

**Remarks by H. E. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki, Ambassador of Japan to the
Republic of Zambia, at the Handover Ceremony of the Project for
Construction of Amala Vocational School for Vulnerable Orphans and
Disabled Children in Chongwe District, Lusaka Province
Friday, 19th July 2024**

Honourable Felix Mutati, Minister of Technology and Science,
Mr. Christopher Habeenzu, Chongwe District Mayor
Sr. Nirmala Savarimuthu, Mission Superior, Congregation of the Immaculate Conception
Zambia
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and pleasure to be here with you today on the occasion of the handover ceremony of Amala Vocational School for Vulnerable Orphans and Disabled Children in Chongwe District, Lusaka Province. This project is implemented by the Congregation of the Immaculate Conception Sisters (CIC) and funded under Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project (GGP).

First of all, I would like to begin by thanking the Guest of Honour, Honourable Mutati, Minister of Technology and Science, for his attendance today. I would also like to thank all those who are involved in this project for their hard work in making today's handover a reality. With the total budget of 96,000 US dollars, this beautiful and unique 7 classrooms in one block has been constructed by CIC.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the Zambia National Disability Survey, the prevalence of disability among adults in Zambia is estimated to be approximately 11 %. This disability rate is higher in urban areas than rural areas. Therefore, it is clear that the support for people with disabilities is crucial in Lusaka Province. However, in spite of the need, regrettably, the number of vocational schools is still insufficient and the persons with disabilities have very limited access to vocational school where they can train themselves in a comfortable environment. In this context, this school built by CIC will bring a significant positive impact to Lusaka Province. Not only does it offer lessons to persons with disabilities, but also its classroom block and facility are carefully designed in unique shape so that they are friendly to persons with disabilities and

other people. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the CIC sisters for taking the initiative to make a huge difference in the lives of vulnerable people and also children in Zambia over many years.

CIC commenced its operations in Zambia in 1994. The organisation's primary objective is to provide support to the most vulnerable, including orphans, children living in vulnerable circumstances, and children with disabilities. Since then, CIC has initiated 8 projects in Lusaka, Southern and North-Western provinces, including establishment and management of an orphanage, a secondary school for the vulnerable children, and a special school for deaf and hearing-impaired students. To accommodate the youth with disabilities and those with vulnerable background who graduated from these schools and to give them skills to survive, this ninth project was launched to provide vocational trainings especially for the youth with disabilities. I would also like to note that this is their third project which is funded by our grassroots programme and both this project and the previous two projects have been run and managed successfully by CIC to date.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

During the implementation of this third project, I was repeatedly informed from my staff that CIC's sincere dedication has touched the hearts of many people who came to support this project to make it successful. The Embassy team has been impressed by the great relationship between the CIC sisters and contractors as well as the surrounding community. In addition, CIC has welcomed members of parliament from Japan last year as well as Japanese government officials this year, and all the visitors were impressed how the grant has been used for the good cause for the community.

Looking back on how the previous projects have been handled by CIC, and considering how this project has attracted so many people already, I am fully convinced that the school will be cherished by many people and the community, and will support the future of many persons with disabilities and with vulnerable background. Strengthening vocational education as well as providing inclusive education are one of the pillars of the Eighth National Development Plan, which is also one of the main pillars of Japan's cooperation policy. I am sure that the CIC Amala Learning Academy will contribute to these efforts of both the governments of Japan and of Zambia.

To the Honor, Excellencies and distinguished guests I would like to reiterate my appreciation

to the CIC sisters and all the staff for their dedication towards the completion of the school construction and wish them the best of luck for their further endeavors.

I also wish that many persons with disability as well as those from vulnerable background learn how to be independent and self-sufficient, and how to make their own decision in their life while at this school.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations of Japan and Zambia. I hope the school will give practical and vocational skills for as many vulnerable youth as possible so that they will acquire the necessary skills for survival to have long-lasting and healthy lives just like we see the friendship between Japan and Zambia, and contribute to strengthening this beautiful long relationship.

Thank you for your attention.

(End)