

“Efficient Work, Quality, and Innovation”

Address of Mr. Hidenobu Sobashima, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia at the Annual Gala Dinner of the Kabwe Chamber of Commerce and Industry under the theme “The Private Sector’s Contributions in Zambia’s Growth and Development” on Saturday 4 November 2017

Mr. Felix Mwangwato, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Central Province, representing also the Hon. Sydney Mushanga, the Provincial Minister, on the way, Mr. Tutwa Sandani Ngulube, M.P. from Kabwe Central, Your Worship Mr. Prince Chileshe, Mayor of Kabwe, represented, Ms. Christabel Ngongola, President, Officials and Members of the Kabwe Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), Senior Government Officials, Representatives of ZAMBEEF and Other Sponsors, Representatives from the Media, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Evening.

It is my honour and pleasure to address this distinguished gathering here, on the topic of “The Private Sector’s Contributions in Zambia’s Growth and Development”.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate President Ngongola who is the first female President of the KCCI, for leading this organization successfully, including hosting this gala dinner.

I have learned that historically Kabwe played a very important role for economic development of Zambia, as it had the largest mines within the predecessor territory of Zambia in the early 20th century and hosted and is still hosting the national railway network headquarters, among other contributions. Thus I would like to pay tribute also to Kabwe and its business people for their contributions made to Zambia.

(Japanese Economy)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me, first, review the history of the Japanese economic development.

As Japan lacks natural resources, it depended on the hard work of its people for its development. Simply put, we imported raw materials and parts for products and with these we made final products and exported them to gain incomes, and

became a major economy in the world. The education and the good relationship between the employers and the employees, among others, played important roles in this process. Japan achieved a rapid economic growth until the early 1990's, including more than doubling its national income from 1961 to 1970, and became the world's second largest economy. One example of innovation in Japan in this period is the development of transistor radio devices from around 1955 to 1970's, and then many Japanese electric appliance manufactures produced portable transistor radio receivers and exported them worldwide. Hard work and resultant quality and technological innovations worked well then.

In the process of achieving economic growth, however, Japan experienced problems of serious pollution which caused ill health and even the loss of lives of many people. But Japan succeeded to overcome the problems, by obligating the compensations by the polluter companies and the Government to the victims, as well as by the new legislation, administrative reforms including the establishment of the Ministry of the Environment, and implementation of relevant measures.

Japan is now the third largest economy in the world after the United States and China, and struggling to grow again, coping with the problems of the rapidly aging population due to the decreased birth rate and the prolonged life expectancy, among other challenges. The Abe Government promotes "Abenomics" of aggressive monetary policy, flexible fiscal policy and structural reforms, including various innovations, to get out of the deflation and achieve growth.

I am optimistic about Japan's future because I see positive signs of innovations in Japan. For example, Japan is now the most advanced country in the field of energy efficiency and using the resources sparingly with consideration to the environment. Here the motto is "reduce, reuse and recycle" the resources. To date 26 Japanese, including of those who obtained the citizenship of foreign countries, have received or been nominated to receive the Nobel Prizes, the majority of them are scientists. For the recent three years from 2014 to 2016, a total of 6 Japanese scientists received the Nobel Prizes every year. I hope that Japan will achieve growth again overcoming the difficulties it faces now, by innovative undertakings, among other relevant factors, such as efficient work and quality.

(Zambian Economy)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Zambia, upholding the "Vision 2030", aims to become a prosperous middle-income country by 2030. For this purpose, the Government is promoting the diversification of the Zambian economy which is currently heavily dependent

on the mining industry. Agriculture, manufacturing and tourism, among others, are identified as the sectors with large potentials for growth. Diversifying the mining industry itself is also under consideration.

“Smart Zambia”, based on innovative methods, is also sought after. At the same time, the Government attaches importance to healthy budgetary management. I admire these efforts of the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

(Relations between Japan and Zambia)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Now let me turn to the bilateral relationship between Japan and Zambia.

Japan recognized Zambia on the very day of its independence. An episode that the athletes who participated in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games representing Northern Rhodesia, proudly marched in the closing ceremony on 24 October, with the flag of Zambia, is remembered by many Japanese.

Tokyo, Japan was the venue for international debut of Zambia. Ever since, our two countries have developed the friendly and cooperative relations.

