

**Opening Remarks by Mr. Minoru Kiuchi
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan**

**At the Side Event: “FfD and the promotion of quality infrastructure investment”
on the occasion of the Third International Conference
on Financing for Development**

13 July 2015, Addis Ababa

H.E. Dr. Arkebe Oqubay, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia,
H.E. Engineer Hailemeskel Tefera, State Minister of Urban Development, Housing and
Construction,
H.E. Ato Tekletsadik Reba, State Minister of Transport,
H.E. Mr. Sinatambou, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International
Trade of Mauritius,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this event on “FfD and the promotion of quality infrastructure investment,” co-organized by the Governments of Ethiopia, the Philippines, and Japan.

The development of quality infrastructure is recognized today as a shared goal by governments and stakeholders around the world. This is reflected in the draft “Addis Ababa Action Agenda”, in which parties are to pledge to “facilitate development of sustainable, accessible and resilient quality infrastructure in developing countries through enhanced financial and technical support”.

Last year, the APEC leaders pledged to “develop, maintain and renew quality infrastructure” in the APEC Connectivity Blueprint in Beijing. The G20 leaders, for their part, pledged to “lift quality public and private infrastructure investment” in Brisbane. The list goes on.

Why this marked international focus on “quality infrastructure”?

Reflecting on this question, one should remember that building infrastructure is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end. The goal is to achieve inclusive, sustainable and resilient growth for all.

What this means is that infrastructure should be developed so it is aligned with and contributes to development strategies at the local, national and regional levels. Aspects such as connectivity, long-term cost effectiveness and value-for-money are essential; furthermore, safety, resilience to natural disasters, conformity with the local ecosystem, and contribution to members of the local community's well-being are also vital.

Effective resource mobilization, including from the private sector, is equally essential. Building capacity, and developing an inclusive partnership among various stakeholders, including businesses, local governments and civil society organizations, are crucially important to this end.

It is encouraging to note that governments, regional institutions and international organizations around the world are recognizing these necessities, and are taking proactive steps.

Speaking for my own government, quality infrastructure investment has long been one of Japan's top priorities in development cooperation policy. This is manifested, for example, in Japan's commitment to contribute 6.5 billion dollars over five years to infrastructure development in Africa, announced at the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, or TICAD V, in 2013. I am pleased to share that this commitment is being steadily implemented, with concrete results already seen on African soil.

To further unleash the untapped potential for growth in Africa, it is vital to enhance regional connectivity by developing adequate infrastructure. This recognition is reflected in Japan's current priorities in this region, ranging from developing facilities and capacities that will allow local authorities to drastically streamline border control, to jointly developing and implementing 10 sub-regional connectivity master-plans in Africa, by developing ports, roads and energy supply infrastructure. Without a doubt, infrastructure will be one of the main focuses of the next TICAD in 2016.

The recently announced 110 billion dollar infrastructure initiative for Asia, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank, is another recent manifestation of Japan's policy focus, following our long track record in quality infrastructure development in the region underpinned by high-quality technologies of Japanese businesses. In this connection, I am pleased to note that we are joined today by several representatives of the Japanese business sector, who will present their field-experience later during this event, and who are potential contributors to quality infrastructure development in Africa and beyond.

How should we proceed from here? Coherence among the many diverse initiatives

would certainly add to the effectiveness of their respective actions. To this end, it would be beneficial to share best practices and lessons learned among all players. Exercises to develop a compelling and clear-cut narrative for quality infrastructure investment will also enhance the coherence and effectiveness of various initiatives.

I am fully convinced that today's event, with its impressive line-up of speakers, representing political leadership as well as policy and business expertise from around the world, will serve as a unique opportunity for all of us to develop a clearer understanding of the challenges ahead. I also believe that today's event will serve as a valuable contribution to our discussions at the FfD conference, as well as to our efforts to develop a meaningful post-2015 development agenda.

Thank you very much for your attention.

(End)