

Remarks of Mr. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki
Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia
At the Premiere Evening of Japan Film Festival 2024
At Ster-Kinekor Manda Hill Mall, Lusaka
Saturday, 3 February 2024

Hon. Rodney Sikumba, Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Zambia,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to welcome you all to the Premiere Evening of Japan Film Festival 2024. I am greatly honoured to be here with you. Thank you all for taking your time to come and celebrate Japanese culture through film.

This year, Zambia and Japan are commemorating 60 years of bilateral relations of friendship and cooperation. This is more important when we recall the fact that Zambia celebrates same 60 years of independence in this 2024. Our Embassy will organise various commemorative events throughout 2024 to mark the Diamond Jubilee between the two countries.

When you talk about relations between Japan and Zambia, you may think of development assistance from Japan. We would like you to know that we also place great importance on cultural exchanges. Our Embassy has been hosting the Japan Film Festival since 2005, and this year, from today, 3rd February, to 24th February, we will hold the 13th Festival. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and other reasons, our Embassy could not organise the film festival since 2018, but till that time, we had screened a total of 35 Japanese films in 14 years, which were watched by thousands of Zambians. Today, I am happy that we have resumed our film festival with you, as one of the very first events to kick off this commemorative year.

Earlier this afternoon, we hosted Japan Day within this mall, to introduce various examples of Japanese culture. I hope that a number of people here visited the Japan Day venue set up by the Shoprite entrance.

(Check against delivery)

The Japan Film Festival and Japan Day should deepen your understanding of Japan and the Japanese people. I am sure those events should contribute to further consolidating the foundations of the friendly and cooperative relations between our two countries for their further development.

Here at Ster-Kinekor, Manda Hill Mall, we will be screening “I never shot anyone” today, “My Sweet Grappa Remedies” on 10th February, and “Sumikkogurashi: Good to be in the corner” on 17th February.

Additionally, more films will be screened at the Embassy of Japan: “One night” on 9th February, “The Voices in the Wind” on 16th February and “Okko’s Inn” on 24th February.

I hope that you will enjoy the Japanese film and return home safely, hopefully with a better appreciation of Japan and at least better understanding of Japan.

Thank you.