

**REMARKS FOR DEPUTY PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA
JAPAN NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
TOKYO
TUESDAY AUGUST 25 2015**

Mr Shuichi Habu, Secretary-General of the Japan National Press Club
Members of the Japan National Press Club
Members of the South African delegation

Thank you for the invitation for us to address the Japan National Press Club.

We know that this Press Club is a highly respected part of the political life of Japan.

We therefore deemed it appropriate to honour this engagement as we prepare to leave Tokyo at the end of a fruitful visit to this exciting and impressive country.

As someone who has visited Japan previously, I have always been impressed and energised by what I have observed and experienced here. But this visit is particularly special because I am in Japan for the first time in my capacity as the Deputy President of South Africa.

It is very important to stress that the point of departure for this relationship is the fact that both our countries share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

We therefore move from this premise as we seek to deepen our bilateral relations.

It is special because I have been accompanied by a delegation of the South African government and the South African business community.

We have issued a clear invitation to Japan to intensify its role in the development of South Africa and Africa as a whole. South Africa is ideally positioned as a gateway through which Japan can access the broader African market.

Our message is genuine and clear: **South Africa is open for business.**

This visit has been special because it has allowed us to reflect on the many positive and mutually beneficial aspects of the political, economic and social relations between South Africa and Japan.

This reflection took place in the many meetings we had in two very busy days.

During this time, we were honoured to engage with Prime Minister Abe, and to hold discussions with key partners and stakeholders in our bilateral relations.

During my courtesy call on Prime Minister Abe, we discussed the TICAD process and Japanese investments in South Africa.

This visit has also allowed us to share the challenges we face as South Africa in freeing our country from the persistent challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

It has allowed us to touch on such challenging issues as constraints in the supply of electricity and recurrent instability in our labour market. We also exchanged views on the impact of recently adopted visa regulations that govern access to our country.

We have appreciated the openness with which Japanese captains of industry asked us about these issues and we appreciate the way they accommodated our viewpoints and our promises to address these matters constructively.

In the spirit of dialogue, South Africa invites its partners - current and potential - to raise issues openly and directly, as this allows us to continuously evaluate what we are doing. It also helps us continuously improve the things we do.

Most importantly, our partners and counterparts here were able to focus on the wide range of opportunities that are available to South African and Japanese businesses to become partners in South Africa's development.

South Africa has a National Development Plan that is a roadmap for our development towards the year 2030.

This is a comprehensive plan that seeks to transform the lives of South Africans, with a view to giving our people a better life.

The National Development Plan touches on every aspect of South African life and sets out the long-term vision for our country.

But, like many other countries, our economy faces a number of challenges

at this moment.

We have been in Tokyo on this visit to say to our partners and friends here that we are not allowing these challenges to overcome us.

Instead, we are responding to these difficulties with a detailed set of actions in which we believe the government and business sector of Japan have a meaningful and profitable role to play.

One of these actions is that of revitalising the agriculture and agro-processing value-chain.

We are also progressing from exporting unprocessed raw materials, to beneficiating these materials and exporting value-added goods.

This applies particularly to our application of a resource which we are fortunate to have in abundance. 75 percent of the world's Platinum Group Metals are found under South African soil.

South Africa has many natural resources that are of benefit not just to our own economy but also that of Japan.

South Africa is now committed to beneficiating these resources domestically. Given Japan's global reputation in innovative technologies, this reality presents a unique opportunity for synergies and partnerships that can benefit both countries.

We are intensifying the industrialisation of our economy by developing the skills and innovative abilities of our people.

Alongside this, we are also developing and adopting new technologies to accelerate our advancement as a society and economy.

We want to unlock the potential of small and medium enterprises, co-operatives, and township and rural enterprises.

We are resolving the energy challenge and stabilising the labour market.

And we are particularly targeting the vast untapped opportunities that we have identified in our marine economy, as we have a 3000km coastline with limited economic activity associated with the oceans.

Areas in which Japan has excelled over many years are new frontiers of development in South Africa.

These include ship-building, marine engineering, port management, fisheries and aquaculture.

We therefore look forward to Japanese partners helping us to develop our capacity to realise these projects.

All these sectors and initiatives present an open door to Japanese investment and involvement in our economy.

We would like to see a more focused transfer of skills and technologies that can serve the sectors we have prioritised for our economic development.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We would like to see more Japanese investment in and trade with our domestic market of 57 million people and the Africa-wide market of one billion people.

Africa's fortunes are on the rise. Many of the challenges you may hear about, involve growth pains; these are not the pains of decline.

The African Growth Story is one of new and growing demand for infrastructure, services and products that have not existed on our Continent before.

Japan is well placed to help us develop the capacity to respond to this demand.

In this regard, I believe TICAD has a positive future ahead as it pursues greater economic connectivity among African states and between Africa and international markets.

The most important investment we are making as South Africa is in our people.

We have a Human Resource Development Council that is there to focus on human resource development from the cradle to just before the grave.

We are focusing on early childhood development and secondary education, as well as the development of an army of artisans and engineers who are needed in our R1 trillion infrastructure development programme.

As I speak of education: just yesterday we were all privileged to meet six bright and inspiring young South Africans who are in Masters Degree programmes at Japanese universities.

At the invitation of the Japanese government, these young people are developing their qualifications and expertise in areas such as marine transport and logistics and the management of public enterprises.

Their studies in Japan are equipping them with professional competencies but their time here is also stimulating their imagination about how they can lead the development and design of the South Africa of the future.

Their emergence as global citizens for such a better future is the best practical expression of the sound economic relations that are in place between South Africa and Japan.

We value the consideration the Japan International Cooperation Agency is giving to create more such opportunities for young South Africans, who are our nation's most precious and valuable resource.

South Africa appreciates the invaluable contribution JICA is making to the development of our country. Africa

We were also amazed and inspired by our visits to the Miraikan National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation, as well as the MEGA-WEB Toyota showcase.

These institutions show us what we can achieve as humanity when we set free our imagination and we work together to create the means through which we turn imagination into reality.

In the end, we are leaving Tokyo with the belief that we have strengthened the already impressive relations between our two countries.

We are also leaving Tokyo with the satisfaction that our engagements over the past two days were focused on clear projects arising from South Africa's development, that provide investment opportunities for Japanese businesses.

These two days have enabled us to meet face-to-face with existing and potential partners who can infuse the values of Kaizen into the tapestry of South Africa's development.

We appreciate the warm hospitality we have enjoyed and look forward to future engagements.

I THANK YOU.