

**REMARKS BY H.E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA,
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE GRANT CONTRACT
WITH CONGREGATION OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
ZAMBIA, EMBASSY OF JAPAN, LUSAKA, 11 MARCH, 2015.**

Sr. Antony Xavier, Mother General, Congregation of the Immaculate Conception,
Sr. Nirmala Savarimuthu, Mission Superior, Congregation of the Immaculate
Conception Zambia,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be here today at this signing ceremony for the Grant Contract between the Embassy of Japan and Congregation of the Immaculate Conception Zambia. The purpose of the Grant is to enable the Organization to implement **The Project for Construction of Solwezi Academy Learning Centre for Blind and Deaf Impaired Special Needs Children.**

This Grant has been provided under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects Programme of the Government of Japan. The programme was introduced in Zambia in 1990 and its primary objective is to support various development and human security projects at the grassroots level. More than 150 projects have been funded and implemented around Zambia since its inception.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

CIC started their social contribution work in Zambia in 1994, focusing on education, social and medical services. Now it operates an orphanage in Lusaka, a girls' high school in Mazabuka, and the Business and Secretarial College in Kasiya. Also, since 1999 CIC has been providing special education for deaf and hearing-impaired children in Ikelenge, North Western Province, thus gaining wide experience in the field of special education.

In 2013, it was reported that there were over 100,000 Children with Special Educational Needs (CSEN) in Zambia. The Government of Zambia promotes the provision of education for these children; however, with only 149 such facilities in the entire country, only very few have access to formal education. For example, in North Western Province, there are only 5 basic schools which provide special education units for deaf and impaired children, in comparison with the fact that there are over 3,000 blind and deaf impaired children. The demand for special schools for CSEN is high, and with CIC which operates special education units in North Western Province, the residents as well as Government have requested for an expansion of their project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With the hope that proper education will be provided for more CSEN by utilizing the special knowledge and educational skills that CIC has, today, the Government of Japan is pleased to provide a Grant amounting to 100,029 United States Dollars, or approximately 670 Thousand Zambian Kwacha to the organization, to facilitate

the implementation of The Project for Construction of Solwezi Academy Learning Centre for Blind and Deaf Impaired Special Needs Children. The fund will be used specifically for the construction of a classroom block.

It is hoped that this newly constructed facility will provide education to more children equally and will be a stepping-stone towards the realization that handicapped people should not be discriminated against and should equally be treated as normal people. Also, it is my hope that children who will get an education at the centre will grow up to be independent individuals and be able to freely participate in the social environment in the future for their welfare.

Finally, allow me to emphasise that the funds that were used for this Project came from Japanese taxpayers. It is thus my sincere hope that this aid will be utilized well and the project will benefit several people in Zambia.

Thank you for your attention.

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