***Check against delivery***

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia, on the Occasion of Contract Signing Ceremony for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects**

**7th March 2023**

Hon. Douglas M. Syakalima, Minister of Education,

Hon. Jack Mwiimbu, Minister of Home Affairs and Internal Security,

Ms. Lillian Kapusana Musonda, Permanent Secretary of the Office of Vice President,

Mr. Gerald Kaseba, Chief Executive Officer, Brave Heart Foundation

Senior officials,

Representatives from the Media Houses,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you all to my residence on the occasion of the Signing Ceremony of the Grant Contract of a project within the framework of “Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)” by the Government of Japan. The project that will be sealed today is titled “Construction of Primary School Buildings in Meheba Resettlement Scheme at Kalumbila District, North-Western Province” with a total budget amounting to 83,438 US dollars. At the outset, I wish to express my special appreciation to Hon. Douglas M. Syakalima, Minister of Education for accepting the role of Guest of Honour. My special thanks go to Ms. Lillian Kapusana Musonda, Permanent Secretary of the Office of Vice President and Hon. Jack Mwiimbu, Minister of Home Affairs and Internal Security for their presence.

Today’s signing partner, Brave Heart Foundation has been engaged in various activities especially in the field of education such as providing teaching materials and stationery to children who cannot attend school and dispatching volunteer teachers to the Meheba Resettlement Scheme since 2012. Despite their efforts, the education situation at the settlement especially the area for former refugees has not improved. Considering this situation, Brave Heart Foundation requested us to assist constructing a primary school in the Meheba Resettlement Scheme. On top of responding to the organisation's request to construct primary school buildings, our support extends to constructing ablution blocks and borehole and installing solar panel. Once the project is completed, it is expected that approximately 400 children in the Resettlement Scheme including children from the surrounding areas will be able to receive primary education in an appropriate educational environment.

As far as I know, this is the first project, since the scheme of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects was introduced in Zambia in 1990, to construct a primary school in the Resettlement Scheme. Looking back at the past grassroots projects that are related to education such as construction of Chitakata Community School in Kabwe, Central Province in 2022, and Madaliso Community OVC (Orphans and Vulnerable Children) School in Chipata District, Eastern Province in 2021, all of these projects were successfully implemented and now many children are able to receive necessary education in an proper environment. Therefore, I expect that this primary school will also sustainably provide appropriate education for children in the resettlement and surrounding area with collaborative support from the three pillars, namely, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security, and the Office of Vice President, whose representatives are here today as witness to the signing. I believe that receiving support from these governmental agencies will strengthen this primary school in playing a significant role to promote regional integration of former refugees and assist their integration with the local communities as a result of this project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since this project is consistent with the 8th National Development Plan (8NDP), especially in the field of education, the project outcome will help achieve the 8NDP by increasing access to education, and improving its quality

With these remarks I now wish the project every success and all of you present here all the best. Finally yet importantly, let me express my hope that the Japan-Zambia cooperation will continue to flourish in the decades to come.

Thank you for your attention.