

REMARKS BY SICILY K. KARIUKI (MRS), CBS, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, YOUTH AND GENDER AFFAIRS DURING THE SEND OFF CEREMONY FOR THE 3RD BATCH OF ABE MASTERS INITIATIVE AWARDEES HELD AT PANAFRIC HOTEL, NAIROBI ON WEDNESDAY, 17TH AUGUST, 2016

H.E. Uesawa, Ambassador of Japan

H.E Benson Ogutu, Special Envoy & Ambassador for TICAD

Dr. Kevit Desai, Chairman, Linking Industry with Academia (LIWA)

Chief Representative, Kenya JICA Office

ABE Participants

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I wish to thank Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for the kind invitation to be part of this very exciting sendoff event. I honored to make remarks this morning as we Sendoff these 33 future leaders of Kenya, selected to participate in the ABE Masters and Internship Initiative.

Congratulations to you 33 applicants for successfully passing the rigorous interviews leading to the Masters scholarships.

This journey began at the Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development (TICAD) on 5th November 2013 when the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Abe reaffirmed Japan's commitment in furthering

development of Japan and Africa partnership by offering one thousand (1000) scholarships to Africa to be implemented over five years. Since inception of the programme, a total of 133 youth from Kenya have benefited from the ABE scholarships. **1st Batch, 2014, 55; 2nd Batch, 2015, 45 and 3rd Batch, 2016, 33).**

Kenya has received considerable allocation of the ABE scholarship since it was launched in 2014 compared to other African countries. And I believe this is due to Kenya's great potential, competitive strength and ability of our youth in academic pursuit, notwithstanding the strong bilateral ties that exist between our two Governments.

The history of Japan and Kenya's cooperation dates back to 1963 soon after independence and through the years, JICA has been at the centre of Kenya's economic and social development.

JICA has supported capacity development for our human resource, health, environment, economic development and rural and agricultural development. this is the background which you 33 young Kenyans have been selected to participate in the Masters programmes.

I am pleased to note that this occasion occurs within this month of August when Kenya is preparing to host the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on Africa's development (TICAD VI) Summit, at Kenyatta International Convention Centre, Nairobi from 27th to 28th August, 2016. This is the first time TICAD is being held outside Japan since its inception in 1993.

It is indeed a great honor and privilege for Kenya and Africa in general to host the first ever TICAD Summit in the continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The relevance and timeliness of this Send-Off cannot be gainsaid. Kenya in 2008 embarked on an ambitious development agenda captured in the Kenya Vision 2030.

The Kenya Vision 2030 aims to transform Kenya into a globally competitive middle income industrialized nation with a high quality of life by 2030.

This transformation is to be driven by skilled Kenyan manpower with competencies in diverse range of fields encompassed in the Vision 2030. The Kenya Vision 2030 lists infrastructural development projects which include expansion and modernization of aviation facilities, expansion of the rail network, the LAPSSET corridor and development of new and renewable energy sources.

This ABE Initiative has focused on those skills which will reflect the development dynamics and changing needs of the industry sector.

To deliver on these projects, engineers, information technology specialists, economists and environmental scientists are required.

Under the economic pillar, Kenya aims to increase agricultural production through innovative, commercially oriented and modern agricultural practices. Once again, to deliver on these aspirations, agricultural specialists, environmentalists and bio-agricultural scientists are needed.

At the global level, the community of nations has adopted Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals, which in our context will support Kenya and other countries to transform our economy into a more equitable country with greater economic opportunities.

To our esteemed scholarship recipients, whatever you have chosen to study, the goal is to ultimately contribute to this higher vision and skilled man power required.

In the recent past, Kenya has witnessed new discoveries in oil, coal and other natural and mineral resources. Specific and comprehensive skill sets will be required for their exploration and effective management into wealth for our nation.

To realize progress in the areas I have mentioned, we need to protect our country's security. Sustainable economic growth can only be achieved in an environment where there is peace and stability at a national, regional and global level.

This requires deepening of our understanding and knowledge in international development, international relations, regional development and management and I am glad to see that this is included in the range of studies that some of you will be undertaking.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It cannot go unsaid that the role of the private sector is crucial to the development of Kenya and of any country for that matter.

In Kenya, our private sector is vibrant and makes significant contribution to our GDP and job creation. The total size of this sector is much larger than most of the economies of the countries in the region.

In this sense, there is opportunity for those of you from the private sector to come back with the knowledge and experience to increase the competitiveness of this vital sector and participate constructively in our country's economic journey.

Mr. Ambassador,

The Government is committed to supporting as many young people as possible to do this training in order to acquire the skills needed for technological and enterprise growth.

I would like to appeal to the Japanese Government to upscale the support it accords to Kenya in training and capacity building so as to provide more opportunities to young people in Kenya.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today is about these future leaders, Congratulations again, on your achievements. You are the future global leaders and you are expected to make your own contribution to the betterment of the world.

You have been selected because you have the potential to contribute to the development of industries in our country. Your knowledge and expertise will be valuable assets to our country and in the region.

Regardless of your chosen area of study, I am convinced that your skills will prepare you to step out into the world and make impactful contribution.

A key strength of our country is the incomparable human capital demonstrated through a brilliant pool of young scholars like yourself. You are the hope and future of Kenya. You here are the hope and future of the world.

Remember, you are also going to Japan as ambassadors of Kenya and I have confidence that you will represent our country well. Carry with you positive lessons and character from our rich culture, natural heritage, diversity and history. Equally, you are going to a country of similarly rich culture and heritage, please spend some time to explore and expand your horizon.

Allow me to once again thank the Government of Japan and its aid agency, JICA for the continued support in developing our human resource capacity.

Esteemed participants, again congratulations and I wish you a safe journey and successful stay in Japan.

I thank you

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