

**AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH DURING THE KENYA TOUR SEMINAR AT THE
KANKU TABIHAKU – 19th May, 2012**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

May I take this opportunity to acknowledge the main organizers of this wonderful fair, the management of Kansai International Airport and the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) which is the umbrella tourism organization in Japan. My gratitude to each and every one of you attending this seminar on Kenya. To the potential clients, you are precious and we welcome you to Kenya. I take note of the 16.4% increase in the number of arrivals from 10, 866 in 2010 to 12, 645 in 2011. This increase notwithstanding, the Japanese market is relatively small compared to other markets thus a need to intensify our promotion

The Tourism sector is the 2nd largest source of foreign exchange in Kenya. Tourism is thus vital in sustaining our economy. The importance of tourism cannot be underestimated. Under the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), tourism is one of the components in which Japan and other international actors seek to collaborate in promoting Africa's development and boosting economic growth.

At a regional level, member countries of the East African Community have come together and formed a united platform to marketing East Africa as a single tourist destination. The proposal to introduce a single Tourist Visa for the region is one of the strategies that if implemented will help boost East Africa's tourism Investments.

As a country, tourism is a major component of the economic pillar, enshrined in our development blue print, Vision 2030. Its aim is to make Kenya a globally competitive and prosperous country with a high quality of life by the year 2030. In a bid to achieve this vision several projects are lined up such as development of resort cities in Diani, Kilifi and Isiolo. Hotels, housing facilities, state of the art sporting facilities, airstrips and good road networks are just part of the infrastructure that the resort cities will enjoy.

Many of you must be following the current affairs within the East African region. I wish to personally assure you that there is no security threat to the tourism industry in Kenya,

despite the on-going war against Al-Shabab insurgency inside Somalia. The government has put in place mechanisms to address any cases of insecurity in its tourist circuits across the country.

Kenya being the home of the “big five” also has the highest concentration of different species of wildlife in a given square unit of land. We say “seeing is believing”, you are therefore invited to view some of the spectaculars of the wilderness in Kenya.

I wish to make a special mention that the Emperor when he was Crown Prince visited Kenya. In 2010 the Crown Prince made a state visit to Kenya. A warm welcome from the heart therefore awaits you from the people of Kenya. Get treated to the magnificent and splendor of the Kenyan wilderness. Have your mind and body rejuvenated by the clean fresh air under blue clear skies. Indulge in the rich Kenya flavours as you get soothed by melodies of birds and waters. Kenya is truly a magical place to be earth.

THANK YOU NA KARIBUNI KENYA