

REMARKS BY MR. SHUICHI SAKAKIBARA
CHARGE D’AFFAIRES AD INTERIM OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING CEREMONY FOR
THE EXCHANGE OF NOTES FOR THE GRANT AID
FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
LUSAKA, ON WEDNESDAY 26TH OCTOBER, 2016

Hon. Felix Mutati, Minister of Finance,

Permanent Secretaries Present,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be here today on the occasion of the signing ceremony for the Exchange of Notes for the Grant Aid for Economic and Social Development Programme.

The Grant Aid amounting to 200 million Japanese Yen (approximately 2 million US Dollars) will be provided to the Government of the Republic of Zambia for procurement of equipment in order to enhance economic and social development in the country. This time, the programme is expected to support the procurement of medical equipment such as X-ray machines.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of the Republic of Zambia is making strides in tackling the achievement of universal health coverage, and in the running of first, second and third level health facilities. However, one of the major challenges is the outdated equipment in these facilities, which urgently needs to be upgraded. Due to the old machinery, the number of patients being examined is limited.

This is why the Japanese Government has provided funding for this project. Although the specific contents of this project are yet to be decided, we expect the Grant Aid to be utilized for the provision of the latest X-ray machines for about 30 facilities. We also hope that high-quality products made by Japanese companies will be procured in the process.

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development was incepted in 1993, and this year, TICAD VI was held in Nairobi, Kenya, for the very first time on the African continent. At TICAD VI, we announced one of the three strategic pillars to be “Promoting resilient health systems for quality of life.” This is for the attainment of universal health coverage as enshrined in the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The Japanese Government has been making efforts towards enhancement of universal health coverage around the world with the hope that each country promotes good health and well-being of its citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen, recent TICAD initiatives have also focused on the development of the private sector. The Japanese private sector has transferrable high technology as well as capacity for investment. At TICAD VI, Japan has pledged to invest, for the future of Africa, approximately 30 billion US Dollars in developing quality infrastructure, building resilient health systems and laying the foundations for peace and stability.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the health sector has been one of the major priorities for development cooperation between Zambia and Japan for some time now. A recent example of the cooperation in this sector is the Project for Strengthening Basic Health Care Services Management for Universal Health Coverage in Zambia.

You might also recall the recent upgrade of the Chilenje and Matero clinics to first level hospitals using Japanese technology. Another example is the support of a Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects which saw the installation of an X-ray machine by Fuji Film, a Japanese company, at Monze Mission hospital. These are examples of how the Japanese Government, through public-private partnership, supports health initiatives in Zambia.

In closing, I would like to state that the Japanese Government pledges to continuously support the health sector and we hope this project will contribute to universal health coverage in Zambia. It is also my sincere hope that the relationship between Zambia and Japan will be further accentuated.

Thank you very much.

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