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**Remarks by H.E. Mr. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia,
on the Occasion of the Handover Ceremony of Xray Equipment**

Bauleni Health Centre, Lusaka

28th October 2024

Dr. Kennedy Lishimpi, Permanent Secretary (Technical Services), Ministry of Health,
Dr. Simulynamana Choonga, Provincial Health Director, Lusaka Province,
Dr. Astridah Maseka, Director Health Services, Lusaka,
Mr. Kosamu Tembo, Area Councilor,
Representatives from Bauleni Health Centre,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here today on behalf of the Government of Japan and to hand over to the Ministry of Health, Xray equipment procured under the "TB Control Project through the Strengthening Case Finding and Management at Health Facilities in Lusaka District". This project consists of three phases, and the 2nd phase that we have gathered here for is funded by the Japanese Government's "Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects" and implemented by the Japan Anti-Tuberculosis Association. The total grant amount is approximately 553,000 US dollars and the grant agreement was signed in March this year.

Let me first acknowledge the presence of our guest of honour, Dr. Kennedy Lishimpi, Permanent Secretary (Technical Services), Minister of Health, and express my deep gratitude for his presence at this very important ceremony. I would also like to thank all the guests present here.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the National Tuberculosis Strategic Plan 2017-2020, Lusaka Province is one of the most TB-endemic areas in the country with a very high incidence rate of 932 per 100,000 population in 2017, accounting for about 36% of all TB cases in Zambia. In view of this severe TB situation in the province, this project aims to expand tuberculosis services both qualitatively

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and quantitatively in four health facilities in Lusaka District. It will also improve healthcare services not only in Lusaka but in the whole Zambia, enhancing diagnostic capabilities and supporting public health initiatives, through the provision of medical equipment, capacity building and introduction of health volunteers. The assistance by the Government of Japan reflects its commitment to Zambia's development and cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan has continued to extend its development assistance to, among others, the health sector in Zambia, based on the belief that the quality of health service directly impacts the quality of people's lives at the grassroots level and thus is indicative of the social development of the nation.

Japan's cooperation dates back many years with various projects conducted across the country. One of the notable projects is the construction of the Paediatrics Ward at the University Teaching Hospital (UTH) back in 1980s and 1990s. This was followed by the establishment of the Virology and Tuberculosis Laboratories at UTH, with a mission to improve its capacity to control infectious diseases. Furthermore, a number of UTH members of staff at different levels have attended training courses facilitated by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

With the donation of this Xray equipment, I hope that the provision of quality TB care services will be enhanced by targeting general hospitals and neighbouring health centres with a high concentration of TB patients. It is also expected to strengthen detection of TB cases and treatment services. There will be a dramatic improvement in access to medical care for residents in the targeted area. It will also help decongest first level hospitals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to express my sincere hope and trust that the equipment donated today will be effectively utilised and well maintained so that they can serve many people for a long time to come. In this way, the project would contribute to the enhancement of the quality of life for the

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people of Zambia through improved health, resulting in higher productivity and enhancement in the general social and economic development of the country. It is also my hope that the project will further strengthen the cordial friendship that exists between Japan and Zambia.

In conclusion, I wish to mention that Zambia's 60th Independence Anniversary also marks the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. So just like today's project, I strongly believe and hope that Japan and Zambia will work together even more for a better future.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

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