

**Remarks of H.E. Mr. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki, Ambassador of Japan to  
the Republic of Zambia  
On the Occasion of the Handover Ceremony of Infectious Disease  
Testing and Dental Equipment  
15<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Lusaka**

Dr. Angel Mubanga, National TB Control Program Manager, Ministry of Health, representing Honourable Elijah Muchima, Minister of Health,  
Mrs. Charity Habeenzu, Chief Executive Officer of Zambia Tuberculosis and Leprosy Trust,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to be here with you today at this handover ceremony for a project that represents our shared commitment to health and human security. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone present and express my appreciation to Dr. Angel Mubanga, National TB Control Program Manager, Ministry of Health, representing Honourable Elijah Muchima for your presence.

Today, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I am honoured to officially hand over vital medical equipment to the NGO, Zambia Tuberculosis and Leprosy Trust or ZATULET to support its infectious disease testing in Lusaka. This project has been implemented since 2024 by ZATULET with Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects with a grant of approximately 70,000 US dollars.

This grant provides a biochemical auto-analyser, other diagnostic tools for infectious disease screening, as well as dental chairs and instruments to strengthen oral health services. I am convinced that these equipment will significantly enhance the capacity of the ZATULET's medical clinic to provide accurate and timely diagnoses—particularly for the patients of tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

Japan previously supported ZATULET's efforts in TB and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment by funding the construction of the current community clinic in 2016 through the same Grant Assistance scheme. Since its establishment, the clinic has consistently responded to the growing healthcare needs of the community, which created the demand for additional equipment and facilities. In response to this growing needs, Japan decided to provide the grant to help the ZATULET's clinic expanding its capacity by providing essential diagnostic and dental tools. As many infectious diseases, including HIV and TB, present their early symptoms in the oral cavity, the new dental equipment will enable the clinic to offer preventive dental care and oral cancer screening.

Zambia has made commendable progress in health outcomes in recent years—HIV-related deaths have declined by about 40 percent, and tuberculosis-related deaths have decreased by nearly 60 percent over the past decade. Nevertheless, infectious diseases, including TB and HIV/AIDS, remain among the leading causes of death in Zambia. Hence, early detection of these diseases continues to be essential for effective treatment and prevention. As many of these diseases manifest initial symptoms in the oral cavity, thus access to appropriate diagnostic and dental care equipment is critically important. However, I learned that outdated tools and limited resources have long constrained the ability of many health facilities including ZATULET to provide timely and accurate diagnosis and early prevention care.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to emphasise that this project directly contributes to Zambia's 8th National Development Plan, which prioritises early detection and response to infectious diseases. It is also closely aligned with Japan's Country Assistance Policy for Zambia, particularly in the areas of expanding access to healthcare and strengthening the country's capacity to manage infectious diseases.

In this context, the COVID-19 pandemic has further underscored the importance of building resilient and responsive healthcare systems that can adapt quickly to emerging public health threats. The lessons learned during the pandemic have highlighted the critical need for the surveillance for infectious diseases, including robust diagnostic infrastructure, trained personnel, and timely access to essential equipment—those needs this project directly addresses.

Japan remains committed to supporting Zambia's health sector through the provision of medical infrastructure, capacity building, and ongoing collaboration aimed at improving the quality and reach of healthcare services.

In conclusion, it is my sincere hope that the equipment handed over today will contribute meaningfully to the delivery of essential healthcare services in Lusaka, especially in the early detection and treatment of TB and HIV/AIDS.

I would like to thank all those involved in the successful implementation of this project. May the friendship and cooperation between Japan and Zambia continue to deepen as we work together toward a healthier future for all.

Thank you very much.

*(End)*