

**SPEECH BY HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III ON BEHALF OF VISITING
HEADS OF STATE AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF THE HIDEYO
NOGUCHI PRIZE FOR AFRICA**

YOKOHAMA – JAPAN THURSDAY 28TH MAY 2008

YOUR MAJESTY EMPEROR AKIHITO
YOUR MAJESTY THE EMPRESS
YOUR EXCELLENCY MR. FUKUDA, PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN
YOUR EXCELLENCIES HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
AND THE FIRST LADIES
DR. BRIAN GREENWOOD AND DR. MIRRIAM K. WERE
DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

MINASAMA KON BANWA !!

ON BEHALF OF ALL THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT PRESENT HERE, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE HIS MAJESTY EMPEROR AKIHITO AND THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN FOR INVITING US TO ATTEND TICAD IV AND FOR HOSTING US TO THIS PRESENTATION CEREMONY: THIS IS INDEED A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION OF THE CONTINUATION OF JAPAN'S COMMITMENT TO AFRICA. WE ARE HAPPY THAT TICAD IV IS GIVING US THE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS OUR CHALLENGES ESPECIALLY WHEN AFRICA IS FACING POVERY, RISING PRICES OF FUEL AND FOOD AND GLOBAL WARMING – TO NAME JUST A FEW. I AM CONFIDENT THAT FROM THIS CONFERENCE WE SHALL COME UP WITH SOME LASTING SOLUTIONS FOR SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS WHICH THREATEN THE VERY CORE OF THE HUMAN RACE.

YOUR MAJESTY,
WE ARE GATHERED HERE TONIGHT TO ALSO CELEBRATE THE INAGUARATION OF THE HIDEYO NOGUCHI AFRICA PRIZE. I HAVE THE HONOUR ON BEHALF OF THE LEADERS AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA TO CONGRATULATE THE LAUREATES DR. BRIAN GREENWOOD AND PROFESSOR MIRRIAM K. WERE FOR THEIR INSPIRATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS. LET ME SALUTE PROFESSOR MIRRIAM WERE WHO HAS MADE TREMENDOUS ACHIEVEMENTS IN HER COUNTRY IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF HER PEOPLE ESPECIALLY IN THE AREA OF REDUCING THE HIV PREVALANCE RATE AND IN EDUCATING HER PEOPLE ON THE EPIDEMIC. MANY PEOPLE IN KENYA AND OTHER COUNTRIES TODAY KNOW MORE ABOUT HIV AND AIDS BECAUSE OF THIS DYNAMIC LADY AND WE SAY CONGRATULATIONS TO HER.

WE ALSO SALUTE DR. BRIAN GREENWOOD WHO CAME TO AFRICA WHEN HE WAS STILL A YOUNG MAN. YOUNG AS HE WAS, HE DID NOT WASTE ANY TIME BUT CONCENTRATED ON MEDICAL RESEARCH TO SEE HOW HE COULD HELP AFRICA FIGHT MALARIA. HE HAS MADE TREMENDOUS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THIS FIELD AS HE HAS COME UP WITH WORKING AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MALARIA. IT IS MOST UNFORTUNATE THAT HIV/AIDS AND TB SEEM TO HAVE SOMEHOW OVERSHADOWED THE DEVASTATION CAUSED BY MALARIA. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE AWARDING OF THE PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH ON MALARIA WILL ENCOURAGE ALL OF US, INCLUDING THE GLOBAL FUND AND THE REST OF THE DONOR COMMUNITY TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO FUND PROGRAMMES TO FIGHT MALARIA.

WE CONGRATULATE THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN FOR ESTABLISHING AND SPONSORING AN AFRICAN MEDICAL PRIZE. THE HIDEYO NOGUCHI PRIZE FOR AFRICA HAS COME AT THE MOST OPPORTUNE TIME WHEN AFRICA IS POOLING HER RESOURCES AND EFFORTS IN THE PROMOTION OF MEDICAL RESEARCH AND CAPACITY BUILDING.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT THIS MEDICAL PRIZE FOR AFRICA WILL CONTINUE TO MOTIVATE AND INVIGORATE OUR RESEARCHERS AND IN PARTICULAR THE AFRICAN MINDS. IT SHOULD INSTIL CONFIDENCE AND CREATE CHAMPIONS EVEN IN OTHER SPHERES OF OUR FIGHT AGAINST SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ILLS SUCH AS POVERTY, HUNGER AND UNEMPLOYMENT - TO NAME JUST A FEW.

HIV/AIDS, TB, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES ARE DISTURBING OUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES. WE MUST ERADICATE THEM. UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AFRICAN UNION WE SHALL CONTINUE TO DO THE BEST WE CAN TO PROMOTE RESEARCH ON OUR HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS. WE ARE PURSUING TRULY AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO AFRICA'S PROBLEMS. THE HIDEYO NOGUCHI AFRICA PRIZE EMPHASISES THE IDEA OF SELF-RELIANCE WITH THE VIEW TO ENHANCE HUMAN DIGNITY.

AFRICA'S HEAVY DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTED MEDICINES HAS RESULTED IN HIGH PRICES AND THE INABILITY TO PURCHASE THESE MEDICINES BY MOST OF OUR PEOPLE. THIS IN TURN, HAS PROMOTED THE DISTRIBUTION OF COUNTERFEIT AND HARMFUL MEDICINES ON THE CONTINENT MUCH TO THE DETRIMENT OF OUR PEOPLE.

JAPAN HAS REMINDED US OF HIDEYO NOGUCHI WHO WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY INDIVIDUAL IN WHOM PASSION AND VALOUR WERE EMBODIED. HE PIONEERED A LASTING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA AND JAPAN.

THE LEADERSHIP AND PEOPLE OF JAPAN CONTINUE TO EMULATE THE NOGUCHI SPIRIT. WE ALL RECALL AND APPRECIATE HOW JAPAN, BY PROPOSING THE GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT HIV AND AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA AT THE G8 SUMMIT IN OKINAWA EIGHT YEARS AGO, HAS TRANSFORMED THE GLOBAL HEALTH SCENE.

WE ALSO APPRECIATE THAT JAPAN, AS CHAIR OF G8 THIS YEAR ONCE AGAIN, IS LEADING EFFORTS TO HARNESS THE SURGING ENTHUSIASM OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ON THE HEALTH AGENDA.

WE ALSO APPRECIATE THAT JAPAN AS CHAIR OF G8 THIS YEAR ONCE AGAIN IS LEADING EFFORTS TO HARNESS THE SURGING ENTHUSIASM OF THE INTERNATIONAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ON THE HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENDA.

LET ME CONCLUDE BY CONGRATULATING ALL THE NOMINEES WHO DID NOT MAKE THE PRIZE. THEY MUST CONTINUE WITH THEIR HARDWORK BECAUSE THEY ARE THE BEST. I ALSO CONGRATULATE THE JUDGES AND ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HIDEYO NOGUCHI AFRICA PRIZE FOR A JOB WELL DONE.

IN HONOUR OF NOGUCHI LET US CONTINUE WORKING HAND IN HAND WITH JAPAN THROUGH TICAD AND OTHER FORA.

IN THIS WAY WE SHALL SUCCEED IN IMPROVING THE LIVING STANDARDS OF ALL OUR PEOPLES, THEREBY UPLIFTING AFRICA'S PROFILE IN THE WORLD STAGE.

I WISH THE GOOD HEALTH AND LONG LIFE OF HIS MAJESTY EMPEROR AKIHITO AND THE PROSPERITY OF THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN AS WELL AS THE HARMONIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN AFRICA AND JAPAN.

ARIGATO GOZAIMAS !!