

**REMARKS BY H. E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA,
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S
KARATE CUP, MULTIPURPOSE CENTER, ISL, LUSAKA,
23rd AUGUST 2015**

Honourable Vincent Mwale, M.P., Minister of Youth and Sports
Mr. Simba Mangaba, President of Martial Arts Karate Federation of
Zambia,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to hold the fifth Japanese Ambassador's Karate Cup. First of all, I would like to thank the Executive Committee of the Kyokushin-kan Karate Association of Zambia for having successfully organised the tournament, the sponsors for providing financial and all the other forms of assistance, as well as the competitors for the high level of Karate skills they have displayed during the contest.

Last year was a very significant year for Japan and Zambia, as it marked the Golden Jubilee of the independence of Zambia as well as the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Zambia. Our two countries have maintained a cordial and steadfast relationship since the independence of Zambia. Now, I believe it is important that our friendly relationship will be enhanced even more in the next 50 years stemming from the good relations which we have enjoyed over the last 50 years. From this point of view, I would like to continue to promote interaction of people between our two countries, not only in economic fields, but also in the field of culture, arts and sports.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Karate is one of the major traditional martial arts in Japan. The typical characteristic of Japanese martial arts is the balancing of three factors:

good spirit, technique and physical condition. I have been told that, after the introduction of Karate to Zambia in the 1970s, 8 different styles are being practiced today, and now, over 2,000 Karatekas in total exist here in Zambia. I believe that Karate is an effective way of polishing one's character by building a sense of high morals and cultivating an attitude of modesty and the respect of good conduct.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When Tokyo was selected to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Japan launched a new initiative called "Sport for Tomorrow" and committed to providing prioritized assistance to further contribute to the promotion of world peace and international understanding through sport, over the period until 2020. In upholding this noble initiative of "Sport for Tomorrow", I would like to continue to expand our assistance towards spreading and promoting the Olympic movement among people of all generations including the youth who represent the future. Unfortunately, we have so far failed to realize the long-cherished wish to see Karate evolve as an Olympic sport. However, I hope that the Tokyo Olympics will generate a positive influence on this in the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In closing, I would like to congratulate the finalists for their splendid performance and wish all of them the very best as they compete for the topmost position. May I also commend all the Karate clubs that have taken part in this year's tournament without whose participation the tournament would not have been possible. I believe that Karate training will provide a platform for the ultimate development of Zambia, as Karatekas will learn more about Japan and develop noteworthy characteristics in the process. Certainly, this will contribute to boosting the bilateral relationship between Japan and Zambia. I hope everyone will become an accomplished Karateka through further training.