

## **Minister Awut's itinerary on her visit to Japan and the summary of discussions**

Honourable Awut, Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare of South Sudan, responded to the invitation of the Government of Japan to attend the World Assembly for Women! (WAW!) 2016, held on 13-14 December, 2016, in Tokyo, Japan.

### **Tuesday, 13 December**

Courtesy call on Vice Foreign Minister (MP) of Japan, Mr. Shunsuke Takei.



Vice Minister Takei expressed gratitude to Hon. Awut for her attendance at WAW! 2016 which serves as a venue to demonstrate Japan's commitment to women's empowerment and social participation. Hon. Awut is internationally recognized for her steadfast advocacy as a peace promoter and a women's representative.

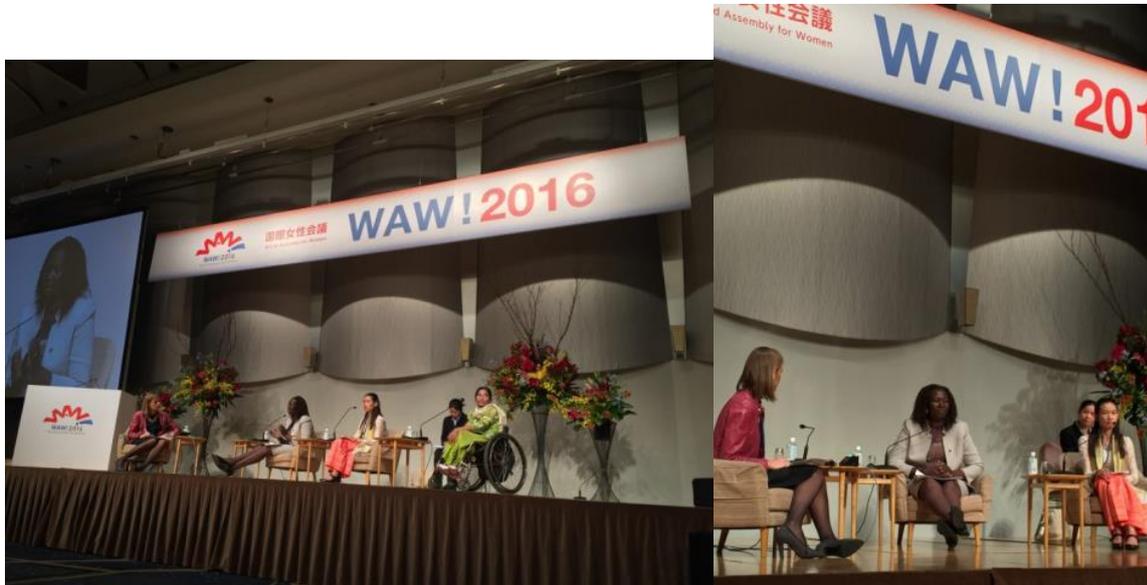
Vice Minister also paid tribute to her recent work in the field of women, peace, and security, initiating dialogues between organized forces and women's representatives and involving various stakeholders from the civil society for reconciliation efforts.

Vice Minister Takei in particular referred to the critical importance that the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan plays on South Sudan's peace and stability. In response, Hon. Awut stated that there is no way out of the Agreement and emphasized the South Sudanese Government's full commitment to its implementation.

Hon. Awut further argued that women can be a driving force for the social reform. In that understanding, Hon. Awut expressed her interest in women's empowerment in Africa at large as well as providing educational opportunities to girls who may lead the society in the future. Hon. Awut concluded by expressing her thanks on behalf of South Sudan for Japan's humanitarian assistance and development cooperation projects that include women's empowerment.

## **WAW! 2016**

Participating as **Panellist in Panel Discussion 1** on “*Building Peace in Society by Women*” with NATO Secretary-General's Special Representative for Women, Peace, and Security, Ms. Marriët Schuurmann, Coach of Battambang Women Wheelchair Basketball Team, Ms. Sieng Sokchan, and ICRC Disability Inclusion Officer, Ms. Sun Sreytouch.



Hon. Awut touched upon South Sudanese women’s role in peace talks who, for instance, promote correction rather than punishment for cattle-raiding offenders, and tame fighters and converting them in to peacemakers. Also of note was South Sudan’s implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 on sexual violence under the National Action Plan.

