

**Remarks by H.E. Ambassador TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki
at the Japanese Language Contest
29th March 2025**

Dr. Martin Mushumba, Director of Quality Assurance at the Higher Education Authority,
Represented by Mr. Denny Nsokolo, Manager of Standards, Research and Institutional
Audits,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the 2nd Japanese Language Contest being held here today at our embassy. First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who are engaged in making this event possible today. Your dedication and passion for promoting Japanese language and culture in Zambia is truly commendable.

As you know, the year 2024 marked the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Zambia. In Japan, the fiscal year as well as academic year start in April and end in March, so, today's Japanese Language Contest is the very last in a series of events organised to commemorate the 60th anniversary since last year. Over these six decades, our two nations have built a strong and enduring partnership based on mutual respect and shared values. This anniversary provided us with an opportunity to reflect on our past achievements and to look forward to even greater collaboration in the future.

Reflecting on the journey of Japanese language education in Zambia, it is heartening to see how far we have come. From the establishment of a Japanese language course at the University of Zambia to the efforts of dedicated educators and volunteers, the progress has been remarkable. This contest is a testament to the enthusiasm and commitment of all those involved in promoting Japanese language learning in Zambia.

In both the 2024 and the 2025 editions, the Embassy received an overwhelming number of applications from prospective candidates wishing to participate in the contest. This can only point towards the desire by many Zambians wishing to explore other international languages and cultures.

To all the contestants here today, I extend my warmest encouragement to you all. Your participation in this contest is a significant step towards mastering a new language and

understanding a different culture. I hope that you will continue to pursue your studies with determination and that some of you may even consider studying in Japan in the future. Speaking of study in Japan, several Japanese government scholarship students who will be leaving for Japan next week are in the audience today in the first row to cheer on you. The experiences and knowledge you gain through the study of Japanese language will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening the bonds between our two countries.

In closing, I wish all the participants the best of luck in today's and future contests and look forward to witnessing your impressive performances.

Thank you for your attention.