

**The First TICAD V Ministerial Meeting (May 4-5, 2014)**  
**Special Session on “Empowering Women and Youth”**  
**Chair’s Summary**

The special session on “Empowering Women and Youth” was co-chaired by H. E. Mr. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and Dr. Rose Mwebaza, Gender Advisor to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. The session was opened with keynote presentations by Mr. Kishida and Dr. Mwebaza, followed by panel discussions by H. E. Amb. Jean-Baptiste Natama, Chief of Staff of the African Union Commission, Dr. Raymonde Agossou, Head of Youth Division of the African Union Commission, and Ms. Rumiko Seya, President of Japan Center for Conflict Prevention.

Mr. Kishida and Dr. Mwebaza observed that in order to empower women and youth, it is essential to give special attention to three key elements in advancing measures at national, regional and global levels, namely: social and economic advancement of women, mainstreaming women in the area of peace and security, and building capacity of youth through education and vocational training.

Following the keynote speeches by the two presenters, participants engaged in discussion over a wider range of issues, shared information, and offered practical suggestions for further empowerment of women and youth in Africa. The following points highlight key issues and conclusions reached.

- (1) Participants shared recognition that women and youth have the greatest potential for development and economic growth throughout the world, yet they have not been fully mobilized. They acknowledged endeavors to empower women and youth at national, regional and global levels to date. For example, they recalled that the TICAD V outcome documents, *Yokohama Declaration 2013* and *Yokohama Action Plan 2013-2017* gave special attention to mainstreaming women and youth and the promotion of human security across all aspects of development agenda; and that the African Union has undertaken various initiatives to mainstream gender and youth, including through the AU Gender Policy and the AU Youth Decade Plan of Action 2009-2018.
- (2) **On women empowerment**, participants recalled that TICAD V involved holding a thematic session on *Driving Development in Africa through Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*, and welcomed the holding of this special session to

advance the cooperation between Africa and TICAD partners in this field. Participants agreed that driving progress in Africa requires investments in women's social and economic advancement.

- (3) Participants acknowledged that entrepreneurship among women is increasing in city and rural areas of Africa, while the profitability of their business endeavors needs to be strengthened. When profitability is strengthened, women will be able to transform their engagement from petty trade and micro-enterprises to small-and medium scale enterprises, which in turn would increase incomes and create employment.
- (4) In addition to the economic and social aspects, participants acknowledged the importance of mainstreaming women in the area of peace and security, consistent with the UN Security Council resolutions on *Women, Peace and Security*. Participants recalled that these resolutions have stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-building and peacekeeping.
- (5) **On youth empowerment**, participants recognized that many young people remain marginalized, disconnected or excluded from the opportunities that globalization offers. In Africa in particular, over 40% of the current African population is youth and over 65% of Africa's population is under the age of 35 – making Africa the most Youth-full continent.
- (6) Participants recalled that TICAD V in *Yokohama Action Plan 2013-2017* emphasized the importance of strengthening innovative programs on youth employment and entrepreneurship for capacity development and consolidation of peace. Drawing upon the African Youth Charter, participants discussed strategies Africa has embraced for youth empowerment, including: rights-based approach to youth development, youth mainstreaming, skills development and mentorship, entrepreneurship development, and youth participation.

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