### **Wednesday, 14 December**

Participating in the **High-Level Roundtable 5 “Women, Peace, and Security”** co-chaired by

Special Ambassador of Japan for World Tsunami Day (former Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs), Hon. Akiko Yamanaka, and

Executive Director of the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, Amb. Melanne Verveer,

Other discussants:

Ms. Hilary Amesika Gbedemah, Rector of the Law Institute of Ghana;

Ms. Hiroko Hashimoto, Japanese Representative to UN Commission on the Status of Women;

Ms. Yoko Hayashi, Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against women;

Hon. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Ministry of Defence of the Netherlands;

Mr. Shinichi Kitaoka, President of JICA;

*Ms. Mihoko Kumamoto, Head of UNITAR Hiroshima Office;*

*Ms. Anju Malhotra, Principal Advisor on Gender and Development, UNICEF;*

*Judge Motowo Noguchi, Board Chair of the Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims of the International Criminal Court (former International Judge of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal (ECCC)); and*

*Ms. Marriet Schuumann, Secretary-General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security of NATO.*



Hon. Awut raised the issue of absence of female mediator in peace talks. Women have the inherent quality in peace-generating action, saying no to violence, convening military religious, and tribal leaders to work together for peace. Ordinary women on the ground would not wait for rapport opportunities to be given but naturally take it up and leading. However, it is important that the international community acts on true sense of gender equality and proactively lays the foundation for high-level female leaders to function as a mediator of international and domestic conflicts and peace talks

Attending Receptions for WAW! 2016 participants



Answering journalists' interviews.



**Thursday, 15 December**

Excursions to Meiji Shrine, a sacred precinct for followers of Shintoism, and Lunch, hosted by Ambassador on Women's Empowerment, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, H.E. Atsuko Nishioka.



Other participants:

Ms. Stephanie Foster, Senior Advisor at the Office of Global Women's Issues, State Department, USA;

Ms. Elise Moison, Director of Force Femmes;

Ms. Anjan Shakya, Chairperson of International Concert Centre and her spouse;

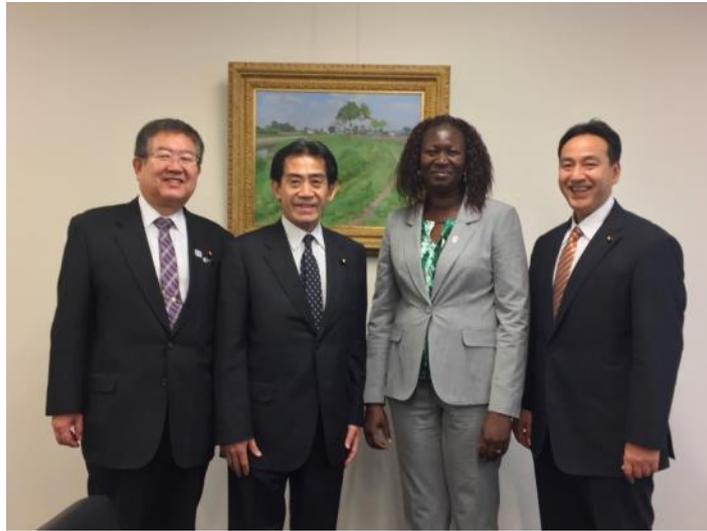
Ms. Hilary Amesika Gbedemah, Rector of the Law Institute of Ghana;

Ms. Anju Malhotra, Principal Advisor on Gender and Development, UNICEF; and

**Friday, 16 December**

Courtesy call on Japan-Africa Parliamentary Friendship League

Chairperson, *Hons. Ichiro Aisawa*, and members *Hons. Daishiro Yamagiwa*, and *Akira Sato*.



Hon. Awut expressed her gratitude for Japan’s cooperation through TICAD VI, especially, infrastructure projects by JICA, engineering work for IDP populations by Japanese peacekeepers of UNMISS, and humanitarian to development assistance projects in partnership with UN agencies.

Hon. Awut, while briefing on security situations and concerns over media portrayal thereof, reiterated her Government’s unwavering commitment to the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan as well as to improving humanitarian access for UNMISS.

Hon. Awut made a point about the Government’s latest initiatives, indigenous to South Sudanese citizens, on the “National Dialogue” and voluntary return of women who would play critical functions in bringing peace to their villages.

Hon. Awut says she is ready to strengthen bilateral relations with Japan further and anticipates Japan to facilitate the national reconciliation efforts through offering much-needed skills training of cantoned organized forces, utilizing lessons from Japan’s past experience.