

Statement of Mr. Hidenobu Sobashima, Ambassador of Japan to the
Republic of Zambia at the Reception to Celebrate the Birthday of
The Emperor of Japan on Tuesday 4 December 2018

The Hon. Dr. Chitalu Chilufya, Minister of Health of the Republic of Zambia,
the Guest of Honour,
The Hon. Given Lubinda, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Zambia,
Your Worship Mr. Miles Sampa, Mayor of the City of Lusaka,
The Former Prime Minister and Former Ministers present here,
Senior Officials of the Government of the Republic of Zambia present here,
Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners, and Heads of the
U.N. and Other International Organizations present here,
Distinguished Guests,
Representatives from the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour and pleasure to welcome you all present here this evening
to a reception to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty The Emperor of
Japan.

His Majesty The Emperor will be 85 years old on the 23rd of this month.

Next year His Majesty The Emperor will abdicate on April 30, and His
Imperial Highness The Crown Prince will accede to the imperial throne on
May 1.

The relationship between Japan and Zambia dates back to the very day of
independence of the Republic of Zambia, as the athletes who had represented
Northern Rhodesia in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, proudly marched with
the flag of Zambia at their closing ceremony on October 24. The venue for the
international debut of Zambia was Tokyo, Japan.

The visits from the Japanese Imperial Family to Zambia including those of
Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress in 1983 as Crown Prince and
Princess then, and Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino
in 2014 to celebrate Zambia's Golden Jubilee as well as the 50th anniversary
of the diplomatic relations of Japan and Zambia, among other high-level

visits between our two countries, such as those of former Presidents of the Republic of Zambia to Japan, underpin our strong friendly relationship.

This year, the following exchanges took place between our two countries.

Senior officials of Zambia attended the second Quality Infrastructure Dialogue between our two countries held in Japan in January.

Four Ministers; the Hon. Christopher Yaluma, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, the Hon. Richard Musukwa, Minister of Mines and Minerals Development, the Hon. Ronald Chitotela, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Development, and the Hon. Brian Mushimba, Minister of Transport and Communication participated in the Japan Africa Public-Private Economic Forum co-hosted by Japan and South Africa in Johannesburg and had a bilateral meeting with the Hon. Hiroshige Seko, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan in May.

Japan sent a Public Private Sector Joint Mission for Promoting Trade and Investment in Africa headed by the Hon. Manabu Horii, then Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan to Zambia, who paid courtesy calls to H.E. the President, the Hon. Yaluma, the Hon. Musukwa, and the Hon. Michael Katambo, Minister of Agriculture, and participated in a trade and investment promotion seminar, among their other activities, in July.

The Hon. Joseph Malanji, Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo and had a bilateral meeting with the Hon. Taro Kono, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan in October.

Ever since I arrived in Zambia at the end of October 2016, 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 - many of them are present here - , to further advance our bilateral relations in such fields as ODA, trade and investment, particularly by implementing the TICAD VI initiatives.

Japan started TICAD, i.e. Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 1993, and TICAD VI was held in Nairobi, Kenya in August 2016.

Japan's initiatives announced at TICAD VI uphold, (1) Economic Diversification and Industrialization: "Quality Africa", (2) Promoting Resilient Health Systems for Quality of Life: "Resilient Africa", and (3) Promoting Social Stability for Shared Prosperity: "Stable Africa", as the three pillars for Japan's cooperation to Africa.

(Political Situation)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We admire that Zambia has continuously maintained its peace and stability since its independence, upholding the motto of "One Zambia, One Nation".

The changes of government took place only as a result of elections.

Internationally, Zambia has contributed to the peace and stability of the region, including by its mediation of peace for Angola and the DR Congo, among other initiatives.

We highly appreciate the efforts of the Government in accepting refugees and "former refugees", not only from the neighboring DR Congo and Angola, but also from Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia, totaling more than 73,000 people. What is very unique here is that Zambia recognizes many long-term refugee immigrants from Angola and Rwanda totaling about 23,000 people as "former refugees", and is implementing "the Local Integration Programme" to sustainably resettle them.

In March, Japan extended to UNHCR here US\$ 1 million or about 10 million Kwacha to contribute to "Stable Africa".

(Economic Situation)

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 addressed. "Smart Zambia", based on innovative methods, is also pursued.

At the same time, the Government attaches importance to healthy budgetary management, and is consulting the IMF.

We admire these efforts of the Government of the Republic of Zambia, and

we would like to support these efforts for Zambia to become a prosperous middle-income country.

