

Address of Mr. Hidenobu Sobashima, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of  
Zambia at the 28<sup>th</sup> Swearing-in and Prize Giving Ceremony  
of the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia  
on Friday 1 March 2019

The Senior Official Representing the Hon. Kampamba Mulenga, Minister of  
Fisheries and Livestock of the Republic of Zambia,  
Prof. Enala Mwase, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Zambia,  
Prof. King Nalubamba, Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine of the  
University,  
Dr. Ntombi Mudenda, Chairperson, Veterinary Association of Zambia,  
The Awardees this afternoon,  
The Graduands,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Good afternoon.

At the outset, I would like to thank the University of Zambia and its School  
of Veterinary Medicine for inviting me as the Guest of Honour to this  
important occasion.

I understand that successive Ambassadors of Japan have been invited as the  
Guest of Honour to the Swear-in and Prize Giving Ceremonies of the School  
of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia, because of the  
relationship between the school and Japan.

I am sorry for last year's graduands for my absence at their ceremony, as I  
was not in Zambia then.

I am glad to be back here today.

Indeed, it is my honour and pleasure to address this distinguished gathering  
this afternoon, as I believe that human resources development is one of the  
most important tasks of any country.

So let me begin by outlining the history of the economic development of  
Japan for your information.

By the way, I made similar outlining two years ago here at the 26<sup>th</sup> ceremony  
of the school, and more recently at National KAIZEN Conference in

Mulungushi International Conference Centre last week, with the presence of the Hon. Christopher Yaluma, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, and many scores of KAIZEN performers of both the public and private sectors of Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

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 which facilitated development of KAIZEN activities, i.e. activities for continuous improvement of quality and productivity, 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.

Hard work and resultant quality and technological innovations worked well then.

Japan is now 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 a huge number of Japanese companies are undertaking some forms of KAIZEN activities, and positive signs of innovations are found in Japan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Zambia, upholding "Vision 2030", aims to become a prosperous middle income country by 2030.

On the occasion of the visit of H.E. Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia to Japan in December last year, H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe Prime Minister of Japan, expressed his determination to support the efforts

of Zambia to become a prosperous middle income country.

To achieve such an economic development, the human resources are a very important key, among other elements, as indicated in the case of Japan.

Universities are the providers of talented human resources to society.

Here in Zambia, the University of Zambia is at the top of these universities.

The School of Veterinary Medicine is very important as it is engaged in study of infectious diseases common to animals and people, as well as of proper and efficient breeding of the livestock, among its other activities.

The Hokkaido University Research Centre for Zoonosis Control in Zambia in the University of Zambia has been recognized by the Government since 2014 as the sole entity in Zambia to effectively examine the Ebola Virus Disease.

With these accomplishments, among others, the University of Zambia was recognized as the Africa Centre of Excellence for Infectious Diseases of Humans and Animals by the World Bank in April last year.

Congratulations!

By the way my daughter is a vet, and she will start to work at an animal hospital in Japan from April this year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now review the relationship between Japan and the School of Veterinary Medicine.

It is Japan that contributed to the establishment of the School of Veterinary Medicine in mid 1980's by extending a grant assistance of about US\$ 35.4 million (around 390 million Kwacha, at the current exchange rate) to the University of Zambia.

Japan also provided grants totaling more than US\$ 1 million (around 11.5 million Kwacha at the current exchange rate) for providing equipment and materials for research and study there.

Furthermore, Japan has continuously cooperated to the University for improving its study levels of the newly established school, by sending a total of about 200 JICA experts and JOCVs and receiving many Zambian students through the Japanese Government Scholarship Program and JICA Programs.

Hokkaido University has been heavily involved in this process of human

resources development.

Currently the Project for the Epidemiological Research on Zoonotic Virus Infections in Africa is being implemented by JICA for infectious diseases prevention and control in this country, mobilizing a number of Professors and Doctors of Hokkaido University.

Last December, on the occasion of the visit of H.E. the President to Japan, President Lungu and Prime Minister Abe confirmed that the relations between the two countries would enter a new phase of cooperation, and Japan made a new commitment of grant assistance of 500 million Yen or about 50 million Kwacha, for upgrading the equipment at the School of Veterinary Medicine in the University of Zambia.

Congratulations!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under these circumstances, I am pleased to be a part of this awarding ceremony for the *Zambian vets of distinction*.

Congratulations to those who will be awarded and graduating!

Congratulations to the School of the Veterinary Medicine!

Congratulations to the University of Zambia!

And indeed congratulations to the Republic of Zambia for having those students of distinction!

Thank you.