

ADDRESS BY MS SUE MBAYA, REPRESENTATIVE OF AFRICAN AND JAPANESE CIVIL SOCIETY

AT THE TICAD MINISTERIAL FOLLOW UP MEETING

Gaborone, Botswana, March 21, 2009

Your Excellency Honorable Vice President of the Republic of Botswana

Your Excellency Former Prime Minister of Japan

Honorable Ministers

Heads of Delegations

Invited guests

Fellow Representatives of Civil Society

1. Introductory Statements

We would like to start by adding our voices to those who have acknowledged the progress made in operationalising the TICAD follow up mechanism. Having said this, we will use this opportunity to make observations which, in our view, would facilitate the realization of the TICAD objectives.

The potential of the global economic crisis to profoundly impact the economies of African countries has been well articulated here and in numerous recent platforms. As civil society organisations working closely with communities across Africa we have already observed the deteriorating livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable as a result of this crisis. Therefore, as civil society, we add our voices to the calls which our governments have made to donor countries. We recognize the importance of donor countries making efforts to secure their economies. However this should not be at the expense of keeping the promises made to Africa. Keeping pledges made to African economies is critical to shielding the poorest and most vulnerable from the impacts of the global financial crisis. Hence, we urge the Government of Japan to develop and publish a time bound plan of how it proposes to fulfill the pledges which it has made to African countries both within *and outside* the TICAD framework.

At the same time, we also highlight the fact that African governments have the obligation of ensuring that resources availed to them are used democratically and efficiently.

2. General Statement

'Ownership' is one of the five key principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Developing countries must decide and direct their own development paths or else development will fail to be inclusive, sustainable and effective. Long term and sustainable outcomes can only be achieved if citizens are effectively connected with development assistance processes and initiatives as shapers, rather than mere users of Development Assistance. We therefore recommend that the TICAD implementation process should extend the notion of African ownership to *the meaningful participation of citizens*. This brings in the critical role of civil society organisations, many of whom have played a vital and unique role in ensuring that development assistance resources have a meaningful impact on the lives of people living under conditions of poverty. Civil society also recommends that TICAD establishes a mechanism to *measure* ownership which includes citizen participation.

Achieving MDGs

MDGs 1, 4, 5 and 6 have been highlighted by the TICAD process. However we note that insufficient progress has been made in this regard. This is of deep concern to us since meaningful progress on the MDGs is essential to the other TICAD thematic areas; economic growth, consolidating peace and good governance and the environment. Unless African countries have healthy, educated children, women and men, we cannot expect to see peaceful and well governed countries characterized by healthy, equitable, and sustainable economic growth. We therefore urge the TICAD framework, including African governments, to prioritise interventions which mitigate against the impact of poverty, infant and maternal mortality and environmental degradation. These include addressing HIV & AIDS and improving access to child nutrition and family planning.

3. Consolidating Peace and Good Governance

Given the extent to which governance and conflict related crises destabilise the continent, our observation is that TICAD implementation efforts should place greater emphasis on

interventions to improve governance, peace and security. We recommend a much greater emphasis on preventive approaches which involve civil society organisations and affected communities.

4. Climate Change

Focusing on adaptation is very important for African countries. We therefore urge the TICAD implementation process to place greater and urgent focus on adaptation considerations in climate change interventions.

5. Broadening Partnership

We applaud TICAD efforts to realize a broad based partnership as the basis for success. In this regard, we believe that a more central involvement of the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities in TICAD implementation would enhance African ownership. We also urge African governments and the regional economic blocks to capitalize on the support from the Japanese and other governments, to accelerate the implementation of the various commitments and declarations which have been made under the leadership of the African Union.

As civil society we appreciate the position we have in the TICAD Follow-up and we pledge our continued effort to catalyse the engagement by the communities with whom we work, in order to sustain the improvement in the living conditions of the people of Africa.