

**Remarks by Mr. OMINATO Satoshi, Deputy Chief of Mission at the
Embassy of Japan, at the Opening Ceremony of the Women's Centre
at Kapiri Mposhi District, Central Province, Zambia**

Thursday, 18th January 2024

The Guest of Honour, Mr. Milner Mwanakampwe, Permanent Secretary for Central Province, represented by Mr. Godfrey Chitambala, Deputy Permanent Secretary,
Mr. Francis Hasalama, District Commissioner, Kapiri Mposhi District,
Mr. Brilliant Munyeke, Council Chairperson, Kapiri Mposhi District,
Dr. Elijah Mutoloki, Provincial Health Director, Central Province,
Ms. Mayumi Katsube, Chairperson, Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP),
Ms. Getrude Sijabala, National Executive Committee Member, Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ),

Distinguished Guests, and
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and pleasure to be here today at the opening ceremony of the Women's Centre in Kapiri Mposhi District, implemented by JOICFP with funding from the Japanese Government's framework of the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Zambia, including the Ministry of Health and the District Health Office, Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ) and all those present here today for their support in implementing this project and making today's opening ceremony possible.

The importance of achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls is recognised globally as is established as Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but cannot be overemphasized. The Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8), led by the Government of Japan, which was held in Tunis, Tunisia in August 2022 and attended by Zambia, reaffirmed the importance of addressing gender-based violence (GBV) in Africa and supporting women to improve

their lives. Support for women's advancement in society is important for Zambia in achieving further socio-economic development in a sustainable manner.

In particular, JOICFP and PPAZ have been supporting women in Zambia for many years. From 2014 to 2020, they implemented two projects in the Copperbelt Province to construct and renovate a number of health centres and establish maternal and child health one-stop service facilities with the funding of a total of approximately 3 million US dollars from the Japanese Government's framework of the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects. As part of these projects, JOICFP also worked actively on human resource development, including for health staff and volunteers.

Since 2023, JOICFP and PPAZ have been working to promote GBV prevention and care through community empowerment with the funding of approximately 600,000 US dollars from the Japanese Government for the initial year. They are actively implementing this project that aims to reduce the number of victims of GBV by promoting gender equality in the community, providing care and services for survivors of GBV, and promoting prevention activities through strengthening community networks for the empowerment of women.

Today, I am very pleased to officially launch the Women's Centre, which combines counselling and care, health services, and vocational and other training for survivors of GBV. I believe that since the project started, the beneficiaries' knowledge and understanding of what GBV is and what to do if they are affected has deepened. Now that the Women's Centre has been completed, it will be able to deliver the support they need.

This project will continue in the coming years. Gender equality is one of the important areas for Japan's development assistance and we will continue to contribute to this cause in various ways, including funding this project.

In conclusion, this year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Zambia. I believe that the partnership in this project will play an important role in strengthening

our long-standing bilateral ties, and I wish that the Women's Centre will become a symbol of friendship between Japan and Zambia.

Thank you.