

SPEECH BY H. E. MR. KAZUYA OGAWA, AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN, ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF HIS CREDENTIALS, ON 27TH JUNE 2013.

Honourable Louise Mushikiwabo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation;

Honourable Members of Parliament; Your Excellency Ambassadors and High Commissioners; Distinguished Representatives of International Organisations accredited to Rwanda;

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you here for joining today's reception. It is my great honour and pleasure to officially introduce myself, after the presentation of my credentials to His Excellency President Paul Kagame, which took place on 24th May.

On the day of presentation, I had an opportunity to exchange views and ideas in various fields with President Kagame. Particularly, I placed a special emphasis on three fields as the focus of activities during my tour of duty in Rwanda.

The first is the "expansion of economic cooperation", in various domains such as water supply, agriculture, education, energy and infrastructure, etc. The second is the "promotion of trade and investment", aiming to accelerate Rwanda's economic growth. And the third is the "facilitation of people's exchange", not only increasing the

number of tourists from Japan, but also coordinating the reciprocal visits of high-level figures both of the public and the private sectors.

In the meeting, I also touched upon the similarities of the people of Japan and Rwanda from the viewpoints of “serious and diligent”, but “reserved” characters. I have almost no doubt that a number of Rwandans would share my opinion on these similarities. So that I think there are many fields where we Japanese and Rwandans can work together.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In early June, the Government of Japan hosted the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, more commonly known as its abbreviation of TICAD V, together with the other co-organisers: the African Union Commission; the United Nations; UNDP; and the World Bank.

Since its inception in 1993, TICAD, including its process, has been the most important framework for Japan to promote African development, under the dual principles of African “ownership” and international “partnership”. This duality, comprising both bilateral and multilateral aspects, is one of the notable features of the TICAD process.

As you may know, President Kagame also visited Japan for TICAD V, and played a leading role in encouraging lively discussions. Take for instance, the President made remarks in an official session on gender equality and women's empowerment, and a plenary on peace and stability. Moreover, during TICAD V, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had a summit meeting with President Kagame and discussed the importance of the promotion of trade and investment, and the people's exchange, on top of development assistance in order to deepen and strengthen bilateral relation.

After series of dialogues with African partners, "Japan's Assistance Package for Africa" was officially announced as one of the outcomes of TICAD V. The basic policy of the package is to boost the growth of Africa through private-sector trade and investment, and to tackle the issue of "Human Security" through Japan's unique assistance approaches. Under this policy, Japan will contribute to the growth of Africa, utilising private and public means, up to 32 billion US Dollars, in the next five years.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that Rwanda, the beautiful country of a thousand hills, has a lot of potential to become a driving force for the peace and stability, and the socio-economic development of the Great Lakes region, and beyond.

Bearing always this in mind and based on the three fields which I mentioned earlier, I will do my best to further strengthen the already existing friendly relationship between Japan and Rwanda. In other words, the Embassy will work hand in hand with the Government of Rwanda and all of you here, while fully respecting Rwanda's efforts towards self-reliance.

Thank you for your attention.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to propose a toast to your good health and friendship between Japan and the Republic of Rwanda.

Today, we will serve high quality Sake, Japanese rice wine, and some Japanese foods, like sushi and tempura. I hope you will enjoy them.