

AFRICAN UNION

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TICAD V SUMMIT

1-3 June 2013

Yokohama, Japan

Statement by H.E. Dr. Nkosazana DLAMINI ZUMA

Chairperson of the African Union Commission

at the Opening Session/ Plenary I

1st June 2013

Check against delivery

Excellency Mr Shinzo ABE, Prime Minister of Japan

Excellency Mr Hailemariam DESALEGN, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Chairperson of the African Union,

Excellencies Head of State and Government,

Honourable Heads of Delegations,

Excellencies Co-organizers of TICAD,

Excellencies Head of International and Regional Organizations,

Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished Representatives of the Civil Society,

Honourable Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please, allow me, at the onset of my statement, to express my deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to H.E Mr Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, the Government and the people of this great country for the warm welcome extended to me and to the delegation of the African Union Commission.

I wish to commend the Government of Japan, which spearheaded the preparations for this Summit, for its efforts in making the TICAD process a successful one by working in close collaboration with all Co-organizers, African countries and other relevant stakeholders.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

This TICAD V Summit is taking place in a particular context, which is marked by two important events: the celebration of the OAU/AU Fiftieth Anniversary and the Twentieth Anniversary of the launching of the TICAD process. Such celebrations usually involve twofold actions: stock taking and the designing of the prospects for the future.

We, at the African Union, have just launched the yearlong celebrations of our Golden Jubilee anniversary under the theme of “Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance” which is very relevant at this stage of our history and captures the core principles and shared values of African development: people-driven and centered, unity and solidarity, self-reliance and self-determination; as well as the resolve not only to rid ourselves of poverty, disease and war, but to work for a peaceful and prosperous continent that takes its rightful place in the world.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Indeed, Our continent is once again infused with a sense of optimism and unimaginable opportunities, with a number of positive indicators and trends.

Japan, which has from the land, ocean and more importantly the ingenuity, creativity and innovation of Japanese people has become a modern country and one of the largest economies in the World gives us the evidence that Africa’s demographic dynamics present a unique opportunity. There are already fifty two (52) cities in Africa with more than 1 million inhabitants.

By 2025, a quarter of the population under 25 will be living in Africa, 50% of Africans will be living in cities by 2030, our working age population will reach 1.1 billion by 2040 and our total population will be over 2 billion by 2050. Africa's middle class continues to expand, currently estimated at over 350 million with more people pursuing opportunities in the cities. Young people with their energy, creativity and enthusiasm are seen as representing “the most dynamic human resource available” and with women representing just over half of the continent’s population. Africa’s greatest resource and potential is clearly its people – now and into the future.

This is why our top priority is to investing in people in people through education and skills development and by also ensuring healthcare and food security to them, Africa that is not confronted with aging population will create conditions conducive to the full utilization of all its people, including youth and women as main drivers of economic growth, to achieve its objectives for transformation and modernization.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our objective for sustainable food security will achieved if we develop and modernize agriculture, promote agro-processing. Africa has a large share of the world’s reserves in a number of critical minerals, as well as oil and gas. 60% of the world’s unused arable land is on the continent. Our land area is 12 times larger than India’s, with lesser number of people. Africa is also blessed with abundant water resources, including but not limited to the 63 international river basins.

Africa 's renewed commitment to industrialization, and the development of diversified industrial capabilities must therefore build on its key natural endowments to spur sustainable and equitable growth: addressing its infrastructure backlogs to improve regional trade and spatial development; revolutionizing agricultural production and agro-processing, and ensuring that the exploitation of African natural resources, especially its mineral resources, results in a fair sharing of the proceeds, are saved and invested in developing productivity capacity, and that mining contribute to industrial development through backward and forward linkages. Against this background, the AU should be a catalyst and its Agenda 2063 currently being developed will set up the vision as well as the priorities.

With regards to infrastructure, there is no question that there are also pockets of progress. In the areas of telecommunications, whereas African telephone connectivity was just one-tenth of global average in the mid-1990s, by 2011 it was half the global average, growing at a whopping 20% per year between 2006 and 2011. Thus in 2011, Africa became the second largest mobile market in the world after Asia, with about 620 million mobile connections. Africa's fast absorption of information, communication technologies has resulted in enhanced innovation in many areas such as access to health services, agricultural support, micro-finance access and improving access of rural producers and entrepreneurs to markets.

In the area of knowledge management, Africa recognizes the importance of science and technology. During the last months we have adopted the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) and the launched the Pan African University. We are confident that through TICAD V, efforts will be made to boost science and technology and link it to the real needs of African economies.

Large-scale investment in energy, including in hydro, coal, geo-thermo and solar power over the next decade will therefore be critical to Africa's transformation – in both economic and social spheres – moving forward with the PIDA priority projects in energy, transport, ICT and other economic and social infrastructure is therefore a non-negotiable.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Africa can learn from Japan's experience in areas like industrialization especially small and medium enterprises, agro-processing and building of infrastructures. Africa as a big island surrounded by small Islands with a long coastline which it could take advantage of in building the pillar of the "Blue economy" as Japan rightly did.

With regard to TICAD, it is worth recalling that this important partnership Forum was established in 1993. Japan recognized that in this fast-globalized world of which Africa is part, there would not be any world peace and development if problems facing Africa are not taken care of at a global level and in a coherent and strategic manner. TICAD's achievements in various African countries speak highly of the success of the TICAD process. A quick look at the TICAD IV Annual Progress Report gives an overall idea of the scope of Japan's commitments to the continent.

At this juncture, I wish to highlight the fact that African Union, in line with the principle of ownership which underpins the TICAD process at the very beginning, designed a clear policy for the development of the continent through continental flagship programs such as PIDA, AIDA, CAADP, APRM, etc.

These programs express the will of our leaders to move towards an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. It is our hope that, as the African Union Commission is a new comer as a Co-organizer, its voice would be heard in putting forward African priorities as the TICAD process is all about contributing towards the development of the continent.

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

This will require a dynamic Private sector, with necessary Skills to meet needs of the market, and product standards, which is capable to develop viable businesses with added value and contribute to poverty reduction through investment and job creation. There is a need to also pay special attention to gender, to develop capacity and innovative financing mechanisms, to develop a pipeline of bankable projects and effective public-private partnerships, to encourage and support regional approaches, to promote South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as well as effective partnerships between governments, private sector, development assistance partners, investors and the diaspora. Africa sees what Japan has to offer from its own development experiences. Japan's expertise in private-sector-driven economic growth, infrastructure and agricultural development and energy efficiency could be well adapted to the African context.

This fifth TICAD Summit will adopt two main documents, namely the Yokohama Declaration 2013 and the Yokohama Plan of Action 2013-2017, as a consensus was reached for their adoption and submission to the Summit for endorsement.

This has to be noted as a positive move for further success stories. As I conclude, I would wish to reassure the strong commitment and readiness of the Commission to continue its collaboration with the Government of Japan and other Co-organizers to make TIVAD V a great success. We will also pursue our consultations with Japan on issue of global governance such as the UN reform. I wish fruitful deliberations to our meeting and, later on, successful implementation of decisions and actions.

I thank you for your kind attention.