In order to assist Zambia to achieve economic growth and development, the Government of Japan has extended Official Development Assistance to Zambia totaling more than 230 billion Yen, for both building infrastructure, and developing human resources in this country. While currently about 100 Japanese Experts, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and Senior Overseas Volunteers (SVs) are working in Zambia, a total of more than 1,500 JOCVs and SVs have been sent to Zambia, and more than 3,000 Zambians have received training in Japan. Recently under the ABE initiative, that is the Africa Business Education Initiative for Youth, where trainees from Africa are expected to obtain a master's degree from a Japanese university as well as to experience work at a Japanese company, Japan has received 26 Zambians, out of which 7 are from the Private Sector.

Kaizen Project, of work ethics based on the Japanese experience, is under way in Zambia. One example of Kaizen is 5Ss: Sort, Set in Order, Sweep, Standardize, and Sustain. While I understand that a number of members of the KCCI had already participated in Kaizen Project, I hope that many more business people in Kabwe will experience the training of Kaizen Project to equip themselves with hints for ensuring the quality of work for better business opportunities.

Now let me introduce to you one example of an innovative project being implemented by a Japanese company and Zambians. Last March the Government of Japan handed over new facilities and equipment to a banana paper making factory in Mfuwe, Eastern Province. Executives of a Japanese company and a

Zambian entrepreneur had paid attention to banana stems which are usually thrown away, and had started extracting fibers from banana stems and sent them to Japan for making banana paper and banana paper products. For this business, they already employed 23 residents there who supported more than 250 members of their families. In order to produce banana paper and banana paper products locally, they requested the Government of Japan to provide financial assistance for building new facilities and purchasing necessary equipment, and we decided to do so. As a result of the expansion of the factory, about 80 additional residents are expected to be employed to benefit about 1000 members of their families.

The post cards made of the banana paper produced at that factory are now sold at Mfuwe Airport.

In Kabwe, Japan provided grant assistance to Kabwe Institute of Technology in 2015 to improve its Automotive Course Facility, and now a Japanese senior cooperation volunteer is attached to the Institute to assist the training of automobile maintenance there. Currently a total of 7 Japanese volunteers are working in Kabwe, 2 at Kabwe Institute of Technology, 1 at Kabwe Skills Training Institute, 2 at secondary schools, and 2 at Kabwe District Health Office.

We are implementing the KAbwe Mine Pollution Amelioration Initiative, or KAMPAI Project. Its purpose is to develop and propose effective and economical remediation and pollution control technologies, based on the lead contamination researches. In 2002, when I was the Director of the Global Environment Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, and stated that the greatest contribution Japan can make to the realization of sustainable development of the world is to share the lessons we have learned so that our friends will not repeat our grim experience. I sincerely hope that Kabwe will become the pioneer in overcoming the problems of pollution, and thus the pioneer of sustainable development.

In January this year a Zambia-Japan Public Private Conference on Quality Infrastructure was held in Lusaka, resulting in signing of one MOC by the two Governments, as well as three MOUs by 3 Japanese companies and Zambia National Council for Construction. At the follow-up Quality Infrastructure Dialogue held in last April in Lusaka, 4 Study Groups were established on Urban Transportation, Roads and Bridges, Power and Batteries, and PPP. I look forward to tangible outcomes emerging out of these meetings.

In last June at the meeting between Mr. Shunsuke Takei, Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan who visited Zambia, and the Hon. Harry Kalaba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia, agreement was

reached to launch negotiations on an investment agreement between our two countries. I look forward to an early conclusion and becoming effective of the investment agreement which will expand investments between our two countries.

Marubeni Corporation, a Japanese general trading company, whose representative is present here this evening, plans to sign soon an EPC contract with IDC on a project to build a textile factory in Kabwe Multi-Facility Economic Zone. I am confident that, as this project progresses, it will generate a considerable number of new employees here, and will contribute to the growth and development not only of Kabwe but also throughout Zambia.

(Conclusion)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Private Sector should be the main driving force of Zambia's growth and development. To this end, efficient work such as that proposed by Kaizen Project, quality and innovation are, in my view, key factors. The Government of Japan intends to contribute to the economic growth and development of Zambia, in cooperation with the Private Sectors of Japan and Zambia, and in this regard we look forward to interacting with the KCCI and its members, among other organizations and companies.

Before closing, let me extend my heartfelt congratulations to the various award winners. I hope you will continue to play your respective important roles in this important town.

Thank you for listening and may you enjoy this evening.

Thank you.