

**Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Mr. MIZUUCHI Ryuta on the
Occasion of JATA's Grant Contract Signing Ceremony at the
Ambassador's Residence, Leopard Hills Road 16C, Lusaka On March
3rd, 2021**

Dr. Kennedy Malama, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Guest of Honour,
Ms. MATSUOKA Yuko, Resident Representative, Japan Anti-Tuberculosis
Association, or JATA,
Ms. AMANO Satomi, Project Coordinator, JATA,
Dr. Rhoda Mkandawire, District Health Director, Lusaka District Health Office,
Representatives from the Media,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and pleasure to welcome you to my residence on the occasion of the Signing Ceremony of the Grant Contract of a project within the framework of "Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO projects" by the Government of Japan. Today, the project titled "Strengthening access to quality of integrated TB prevention, management in high TB/HIV burden community in Lusaka (Phase Three)" implemented by JATA will be officially sealed by the signing. Its total budget amounts to up to 443,607 US dollars.

First and foremost, I wish to draw your attention to the dolls on your left-hand side in front. Today is a special, auspicious day called Hina-Matsuri, a traditional Girls' Festival in Japan. It is all the more delightful that we are graced with an opportunity to officially launch another significant project with the presence of Dr. Kennedy Malama as Guest of Honour, who will deliver messages on behalf of the Zambian Government. I also welcome Ms. MATSUOKA Yuko and Ms. AMANO Satomi again my residence, almost one year after we signed another grant contract last year. Although COVID-19 pandemic caused many unknown difficulties in implementing the project, JATA successfully continued implementation virtually, using online communications between Japan and Zambia. It also decided very early to return to the project site and has been actively engaged in the implementation since then. I wish to stress that these particular efforts deserve utmost appreciation. The new project is a successor of this foregoing project, aimed to amplify practical and optimised TB control in Chipata and Chelstones Sub-Districts in Lusaka. Further, I acknowledge the presence of Dr. Mkandawire, who has been continuously supporting JATA in its activities.

Although COVID-19 is dominating the challenges in the medical and healthcare sector all over the world, I am aware that the Zambian Government has never neglected the fight against conventional infectious diseases, such as HIV- AIDS and Malaria. TB is undoubtedly one of the most challenging one. JATA's expertise in combating TB dates back to 1939 when it was established as a semi-national health institute in Japan. It has provided technical assistance and program support on TB control to the health sector in approximately one hundred countries in the world. Utilising the accumulated know-how concerning TB prevention, early diagnosis and medical care, JATA launched TB control

activities in Zambia in 2003 under close coordination with the Ministry of Health and other relevant stakeholders. This upcoming well-organised project is the third phase of the three-year project implemented by JATA since March 2019.

Thanks to its first and second phases of the project, substantial synergy has emerged in the prevention of TB in the targeted seven public health facilities in Chipata and Chelstone Sub-Districts. The comprehensive approach, combining the provision of X-ray Machine and GeneXpert and the tailored skill training on TB test and chest X-ray interpretation for the medical workers in the target areas by the prominent Japanese doctors, together with trained TB volunteers in the community, helped local communities expand their awareness of TB prevention, early diagnosis, and care.

At the end of the three-phased project, JATA will focus on monitoring of TB patients in the final phase in order to prevent treatment dropout rate of the patient, as well as maintenance training for medical workers on procured medical equipment such as X-ray Machine and GeneXpert. This will enhance the high-quality diagnosis system in the entire Lusaka District. The final phase is designed to strengthen further the collaboration between TB and HIV related sectors, bearing in mind the commonalities of HIV and TB. Further, Analysis of the data obtained through this three-year project that will benefit the Zambian Government in its efforts eliminating the TB.

In concluding, let me once again express my appreciation for the outstanding contribution by JATA so far. With these remarks I wish JATA and its partners in Lusaka all the best and every success with this project!

Thank you.