

**Remarks of Mr. Hidenobu Sobashima, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic
of Zambia at the Official Launching of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
One Stop Service Project in Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts
on Saturday 23 September 2017**

The Guest of Honour Mr. Elias Kamanga, Permanent Secretary, Copperbelt
Province, Representing also the First Lady,
Your Royal Highness Chieftainess Lesa,
Your Royal Highness Chieftainess Malembeka,
Mr. Joseph Kabamba, MP from Kafulafuta,
Dr. Consity Mwale, Copperbelt Provincial Health Director,
Mr. Keith Maila, Mpongwe District Commissioner,
Dr. Mulenga Peter, Mpongwe District Health Director,
Dr. Davis Mwewa, Masaiti District Health Director,
Ms. Sumie Ishii, Chairperson, Japanese Organization for International
Cooperation in Family Planning, or JOICFP,
Mr. Emmanuel Obeng, Representative, International Planned Parenthood
Federation Africa Regional Office,
Mr. Michael Bwalya Chimponda, Chairperson, Planned Parenthood
Association of Zambia, or PPAZ,
Political Parties Officials present,
Senior Government Officials,
Senior Medical and Medical Superintendents,
Members of Civil Society Organizations,
Distinguished Guests,
Representatives from the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour and pleasure to say a few words at the Official Launching of
Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) One Stop Service Project in
Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts, implemented by JOICFP in cooperation
with Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia, Masaiti District Health
Office and Mpongwe District Health Office, with the funding from the
Government of Japan of the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects.

At TICAD VI, that is the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development, held in Nairobi, Kenya in August last year, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan attached importance to promoting resilient health systems for quality of life, to achieve universal health coverage, and create “Resilient Africa”, among other priority issues.

On the occasion of TICAD VI, JOICFP co-hosted with International Planned Parenthood Federation an event with a theme for promotion of health of women in Africa.

In the pamphlet entitled “TICAD Japan’s Initiatives 2017” distributed at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Maputo, Mozambique last month, this One Stop Service Project here by JOICFP was shown as a good example of collaboration between the Government of Japan and NGOs.

As for the health sector in Zambia, last April, Chilenje and Matero First Level Hospitals in Lusaka, were officially commissioned by H.E. Mr. Edgar Chgwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, for which the Government of Japan extended grant assistance of about 200 million Kwacha.

In the following month, the two Governments signed the documents for Phase 2 of the Lusaka District Hospital Project, of about 400 million Kwacha.

Also the two Governments are now consulting on the procurement of x-ray equipment to a number of hospitals throughout Zambia including Copperbelt Province, with the budget of 200 million Yen or about 2 million US Dollars, to be funded by the Government of Japan.

In addition to such grant assistance, the Government of Japan has tools of assistance of a smaller scale at the grassroots level.

In 1990 the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects was introduced in Zambia, and until last year 162 projects of this scheme were implemented.

In 2002 the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects, which evolved from the grassroots human security scheme just mentioned, was introduced in Zambia, and until last year 27 projects of this scheme were implemented. A large number of these are the projects in the health sector.

JOICFP proposed a three phase project for establishing Maternal, Newborn and Child Health One Stop Service facilities, by renovating the Rural Health Centres at Mutaba in Masaiti District and Kalweo and Mikata in Mpongwe District, particularly those buildings for maternal and child health, and newly constructing a maternity waiting house and a youth centre, as well as by training the members of Safe Motherhood Action Groups engaged in enlightening activities on reproductive health, and Peer Educators.

For the three phases of the project, the Government of Japan provided the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects totaling US\$ 1,747,130 or about 16 million Kwacha.

Now the 3 Rural Health Centres have been renovated with new buildings, and about 300 members of SMAGs and about 60 PEs have been trained to benefit about 91 thousand people in Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts.

Congratulations!

I hope that the One Stop Service Health Centres at Mutaba, Kalweo and Mikata, will significantly contribute to improving the health of Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts, as appreciated by the TICAD Ministerial pamphlet, rewarding the efforts of JOICFP, PPAZ, the Rural Health Centres, the District Health Offices, SMAGs, PEs, and the local residents.

We believe that for Zambia to continue to achieve further development in a sustainable manner, the strengthening of the health sector is important, among other sectors.

Therefore, the Government of Japan intends to contribute to this process in cooperation with its private sector, in various ways, including promoting further introduction of high quality Japanese medical equipment to Zambia.

In conclusion, I hope that, Mikata Rural Health Centre, along with Mutaba Rural Health Centre and Kalweo Rural Health Center, as Maternal, Newborn and Child Health One Stop Service Centres, will play an important role in promoting universal health coverage in Zambia and will develop to become a symbol of friendship between Japan and Zambia.

Thank you.