Thank you!

INTRODUCTION

The timing of TICAD VI comes at a critical period in global development, a time of the commencement of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2063 – The Africa We Want. The close alignment with Africa’s ‘Agenda 2063’ framework is especially significant as we all seek to put the continent in the driving seat of its development over the next fifty years. The thematic issues covered in this Summit include industrialization, health and social stability, issues that are aligned with the developmental needs of Africa. Of critical importance as Africa advances the objectives of Agenda 2063, the creation of industries to feed into the rapidly growing economies. The long-term nature of development, especially sustainable development will demand that Africa’s industrialization be aligned with the sustainability pillars of development. This long-term nature, will require that the young generation assumes leadership role in promoting sustainable industrialization in Africa.

Africa must therefore look at its past, speak to its present and plan for the future if she is to bring about ‘sustainable industrialization’ that will nature inclusive and green growth, and, above all, employment creation for her increasingly youthful population. The fierce urgency of now for the continent is to stimulate or catalyze Africa’s industrialization process so as to deliver the narrative of ‘Africa rising’ to all Africans.

We naturally must ask ourselves what we can do as Africa to achieve sustainable industrial development:
Governments, universities and political leadership through budgetary provisions, must make investment in Research and Industry Development. Across the length and breadth of the continent are many young and brilliant minds that can be harnessed for relevant research in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for purposes of development. Nations must deliberately make efforts for economic diversification – to reduce vulnerability from reliance on a small number of existing sectors and to increase the proportion of GDP derived from agriculture, create of high value jobs – while employment levels in Africa are high, the creation of higher value jobs should be seen as a priority, ensuring food security – through effective and sustainable utilization of natural resources, while managing and protecting the environment in a sustainable and responsible manner for present and future generations.

Innovation must also be promoted and supported at all levels of education and industry. There is a rumour, which our friends from Japan can confirm if true that whereas a 5 year old child in Africa plays with a TV remote, a similar aged child in Japan toys with resistors and capacitors making sense of current flow and the interplay between temporary storage of electrical energy and electric fields. Africa must provide opportunity for experimentation and innovation from a very tender age if Africa is to stake her rightful place on the table of development.

Governments should emphasize the importance of commercialization of research. Large scale production is what spawns industrial revolutions and Africa must now more than ever focus on commercial viability of her research outputs and seek to leverage on large scale productions in order to create sustainable development.

Africa should turn away from what Prof. PLO Lumumba terms as “A continent that produces that which she does not consume and consumes that which she does not produce” Africa must disabuse herself of the notion that she exists to produce raw materials required by factories in other continents and to import finished products. We must build those factories here on the continent and add value to our products. This is the only sure way of consuming locally manufactured products, creating employment and wealth, increasing local income levels, saving on the hard-earned foreign currency and reversing the unfavorable balance trade with our trading partners. This is the only sure way to build Africa buy buying African.
Lack of skills is harboring establishment of new industries and business in Africa. There is therefore urgent need for skilling & retooling African labor force. The urgent need is NOT to create more Universities BUT more Technical and vocational Training Academies. This is because we need workers with specific skills (welding, drilling, shipping, maritime, maritime security and ICT etc). Skilled labor is in high demand locally and internationally. There is need for specialized colleges/technical academies. Once trained, there is need to guarantee that the trained workforce keep up to date with the evolving demands of industry. There is therefore need to (i) guarantee that technical vocational training combines practical experience with tailored, task oriented engineering skills. Skills that can be put into practice immediately at their workplace. (ii) establish a globally recognized Certification and Accreditation Training Centers for their graduates based on internationally recognized standards, (iii) Create a technical academies and that will train and up skill a substantial amount of graduates, increasing their employability (iv) establish industry – university certifying body for all workers at all levels, enabling them to work in the African industry (v) make African training institutions the preferred partner for international industries, positioning as a thought leader in this business (vi) position African universities and certification and accreditation training bodies as a partner at all levels of capacity building in the future and emerging industries.

To achieve this, Africa must make her education relevant to the continent in the 21st Century. This should be through a critical examination of the existing programs in the African universities supported by in-depth research on the present state and future possibilities for Africa’s industries and supporting sectors. Africa should look to reviewing and revamping her curricula both to make it fit for the continent and also comparable to the best the world has to offer in terms of graduates’ acquired skills and competencies.

Africa must retool her faculty and her graduates through specialized colleges/technical academies where those who have basic scientific knowledge are updated, developed and equipped with better and new skills. An integrated education approach is required that addresses integration of knowledge and skills in research and teaching. Further, incentives should be offered for early technology adopters to stimulate interest in new knowledge and dissemination means. This way those impacted by innovation are more likely to embrace new technologies when they are developed in an environment that is sympathetic to their social
needs. Africa must ride back to the top of the education chain and relive the days of yore where the first university in the world was a product of the Ancient Kingdom of Timbuktu in modern day Mali.

Africa’s universities and research institutions should work with industry and government in the well-known triple helix to solve local problems through research and innovation. Governments and the industry need to support the commercialization of local innovations coming from the education and research institutions in order to produce products made in Africa that will be key to achieving sustainable development. In Kenya for example, the president has given the government’s commitment to innovation not only by attending the University of Nairobi’s innovation week but also providing a government commitment of about $1,000,000 to support innovation.

African Governments must make deliberate efforts to inculcate entrepreneurial culture in our societies. Most of Africa lacks entrepreneurship culture. The education system creates graduates that are more of job seekers and less of job creators. Young people expect jobs at the end of their education and imagine someone else is responsible for creating those jobs. Entrepreneurship education is taught as part of a formal program in educational institutions, such as business management. Most entrepreneurs, however, do not have access to such programs. At the same time, there are few entrepreneurship training opportunities for young entrepreneurs, such as short certificate courses. The opportunities and exposure to access skills, mentorship on incubation of ideas, startups and entrepreneurship for purposes of commercialization should be expanded for all students in Africa.

**specialized colleges/technical academies** for innovation should be founded and supported by industry. Their governance, leadership structures and curriculum should reflect industry relevance.

In addition, this culture and the entrepreneurs created must be supported to scale and become sustainable middle and large businesses that can compete in the market place as opposed to dying within the first 5 years of corporate existence or not scaling into medium and large businesses. This will eliminate the huge youth unemployment that is typical in our countries and increase national gross domestic products.

In order to be effective and relevant, science, technology and innovation (STI) must be carried out in such a way that promotes sustainable
development e.g. human centeredness. Further, African governments must address social, economic, ethical, political and environmental forces that act against STI from playing its rightful role in sustainable development.

Finally, partnership and linkages must be established or strengthened between various sectors within each country and between African countries. These interactions should involve exchange programmes, cooperation between industries and educational institutions, linkages in research facilities, and identifications of other mechanisms and sources of assistance and support. These interactions should be promoted at national, regional and international levels for purposes of building development synergy between African Nations.

If Africa takes and implements this recipe well, she will set in motion a mechanism for generating a stream of entrepreneurial talents, equipped with the right attitude and mindset to forge the African model of development and transformation” as visualized in the African Union’s Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

Thank you!