

**REMARKS BY MR.HIDENOBU SOBASHIMA,
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA,
AT THE HANDOVER CEREMONY OF JAPANESE
TEXTBOOKS, UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA,
22 NOVEMBER 2016**

Prof. Luke E. Mumba, Vice Chancellor of University of Zambia,
Dr. Felix Masiye, Dean of School of Humanities & Social Sciences,
Dr. Satoshi Nakamura, Study Abroad Coordinator from Hokkaido
University,

Other members of the Zambian and Japanese universities engaged with the
study of the Japanese language,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Japan Foundation has a Grant Program for Japanese-Language
Education Activities, which finances a part of the costs of the activities to
promote education of the Japanese language and understanding of Japan.

This grant program has enabled us to donate 52 text books of Japanese
language to the University of Zambia.

An open class of the Japanese language was established in the University of
Zambia in 2013, as the University of Hokkaido responded to the request from
the University of Zambia. We believe that this was a big step for promoting
understanding of Japan. I hope that through these endeavors Zambia will
become a pioneer in the field of study of Japan in Africa.

We consider it important to widen the exchange and cooperation between
Japan and Zambia from political and economic fields to culture, education
and other fields.

I personally hope to see that one day the University of Zambia will adopt the
Japanese as one of optional foreign languages to be learned there and a
course on Japanese language or Japanese culture will be established there.

Japan has extended to the University of Zambia a grant of about 220 million Kwacha (about 4 billion yen) for establishing the School of Veterinary Medicine in mid 1980's and grants totaling about 6.3 million Kwacha (about 115 million yen) for providing equipment and materials for study and education there.

Furthermore, Japan has continuously cooperated to the University for improving its study levels, since the establishment of its School of Veterinary Medicine by sending a total of about 200 JICA experts and JOCVs and receiving many Zambian students through its MEXT Scholarship Program.

The University of Hokkaido also contributed to human resources development in Zambia through inter-university exchanges, and established an office in the University of Zambia, as the first-ever office in Africa of any Japanese university. The University of Hokkaido played an important role also in respect of the Japanese language education, and thus worth high appreciation.

A language is a tool of communication. At the same time, it reflects the culture, the society and the way of thinking of the people living in the country. I have learned through my experience that obtaining good knowledge of a foreign language will help understand the foreign culture well.

Communicating by the same language, for people from different origins to understand each other deeper from heart to heart, is very important, from the level of person to person to the level of country to country.

Such endeavor as the open class on the Japanese language by the University of Zambia may be regarded as a small bud. But I hope it will grow to become a big tree, linking Zambia and Japan, and perhaps Africa and Japan.

The Embassy of Japan intends to continue to support the parties concerned for this purpose.