

Statement of H.E. Mr. MIZUUCHI Ryuta, Ambassador of Japan to  
the Republic of Zambia at the Commissioning of the Science,  
Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education  
Training Centre  
and the Establishment of STEM Schools in Zambia  
on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Hon. Douglas Siakalima, Minister of Education  
Representative of Hon. Felix Mutati, Minister of Technology and  
Science,  
Hon. Mulambo Haimbe, Minister of Justice,  
Mr. Joel Kamoko, Permanent Secretary (Technical Services), Ministry  
of Education,  
Dr. Benson Banda, Director of the National Science Centre, Ministry  
of Education,  
Representatives from the Media,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honor to be with you here at the  
Commissioning Ceremony of the Science, Technology, Engineering and  
Mathematics (STEM) Education Training Centre and deliver a  
message on behalf of the Government of Japan and my own behalf.  
First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the  
Government of Zambia for their initiative to officially commission this  
long-awaited, important project that Japan has been supporting.

For my part, I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all those  
who, so far, have been working very hard for the establishment and  
improvement of STEM education system, preceding today's official  
commissioning of this new institution, the STEM Education Training  
Centre.

The seeds of this Training Centre were first sewn 9 years ago, when  
Japan and Zambia agreed to embark on significantly strengthening the  
education sector in Zambia, first through a financial support in three  
stages, totaling JPY 900 million, or approximately USD 6.8 million.  
This project encompassed, inter alia, teachers' training project known  
as the "STEP" and production of "Mobile Science Laboratory Kits"  
which were delivered to schools in all provinces in Zambia. Japan also  
sent 21 experts to the key positions within the Ministry of General  
Education from 2005, thus serving to strengthen the functions of the

National Science Centre. These experts helped identify the priorities in the education sector and formulate the budget in accordance with these priorities. Two experts – one Japanese and one Zambian –, namely Mr. NAKAI Kazuyoshi and Dr. John Chileshe, have even gone so far as to be given the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation for their splendid achievements in this work. Today's commissioning of the new STEM Education Training Centre is the culmination of all these previous achievements and contributions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I understand, the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Training Centre will go hand in hand with the STEM schools that have been identified and supported by the Zambian Government. The STEM Education Training Centre at the core and all these STEM schools will constitute a system to discover and cultivate the talent of young Zambian boys and girls who excel in these areas and are expected to become experts in physics, engineering, science and technology or other subjects that the nation needs. Further, the Centre is expected to act as a regional center to share its expertise with other African countries.

As the new Administration is investing substantively in education through various measures, such as exemption of school fees or employment of 30,000 teachers, the newly commissioned Centre will definitely be able to discharge its functions to the full extent.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

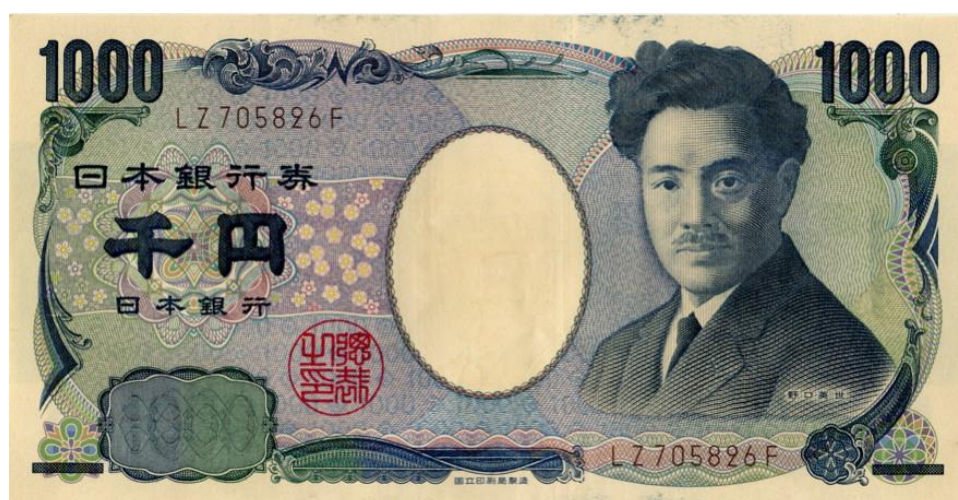
In this context, I wish to share with you a memory that we have in Japan in the 19th century. On 9th November 1876, a baby boy was born to a poor farmer family in Fukushima, Northern Japan. A home of a farmer in Japan at that time did not look much different from those you see anywhere in Zambia today – a humble hut made of wood and thatch. In winter, the depth of snow reached more than 1 meter and the only heat the family could get was from a hearth of firewood on the ground.

At the age of one, the boy fell on it and had his left hand severely burnt. Despite this handicap, however, his hard work at school convinced the schoolmaster to bring him to the higher education and eventually to medical studies. At the age of 24, he got a chance to travel to USA with

a huge donation by his friends and work at the newly established Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. There, he established himself as a competent bacteriologist. After completing several academic works that led him to become a candidate for the Nobel Prize in medicine, he decided to dedicate himself to the research of Yellow Fever in Africa. In 1927, he traveled to Accra on the Western Coast of Africa and embarked on the study. However, on 21st May 1928, he succumbed to the disease and passed away.

The name of this great medical doctor is NOGUCHI Hideyo. In 1979, in commemoration of his dedication to Africa and fight against infectious diseases, the Governments of Japan and Ghana established the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) with the Japanese Government's Grant at the University of Ghana in Accra.

Today, the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize, established within the framework of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), is awarded to individuals with outstanding achievements in combating various infectious diseases in Africa or in establishing innovative medical service systems. The portrait of Noguchi can also be seen on the Japanese 1,000 yen banknote.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

The education sector will remain the main pillar of Japan's cooperation to Zambia under the 8<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan (8NDP) under the New Dawn Administration. Currently, we are considering a new project worth JPY 1.5 billion (approx. USD 11.27million) to further strengthen the STEM system in Zambia, covering all 10 provinces for the construction of STEM schools at the secondary level and the provision of teaching materials in science and mathematics, including

laboratory equipment.

However, I wish to remind you that it will be in the hands of Zambians how many Noguchis this system will give birth to. I am sure that the STEM Education Training Centre will play a significant role in this regard. But Zambia will also need mothers, schoolmasters, or communities who can discover in a child a talent and support him or her to follow the path of a Zambian NOGUCHI Hideyo.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding, let us hope that the Zambian education system will be significantly strengthened through the dedication of all the stakeholders and with the work of the STEM Education Training Centre. If I can add my humble wish to my statement above, I hope to see a strengthened Japanese language training within the secondary education in Zambia. With this, and together with the STEM education in general, we could count on Zambian youths who would also contribute to strengthening our bilateral relationship in the future, possibly having had an opportunity of studying in Japan with a Government-sponsored and/or private scholarship.

With these remarks I would like to extend my best wishes to the STEM Educational Training Centre for a great success in the sustainable human development, as well as to teachers, officers and others all the best and good luck.

Thank you for your attention!