to thank C-CfA for inviting us to this important event.

Last week, together with the Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation, the Japanese Embassy hosted another event related to TICAD, namely the Botswana-Japan stakeholder seminar on TICAD process, mainly targeting the private sector. I am glad to see that TICAD is attracting a lot of interests and attentions from various sectors, as it embodies the uniqueness of TICAD: being an open forum that generates innovative discussion, bringing together a broad range of global knowhow and efforts of the international community.

TICAD was launched by Japan in 1993 and co-hosted by the United Nations, UNDP, the World Bank and the African Union Commission (AUC). TICAD is a multilateral forum whose participants include not only African countries but also international organizations, partner countries, private companies and civil society organization involved in development. TICAD has advocated the importance of African ownership and international partnership. Today, the development philosophy based on these two principles is shared globally.

Steady fulfilment of promises is also another unique characteristic of TICAD. In the TICAD process, Japan has established follow-up mechanisms to make sure we keep our promises. For example, pledges are announced at the summit-level meetings, and the status of their implementation is confirmed at the ministerial meetings which are held in between TICAD summits.

Over time, the focus of TICAD has shifted. At its foundation, TICAD was about how best we can provide assistance to Africa. Reflecting Africa's huge potential and its dynamism, the current focus is on how the Government of Japan can enhance economic cooperation with Africa and strengthen public-private partnership in order to achieve economic growth.

However, I would like to reiterate that, our aim should not be just to achieve an economic growth. We should achieve a balanced growth that benefits vast majority of society in Africa, especially the disadvantaged. To do so, your voice, voice from civil society organisations, is indispensable, as you are the one who know the real needs of people and can convey such people's voice to us. You have a big role in TICAD to make sure that we are in the right direction to achieve mutually beneficial collaboration for prospering Africa's development. Therefore, I am very happy to know that your representative, Ms. Maungo Mooki together with her colleagues will participate in TICAD 7 in Yokohama, representing the civil society not only of Botswana but also of the whole African continent and convey your message: Civil Society Aspirations.

It is my sincere hope that this meeting will contribute to enhancing your understanding on the importance and goal of TICAD. I am very confident that TICAD will further strengthen our ties with African countries including Botswana.

Thank you very much.