

Remarks of Mr. Ryuta Mizuuchi, Ambassador-Designate of Japan to the Republic
of Zambia on the Occasion of the 10th Ambassador's Karate Tournament
at the Olympic Youth Development Centre in Lusaka
November 10th, 2019

Mr. Gibson Muyaule, Deputy Director for Sport, Ministry of Youth, Sport and
Child Development,
Master Kiyoshi Imtiaz Abdulla, President, United World Karate Federation,
Mr. Munyaradzi Mangaba, President, Martial Arts Federation of Zambia,
Mr. Farai Mangaba, Zambia Branch Chief of Kyokushin Karate Organization,
Karateka Participants,
Representatives from the Media,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor to be able to be with you today and to host this year's
Japanese Ambassador's Karate Tournament, which marks the 10th anniversary
since its launch in 2009.

At the outset, I would like to welcome you all as the new Ambassador of
Japan in Zambia. Having arrived here in Lusaka just a month ago, this event
happens to be my first official appearance in front of the public of this country.
Therefore, I would like first of all to assure you that I will do my best to serve in
Zambia and strengthen the friendly relationship between our two countries. I am
certain that I can count on your support and assistance as I endeavor to discharge
my responsibility, for which I wish to express my sincere gratitude to you all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Coming back to this Tournament, let me now extend my sincere
appreciation to the various Karate organizations, Karate clubs, Karatekas,
coaches, referees and judges across this country who participated in this
tournament. My special thanks go to the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Child
Development as well as the sponsors who have made significant contributions to
enable this tournament to take place.

I think this year's tournament is something very special – not just because
of celebrating its 10th anniversary after having become a major sport event in

Zambia. As you are aware, Karate will join the Olympic event for the first time in history as Japan hosts the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, Tokyo next year. Congratulations!

Not coincidentally, Africa and Japan have never been so close to each other than in this year. At the time I was preparing for my Ambassadorship in August, I witnessed how great a success the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VII) held in Yokohama was, and the positive impact it has brought about. Japanese TV was full of programs featuring Africa every day, and among those countries having been introduced was this country, Zambia. I feel particularly blessed to be dispatched as Japanese Ambassador to Zambia under such forward-looking circumstances.

Turning to Karate, it is of course one of Japan's major traditional martial arts, and I understand that Karate was introduced in Zambia as early as the 1970's. I have learned that currently, it is being practiced by about 8,000 Zambians. I hope very much that Champions in the Japanese Ambassador's Tournament will be in Tokyo next year and compete for the Gold medal in the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Tokyo.

Dear Karatekas,

It is in this spirit that I wish you all a good fight among Zambian and visiting Karatekas. Be the Champion of our Tournament today – and be the Gold Medalist next year in Tokyo 2020!

Thank you.