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Speech by Mr. MIZUUCHI Ryuta, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia, on the Occasion of JOICFP's "Dissemination Workshop in Ndola, Copperbelt Province On November 18th, 2020

Your Royal Highness Senior Chief CHIWALA, Masaiti District,
Your Royal Highness Chief LUMPUMA, Lufwanyama District,
Dr. Kennedy MALAMA, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health,
Ms. KATSUBE Mayumi, Executive Director, representing Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning, or JOICFP,
Dr. Robert ZULU, Copperbelt Provincial Health Director, Copperbelt Provincial Health Office,
Dr. Peter MULENGA, Mpongwe District Health Director, Mpongwe District Health Office,
Dr. Allan MUTALE, Masaiti District Health Director, Masaiti District Health Office,
Dr. Jacob NG'AMBI, Lufwanyama District Health Director, Lufwanyama District Health Office,
Mr. Micheal CHIMPONDA, National Chairperson, Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia, or PPAZ,
Representatives from the Media,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to be invited to the "Dissemination Workshop" by JOICFP and address the audience, albeit virtually, and share with you the outcome of JOICFP's programme "Promotion of Women's Health throughout the Life Cycle at One Stop Service Site in Zambia". This programme has been implemented since 2018 within the framework of the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects (GANP), amounting to up to 1,503,544 US Dollars.

To begin with, I would like to thank Ms. KATSUBE Mayumi and other members from JOICFP and Mr. Micheal CHIMPONDA from PPAZ for today's invitation. Also, it is an honour to meet with Royal Highnesses Senior Chief Chiwala and Chief Lumpuma on this occasion and extend to you, Royal Highnesses, my personal greetings. I thank both Chiefs most sincerely for embracing the activities of a Japanese organisation in their Chiefdoms and having enabled an intensive collaboration between Japanese and Zambian social workers. My deepest appreciation goes also to Permanent Secretary Dr. Kennedy MALAMA for his support and that of the Zambian Government, which was clearly articulated in his encouraging remarks, as well as other high-ranking officials and others from multi-sectors, in particular, of the Copperbelt Province for ensuring the success of this programme.

JOICFP has been quite active in supporting the reproductive health sector in the Copperbelt Province under strong coordination with PPAZ and several governmental organizations since it was engaged in foregoing programmes, namely "Community Safe Motherhood Project" from 2011 to 2014, and, subsequently, the "Maternal Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) One Stop Service Project in Masaiti and Mpongwe District in Zambia" from 2014 to 2017, which was funded by the Government of Japan.

Since 2018, JOICFP has been implementing this on-going project for which we are here today, targeting teenage girls and pregnant women in 16 areas in Masaiti, Mpongwe and Lufwanyama Districts in the Copperbelt Province, and aiming at improving their access to health services throughout the life cycle, by renovating existing Rural Health Centres and upgrading to One Stop Service Sites (OSSSs). Its activity included capacity building of local health staff and volunteers such as Safe Motherhood Action Groups (SMAGs) and Peer Educators (PEs).

More importantly, this project also put in place empowerment of local women by offering skill trainings on textile production and marketing their products by themselves. This comprehensive approach enabled the targeted people to enhance not only their health but also their economic expertise which encompasses knowledge on pre-natal and postpartum cares, and know-hows of sourcing cash income to make a solid living.

This year, the COVID-19 made the activities of JOICFP particularly difficult. The Japanese staff was repatriated following the global outbreak of the pandemic and the activities had to be conducted remotely, by using internet and other virtual networks. Nevertheless, the programme itself was continued, and the anticipated achievements were secured. For this, JOICFP and its supporters deserve a particular commendation. And this challenge shed the light on JOICFP's activities anew, in particular, on the importance of protection of teenage girls, as I read press reports of increased teenage pregnancy during the closure of schools, which is not only a Zambian phenomenon, but also has been observed globally. This, indeed, is a challenge that many Governments in the world, including Zambia and Japan, must tackle, and may trigger JOICFP to consider future projects as well.

Today, marking the end of the three-year project, findings of the end line survey in both quantitative and qualitative manners will be presented by JOICFP and PPAZ, followed by the Presentation on the key health statistics, good practice and sustainability plan for the future by District Health Office from Masaiti, Lufwanyama and Mpongwe. I am convinced that all of the positive outcomes shown by every stakeholder will strongly support the success of the entire project. Also, I am looking forward to the award session for the prominent health workers and volunteers who have been shown outstanding performances throughout the project period.

In concluding, I once again express my appreciation for the great contribution by JOICFP in the Copperbelt Province for such a long time and my sincere hope that this project will be handed over to the three District Health Offices smoothly and that the fruit of the project will be duly taken care of in the years to come, including the functions of OSSSs and training

activities for health workers and community members. Last but not least, we wish all stakeholders every success and good luck in the future.

Thank you.