

**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 THE ASSOCIATION FOR AID AND RELIEF, JAPAN
(AAR JAPAN)
EMBASSY OF JAPAN, THURSDAY 11th FEBRUARY, 2016**

Mr. Ryota Hirama, Country Representative, Association for Aid and Relief, Japan
(AAR Japan),

Dr. Kennedy Malama, Lusaka Provincial Medical Officer,

Dr. Dorothy Marumahoko, Kafue District Medical Officer,

Staff Members of AAR Japan,

Members of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my great pleasure to be here today, representing the Government of Japan at this signing ceremony for Grant Assistance to AAR Japan.

Since 2002, the Government of Japan has implemented 23 projects totaling about 8.9 million US Dollars (or 890 million JPY) under the **Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects** scheme in Zambia, with the primary objective of supporting projects implemented by Japanese NGOs, which would enhance economic and social development in the community.

Today, the Government of Japan will provide a grant amounting to **517,936 United States dollars**, or approximately 5.6 million Zambian Kwacha, to AAR Japan. The purpose of the grant is to enable AAR Japan to start the implementation of **the Maternal and Child Health Project in Chisankane Area, Kafue District**. This is the first year, Phase One, of the three-year community-based project.

Since 2005, AAR Japan has conducted comprehensive HIV/AIDS intervention projects in Kafue and Chilanga Districts through **Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects**. From 2005 to 2008, AAR Japan embarked on **the Chilanga HIV/AIDS Project**, with a focus on raising awareness and training for the people in the community and **the Chipapa HIV/AIDS Project** of 2009 to 2012 had a similar undertaking. You may recall that Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Centres were constructed within three clinics, namely Nangongwe, Mount Makulu, and Mwembeshi Clinics, by AAR Japan through **the HIV/AIDS Project in Kafue District** of 2013 to February, 2016. These projects have successfully contributed to strengthening the HIV/AIDS diagnostic and treatment system and raising awareness for the people in the community. I would like to express my appreciation for the commendable efforts by AAR Japan.

From this year, AAR Japan will start the implementation of **Maternal and Child Health Project in Chisankane Area, Kafue District**. In Chisankane Area, poor access to health facilities is a challenge because of the lack of sufficient health posts, which forces large numbers of pregnant women to give birth at home. Therefore, there is an urgent need to promote safe delivery at the health facilities with proper medical attention.

Of the expected activities, AAR Japan will construct one health post in Chisankane area in order to establish a health system which ensures facility-based deliveries. The other activities for this year also include the provision of medical equipment and training of 90 Neighbourhood Health Committee (NHC) members in Chisankane Area. It is expected that AAR Japan's new project will contribute to the improvement of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health status through the establishment of the basic health system in Chisankane area.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to point out that the project by AAR Japan is also in alignment with policy goals in the health sector set by both the Government of the Republic of Zambia and the Government of Japan regarding the concept of “**Universal Health Coverage**” which is the provision of basic health services to every individual at an affordable cost.

You may recall that Hon. Alexander Chikwanda, Minister of Finance, in his presentation of the 2016 National Budget, mentioned the significance of Universal Health Coverage. I would like to pay my humble respect to the strong commitment by the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

In the same vein, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also announced at the International Conference titled “Universal Health Coverage in the New Development era: Towards Building Resilient and Sustainable Health Systems” which was held in December, 2015 that Japan would promote efforts to respond to public health emergencies and Universal Health Coverage, and contribute actively to strengthening health systems through the G7 Ise-Shima Summit which will be chaired by Japan in May and **the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI)** which will be held in August.

Here in Zambia, the Government of Japan is supporting the implementation of **the Project for strengthening the basic health service management for the Universal Health Coverage** which has just started in October, 2015. The project supports the capacity building of the health management staff at the Ministry of Health and district medical offices for better health service delivery for all. I am confident that, with the commitment from the Government of Zambia and the technical support by the

Government of Japan as well as Japanese NGOs, we can achieve Universal Health Coverage in Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In closing, please allow me to emphasise that the funds that were used to undertake this Project came from Japanese taxpayers. It is therefore my sincere hope that the facilities and equipment being provided will be well utilized and maintained so that they will have a positive long-lasting impact on people in the community, and will symbolize the cordial relationship between the people of Japan and Zambia.

I thank you.

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