

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

PRESS RELEASE N 291/16

The voices of women strongly echoed as TICAD VI Summit convened Gender officials from Africa and Japan to enhance partnership towards improved socio economic development



Nairobi, Kenya 26th August 2016:

Ministers, Ambassadors and experts from Africa and Japan concerned with gender issues in maritime, business construction, mining, agriculture, logistics, private finance among others convened together in an effort to build on commitments made to gender equality and women's empowerment, the TICAD VI Declaration and actions as outlined in the Yokohama Action Plan of 2013-2017. The meeting focussed around the consultation of the Japan-Africa business women exchange program that is an initiative

of the Government of Japan aimed at creating business networks and relationships, skills and entrepreneurial capacity development as well as access to finance for African women and young girls. The African Union through the Directorate of Women, Gender and Development and the Government of Japan held the meeting to facilitate for the launch of the Japan-Africa business women exchange program and also to ensure resource mobilization for the fund for African Women through the TICAD action plan



Opening the event, H.E Erastus Mwencha, the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission stressed AU role in spear heading gender equality and empowerment initiatives on the continent. "This is clearly visible through the 50/50 percent equal representation policy that the commission highly upholds" said Mr. Mwencha. H.E Mwencha highly praised the role of the TICAD VI platform which prioritises areas such as prosperity, stability, economic growth and industrialisation these goals

which he said are similar to the AU Agenda 2063, Africa's clear roadmap towards transforming the continent and empowering women



Minister of Sudan for Gender Affairs H. E Mashair Aldawalab, and Rapporteur of the STC expressed her sincere gratitude to the government of Kenya for hosting the TICAD VI as it is the first time since 1993 that the summit is held in Africa. H. E Mashair noted that the meeting is timely as it comes when the 30th anniversary of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the beginning of the second phase of the African women's decade in the AU's implementation framework for gender

equality and women's empowerment. "The meeting on the theme improved women socio economic development reiterates the African Unions commitment to the realisation of gender equality and is also a call for heightening effective implementation of gender empowerment policies" concluded H.E Mashair.

Honourable Ms. Fumiko Hayashi, Mayor of Yokohama City in Japan, speaking as the previous host for the gender meeting on driving development through women empowerment at the TICAD IV Summit held in 2008 and TICAD V held in 2013 underlined the fund for African women through the TICAD VI action plan which hopes to nurture the development of female entrepreneurs. Ms Fumiko said that the Japan African Business women exchange programme has until date welcomed 58 business women from 17 African countries, she further underlined that the programme drives initiatives for female entrepreneurs and supports women projects.

Speaking on behalf of Mrs. Sicily Kariuki, Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Kenya was Ms. Zainab W. Hussein who stressed that the meeting is held timely as it is the African Union year of Human Rights with specific focus on the rights of women in Africa and also at a time when the AU is working on the continental agenda to move forward the Africa Agenda 2063 that seeks women inclusion in all spheres of life. In that regard Ms. Zainab acknowledged the role of the Japan- Africa business women exchange programme as an important channel for learning and building women's entrepreneurship. In her closing remarks Ms. Zainab commended the partnership between Africa and Japan since financing for gender equality is essential for social economic empowerment

Also present was Honourable Mr. Mitsunari Okamoto member of the house of representatives of Japan who noted that the Japan- African Business women exchange programme is not only for women but also for the men and people in society who will help shape the future on gender equality

Following panel discussions chaired by Mrs. Mahawa Kaba Wheeler AU Director for Women, Gender and Development Directorate held around the theme of the meeting **"improved women economic development"**, various gender representatives expressed their interest in support of the Fund for African Women.

H.E Sicily K. Kairuki Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs of Kenya closed the meeting and encouraged women groups to share lessons learned so as to foster mentorship that will create platforms for women to help each other,

she also reiterated Kenya government's commitment to supporting international and regional statutes on gender.

For more details on the meeting please contact:

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