

**Remarks by H. E. Mr. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki, Ambassador of Japan to the
Republic of Zambia, at the Signing Ceremony
of the Project for the Provision of Medical Equipment
for Infectious Diseases Control and Dentistry in Lusaka City
Wednesday, 24th January 2024**

Hon. Sylvia Masebo, Minister of Health,

Hon. Mike Mposha, Minister of Water Development and Sanitation, in his
capacity as Member of Parliament for Munali Constituency,

Mr. Mukubesa Nyoni, Councillor for Kalingalinga Ward,

Mrs. Charity Habeenzu, Chief Executive Officer, Zambia Tuberculosis and
Leprosy Trust,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you all to my residence today on the occasion of the signing ceremony of the Grant Contract for the project “Provision of Medical Equipment for Infectious Diseases Control and Dentistry in Lusaka City”, which is funded by Japan’s Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP).

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to Honourable Minister Masebo for accepting the role of Guest of Honour today. I would also like to express my gratitude to Honourable Minister Mposha for your attendance in his capacity as Member of Parliament for Munali Constituency to witness and celebrate the signing of the contract for the project which will be implemented in your constituency.

With today’s signing, the project will be officially sealed and launched for implementation by the recipient of the grant, Zambia Tuberculosis and Leprosy Trust, which is abbreviated as ZATULET. With the total budget of approx. 70,000 US dollars, ZATULET will be able to procure medical equipment for infectious diseases control and dentistry for their community clinic in Mass Media, Lusaka City.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are all aware that treatment and prevention against HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) hold utmost importance for Zambia's healthcare and medical system. According to the Zambia Demographic and Health Survey published in 2018, Lusaka Province recorded 15.1% prevalence rate of the HIV/AIDS, the second highest in the country after 15.4% of Copperbelt Province. As TB is the most common cause of death for the HIV/AIDS patients, preventative treatment of the HIV/AIDS has great significance in the healthcare service in the urban areas such as Lusaka City.

ZATULET clinic has been serving its neighboring communities such as Kalingalinga since its establishment in 1998. Because of their specialties in HIV/AIDS and TB treatment in terms of respectful quality as well as affordable cost, many patients choose ZATULET. However, the clinic has faced big challenges of implementing early detection and treatment due to lack of appropriate equipment.

For example, laboratory testing machines are essential to detect various infectious diseases related to tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS in their early stage. In addition, dental and oral care is imperative to find out one of the most common symptoms of HIV/AIDS infection in its early stage. Due to lack of appropriate equipment for these purposes, the clinic has not been able to effectively detect early symptoms and start treatment in time.

That is why the Japanese government came to a decision to support the clinic and purchase those medical and dental equipment so that the clinic can provide timely treatment and medical service for the patients.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is noteworthy that this is the third time for ZATULET to engage in grassroots projects with the Embassy of Japan. The first project dates back to 1999 and they built the very first clinic building and office. During that time, Professor MITARAI Satoshi, tuberculosis specialist at Nagasaki University in Japan was the one who referred Mrs. Habeenzu to GGP. Professor Mitarai was then doing his PhD research at University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, and Mrs. Habeenzu was helping his research as the head of the lab. Since then, Professor Mitarai has

been one of the board members of ZATULET.

With the second project in 2014, the clinic building was expanded to what it is now. This has been the main clinic building since then, and those medical equipment which will be procured through this time will be installed in this main building. For these years, ZATULET has developed good friendship with different Japanese organisations such as Hokkaido University or NGOs. Mrs. Habeenzu also went to Japan for the further training for TB, cementing bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2024 marks the 60th anniversary of Zambia's independence and also of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Zambia. It is not by chance that this third project with ZATULET is chosen at such a significant time for both countries, as they have been good friends to Japan for years.

ZATULET has been dedicating their work to the TB and HIV/AIDS patients in vulnerable communities in Lusaka, with the support by Japan. With our friendship spanning six decades, I wish that ZATULET continues to provide the quality medical care for the patients in their fight against the diseases.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With these remarks, I wish the project every success and all of you present here all the best. Last but not least, let me express my hope that Japan-Zambia cooperation continues to flourish in the decades to come.

Thank you for your attention.