

Japan donates 672 soccer balls to South Africa for the distribution to South African children

The Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry in Japan, Mr. Amari visited South Africa in November 2007. In a meeting with President Thabo Mbeki, it was revealed that the Government of Japan would donate a number of soccer balls to the Government of South Africa for the purpose of distributing them to South African children.

The Embassy of Japan in South Africa has received a total amount of 672 soccer balls, emblazoned with the "TICAD 4" logo. The "TICAD 4" logo stands for "Tokyo International Conference on African Development" that will be held in Yokohama at the end of this month. It was launched to promote high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners. TICAD has since evolved into a major global framework to facilitate the implementation of initiatives for promoting African development under the dual principle of African "ownership" and international "partnership". A central feature of this framework is the cooperation between Asia and Africa.

The Embassy will be holding a Hand-Over Ceremony at the Embassy of Japan, where H.E. Akihiko Furuya, Ambassador of Japan will handover the soccer balls to H.E. Mr. Gert Oosthuizen, Deputy Minister of Sport and Recreation of South Africa. Mr. Tsuyoshi Kitazawa, an ex-player from Japan's soccer national team will also attend the ceremony as an official supporter of TICAD 4.

Please be advised that the ceremony will take place at 18h00 at the Embassy of Japan, 259 Baines Street, Groenkloof, Pretoria. Please could all members of the press be present at least 15 minutes prior to the event.

For further information, please contact the Information and Cultural Section of the Embassy, Tel: 012 452 1500, Fax: 012 460 3880 or e-mail: info@embjapan.org.za.