

Remarks of Mr. TAKEUCHI Kazuyuki,
Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Zambia,
At the Premiere Evening of Japan Film Festival 2025
At Ster-Kinekor Manda Hill Mall, Lusaka
5th September 2025

Mr. Fumba Chama, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth Sport and Arts,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the premiere evening of the Japan Film Festival 2025! It is my pleasure to welcome you all. First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Fumba Chama, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth Sport and Arts, for being our guest of honour this evening. I would also like to thank the officers of the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Arts as well as Ster-Kinekor for their support in making this festival possible.

The Japan Film Festival hosted by the Japan Foundation presents innovative and diverse works this year. Two live-action films and two animation films, totalling four works, will be screened during the festival. Among the four films, today's premiere features the film "Awake." This film is about Japanese Chess "Shogi." Its climax features an intense match between AI and a professional Shogi player, highlighting the tension between human intuition and machine precision. This film encourages viewers to think critically about the role of technology in society while appreciating the cultural significance of tradition. It's a story of redemption and passion, offering a thought-provoking and inspiring experience that bridges innovation and tradition.

Whether you are new to "Shogi" or interested in AI, this film delivers both entertainment and educational value in its exploration of human and machine capabilities.

Furthermore, two more films will be screened tomorrow. One is an animation film titled "Children of the Sea," which is a visually stunning animation with a mysterious ocean adventure. The other is a live-action film titled "Nosari—Impermanent Eternity" which is a touching story that resonates deeply. And on 13th September, Saturday next week, another animation film titled "The Place

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Promised in Our Early Days” will be screened. That is a tale of hope and promise that leaves a lasting impression. All of these works were created by highly regarded directors and very much popular in Japan, so I hope you will enjoy them as well. Through films, we can build cultural bridges and deepen our cultural exchanges. I hope that this opportunity will further deepen our mutual understanding and strengthen the relations between our two countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, It's Friday evening, I hope everyone leave your daily duty and responsibility aside for a while and enjoy a Japanese film together.

Thank you.

(End)