

**Remarks by H.E. Ambassador MIKAMI Akiteru
At the Awarding Ceremony of Japanese Foreign Minister's
Commendation upon Dr Sande Ngalande
6th February 2026**

Our Guest of Honour, Dr. Kelvin Mambwe, Permanent Secretary, Technical Services of Ministry of Education,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all today at my residence for the Awarding Ceremony of Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation 2025 in honour of Dr Sande Ngalande.

Let me begin by expressing my gratitude to Dr. Kelvin Mambwe, Permanent Secretary, Technical Services of Ministry of Education, for his presence today to witness this auspicious occasion. It is also my great pleasure to be able to celebrate this occasion together with all of you here today, including Dr Ngalande's family, friends, and other close associates.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you already know, Dr Ngalande is a recipient and an alumnus of the Japanese Government Scholarship, called "MEXT" scholarship which stands for Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Looking back at the records of the selection process of MEXT scholarship in which Dr Ngalande participated, it is noted that from over 100 applicants, only two candidates were ultimately selected, including Dr Ngalande.

The interviewers at that time recognised Dr Ngalande's strong determination and logical thinking, along with the necessity of his research in Japan, and they unanimously and confidently decided to recommend Dr Ngalande as the top candidate of MEXT scholar at that year.

If I can briefly touch upon the Japanese Government scholarship, or MEXT scholarship, over 40 years have passed since the first Zambian MEXT scholar left for Japan in 1982. More than 120 students have successfully completed their study in Japan despite the differences in language, culture, climate and food – sadly there is no Mealie

Meal in Japan!-.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After successful studying in Kyoto, Japan and upon his return to Zambia, Dr Ngalande's strong enthusiasm motivated officials at the Hokkaido University Lusaka Office and the University of Zambia, leading to the establishment of Japanese language courses, the first Japanese course in Zambia in 2013. By initiating the first Japanese language courses in Zambia, he not only fostered cultural exchange but also laid a foundation for stronger educational ties between the two countries. His achievements are of vital importance, tracing the path of the current friendship between Japan and Zambia. We take pride in having recommended Dr Ngalande, who has continued to contribute to deepening bilateral relations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan and Zambia are separated by a vast distance and possess distinct cultures and values in many respects. Nevertheless, we have built friendships since Zambia's independence and have walked hand in hand together. This is because we have established mutual understandings towards each other at people's level and I am sure that the Japanese language course has contributed to it.

The Japanese language courses continue to attract many students each year. It is our hope that, carrying forward Dr Ngalande's vision and dedication, these courses will not only persist but also flourish. Dr Ngalande said that every Japanese expression carry lessons about respect, humility, discipline, and consideration for others. Through Japanese language education, learners also absorb values such as punctuality, harmony, responsibility, and continuous self-improvement. These are values that extend beyond language and contribute to making everyday life more meaningful and orderly. Through Japanese language education, which Dr Ngalande has started here in Zambia, I sincerely hope that it will contribute to the development of this beloved country itself through personal development of people of Zambia.

Once again, I am so delighted from the bottom of my heart that our Foreign Minister has recognised Dr Ngalande's efforts and dedication in this regard.

Congratulations! Dr Ngalande sensei!

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Thank you for your attention.

(End)