

**Remarks of Mr. Hidenobu Sobashima, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia at the Premiere Evening of Japan Film Festival 2017 at Ster-Kinekor, Manda Hill Mall Cinema on Tuesday 3 October 2017**

Mr. Adrian Chipindi, Director, National Arts Council, Ministry of Tourism and Arts of the Republic of Zambia,

Distinguished Guests,

Representatives from the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Boys and Girls,

Welcome to the Premiere Evening of Japan Film Festival 2017.

Our Embassy has been hosting Japan Film Festival from 2005 and this is the 11<sup>th</sup> Festival to be held from tonight to the Thursday night.

Earlier in this afternoon, we hosted Japan Day at an open space of this mall, to introduce several examples of Japanese culture.

I hope that a number of spectators here have visited the Japan Day venue.

So, the three days from today 3 October to Thursday 5 October are Japanese culture days in Zambia.

As for the Film Festivals, until last year we had screened a total of 29 Japanese films in 12 years, viewed by thousands of people here.

Since I arrived in Zambia about a year ago, I have repeatedly stated on various occasions that, as Ambassador of Japan to Zambia, I am determined to do my best, building upon the long-standing friendly and cooperative relations between Japan and Zambia extending from political and economic to cultural and other areas, and in cooperation with the Japanese experts, volunteers, NGOs and companies in Zambia, to further advance our bilateral relations in various fields.

Japan Film Festival and Japan Day should deepen understanding of Zambians about Japan and the Japanese people, and thus should contribute

to consolidating the bases of the friendly and cooperative relations between our two countries for their further advancement.

We will be showing “A Living Promise” tonight, “The Vancouver Asahi” tomorrow, and “Sing My Life” on Thursday.

A Living Promise is a story about a businessman of the IT industry who tried hard to keep a promise with his friend. However, he will face difficulties and lose all his assets, but through that he will review himself, with the background of a traditional rural area of Japan.

I hope that you will enjoy the Japanese film and will return home safely, hopefully with better appreciation of Japan and at least better understanding of Japan.

Thank you.