

**Remarks by H.E. Ambassador TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki
on the Occasion of the 13th Japanese Ambassador's
Karate Tournament
27th October 2024**

Our Guest of Honour, Mr Chama Fumba, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth,
Sport and Arts,
Mr. Simba Mangaba, Executive Director of Kyokushin Kenbukaikan International,
Mr. David Imasiku, CEO, Higher Heights Marketing,
All Karate-kas participating in this Tournament,
Distinguished Guests,
Members of the Press,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you for this successful Japanese Ambassador's Karate Tournament. This event, held for the first time in two years, has set a new milestone with its impressive scale, attracting hundreds of participants from Zambia and neighbouring countries. I am informed that this year's tournament is the largest in its history, a testament to the growing importance of this competition for enthusiastic Karate-kas across the Southern Africa region. I am deeply honoured to co-host the Ambassador's Karate Tournament here in Zambia with such a significant number of participants. This is even more so this year as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of Zambia's independence and the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Zambia.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to our Guest of Honour, Mr Chama Fumba, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts for gracing this event with his esteemed presence, and also to Mr. David Imasiku, CEO, Higher Heights Marketing for his support to this tournament. My deepest appreciation also goes to all the Karate-kas, Kyokushin Kenbukaikan International, Zambia Kyokushin Karate Organisation and various Karate organisations and clubs, as well as the coaches, referees, and judges who have worked tirelessly to ensure the success of this tournament.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been a great pleasure for me to witness the outstanding performances of the Zambian and other African Karate-kas today. Their high-level technical skills are both inspiring and commendable. I firmly believe that such exceptional performances embody the true spirit of Karate. Furthermore, I am confident that the dedication and discipline demonstrated by these young men and women in their Karate practice will contribute to the development of higher standards in Zambian society, as well as in government and business.

Karate is not just about winning or losing. It is a discipline that fosters personal growth, cultivates discipline, and builds character. Through Karate, individuals develop essential qualities such as resilience, leadership, and teamwork— qualities that are invaluable not only in the martial arts arena but also in our communities, workplaces, and society at large.

In this regard, Karate may play a vital role in human resource development. It teaches us the importance of setting goals, overcoming challenges, and showing respect for one another. For young Karate-kas, the practice of Karate is a journey of self-discovery, where they learn to push their limits, recognise their strengths and build the confidence that will serve them in every aspect of their lives. Through tournaments such as this, we not only contribute to the development of individuals but also strengthening of our communities, as we help to develop our young Karate-kas into the leaders of tomorrow.

As we move forward, let us continue to support Karate as a means of fostering stronger bonds between our countries and creating opportunities for mutual growth. I extend my best wishes to all the Karate-kas, especially the young Karate-kas from Zambia and Southern African countries, for their future success. May they continue to inspire us all with their dedication, discipline, and passion for Karate.

Thank you.

(End)