

Remarks by H.E. Mr. MIZUUCHI Ryuta, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia on the occasion of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Japanese Ambassador's Judo Tournament,  
27<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Mr. Kangwa Chileshe, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts of the Republic of Zambia representing Honourable Minister Elvis Nkandu,  
Ms. Pierrine Aylara, UNHCR Country Representative in Zambia,  
Mr. Alfred Foloko, President of National Olympic Committee of Zambia and President of the Zambia Judo Association,  
Mr. Mabvuto Ng'uni, Secretary General, Zambia Judo Association,  
Other Officials of the Zambia Judo Association,  
Representatives from the Media,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

After a long break due to COVID-19 pandemic all over the world, I am delighted to be invited to the Official Ceremony of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Japanese Ambassador's Judo Tournament. First of all, I wish to welcome Mr. Kangwa Chileshe, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts representing Honourable Minister Nkandu as Guest of Honour to grace this event with his presence, and officiate the Tournament. My thanks also go to all the Judo-kas, who have worked so hard during the COVID time to maintain and further develop their skills; as well as the Zambia Judo Association, various Judo organizations and clubs, coaches, referees, judges, and also the sponsors for their efforts to overcome the difficulties and have made this year's tournament come true.

Just three days ago, we were celebrating the 50 years' presence of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) in Zambia. On that occasion, it was mentioned by many participants that the first volunteers who were dispatched in 1970 to Zambia were Judo instructors. Since then, Judo has much developed, having become one of Zambia's strongest disciplines in sport. Zambia as a nation has been sending many Olympians over the past decades, including this year to Tokyo Olympics 2020. This is truly a remarkable achievement of Zambia's sporting community, and even that of the Japanese-Zambian collaboration. With more than 3,000 Judokas in Zambia, Judo can further look to the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As many of you may know, the first part of the word “Judo”, namely “Ju”, comes from a Chinese character symbolising “soft”, “softness”. One of the most common phrases in the Japanese language reads: *“Ju yoku Go wo seisu”*, meaning that “the soft can often beat the hard” (or “the skill can overpower the physical strength”) – in the sense of David fighting and defeating Goliath. This phrase is even more relevant at a time in which Judo has become globalised and many physically superior Judokas are more commonly successful at many tournaments. Therefore, Japan can no longer hold the dominant position in international Judo competitions, but we are making every effort to maintain the status of “Kingdom of Judo”. I very much hope that on the occasion of today’s Japanese Ambassador’s Tournament, this phrase *“Ju yoku Go wo seisu”* will be reminded here and that all the competitors will strive to beat the more powerful opponents.

Like Japan, Zambia is a “soft-power” in international relations. It is therefore my hope that under the New Dawn Administration, Zambia as a nation will emerge as a resilient soft-power in terms of economy and society, overcoming the current difficulties such as COVID19, the debt issue, corruption and the like. The responsibility of Judokas, young and old, as well as that of the institutions they belong to, should not be underestimated. I would like to call upon you all to make your own contribution to that end. With these remarks I wish all the competitors full of exciting matches and a fruitful tournament.

Thank you very much.