(Japan's Development Cooperation)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To date, the Government of Japan has extended Official Development Assistance to Zambia totaling more than 238 billion Yen, for both building infrastructure, and developing human resources in this country.

A total of almost 1,600 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and Senior Overseas Volunteers (SVs) have been sent to Zambia, and more than 4,000 Zambians have received JICA training in Japan and other countries. Currently more than 100 Japanese Experts, JOCVs and SVs are working all over Zambia. Japan annually receives about 150 Zambians for training in Japan.

Recently, in order to contribute to "Quality Africa", under the ABE initiative, that is the Africa Business Education Initiative for Youth, where trainees from Africa are invited to obtain a master's degree from a Japanese university as well as to experience work at a Japanese company, Japan has received 32 Zambians. Other contributions to "Quality Africa" under way include the Rice Dissemination Project covering 7 Provinces of Zambia, and National Kaizen Project Phase 2, of work ethics based on the Japanese experience, for dissemination throughout Zambia.

Currently, Japan is implementing various health projects in Zambia to contribute to "Resilient Africa".

Among a number of technical cooperation projects being implemented by JICA, the Project for the Epidemiological Research on Zoonotic Virus Infections in Africa plays an important role in infectious diseases prevention and control in this country.

In the past 12 months, my colleagues and I attended a number of ceremonies of various projects implemented by Japan. The most memorable were the groundbreaking ceremonies with the Hon. Dr. Chilufya, of the Project for Upgrading Lusaka Health Centres to First Level Hospitals Phase 2, to which the grant assistance from Japan totaling around 400 million Kwacha was extended, at Kanyama, Chawama and Chipata in Lusaka District in June.

I participated in the handover ceremonies of the following:

The school buildings of Chakwela Makumbi Primary School in Chipapa, Kafue District, Lusaka Province in February.

A Water Supply System in Mangango, Kaoma District, Western Province in March.

A New School Building at Kine Community School, in Mumbwa District, Central Province in April.

A Maternity Waiting Facility at Old Kabweza Health Post in Kafue District, Lusaka Province in October.

A New Science Laboratory at Kasisi Girls' Secondary School in Chongwe District, Lusaka Province in October.

A One Stop Service Site at Njelemanani Rural Health Centre in Masaiti District, Copperbelt Province in November.

(Sport, Culture and Technology)

The Embassy co-hosted with Martial Arts Federation of Zambia, the 9th Karate Tournament for about 100 male and female Zambian and international Karatekas, and co-hosted with Zambia Judo Association, the 30th Judo Tournament for about 200 male and female Zambian Judokas, in November. On both occasions the athletes showed their strength and good manner.

Also in November, we hosted Japan Day to introduce examples of Japanese culture to hundreds of Zambians who visited the venue and Japan Film Festival during which about 400 people viewed 3 Japanese films.

Today we have prepared Sushi made of a top grade Japanese rice, and Tempura, as well as a selection of Sake, Japanese rice wine. Please enjoy them later.

Also Japanese companies have exhibited here their renowned automobiles and cutting-edge product displays. Please have a look later, if you haven't yet.

(Looking Ahead)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Next year, while Japan may make new commitments, we will witness the progress of a number of on-going projects including the Lusaka District Hospitals Project Phase 2, and the project to provide quality X-ray

equipment to a total of 13 hospitals throughout Zambia, as well as the 2 NGO health projects, 1 in Lusaka Province and 1 in Copperbelt Province, 1 grassroots health project in Lusaka Province, and 3 grassroots school projects, 2 in Lusaka Province and 1 in Central Province, committed this year.

I look forward to an early conclusion of the investment agreement between Japan and Zambia, whose negotiations are under way now, which will expand investments between our two countries.

With the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games gradually approaching, we intend to further promote such sports as Judo and Karate, including by continuing to host the tournaments of these sports.

We will continue to host Japan Day and Japan Film Festival, as well.

I particularly look forward to extensive exchanges of people between our two countries at various levels.

As TICAD 7 will be held in Yokohama in August next year, Japan looks forward to welcoming H.E. Mr. Edgar Chawa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia.

In all these areas, I intend to fully engage myself and my Embassy in cooperation with the Japanese experts, volunteers, NGOs and companies in Zambia, to contribute to the economic growth and development of Zambia, and to the further development of the relations between Japan and Zambia.

(Toast)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Having said this, now I would like to propose a toast to H.E. Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, wishing for His Excellency's continued good health and leadership, and to the Guest of Honour the Hon. Dr. Chilufya and all of you present here, for your good health and happiness, as well as for the further development of the friendly and cooperative relations between Japan and Zambia.

Cheers!

Thank you.