

**Remarks by Mr. Atsushi Kuwabara, Chargé d’Affaires ad intérim of Japan to
Zambia on The Occasion of the Completion Ceremony of
The Project for Upgrading of Plant Protection and Quarantine Facilities and
Irrigation System for Improving Insect Pests and Diseases Control in Zambia
Mt Makulu Research Station, Chilanga, 7th June 2012**

Dr. David Shamulenge, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and
Livestock,

Mr. John C. Musanya, Acting Director of Agricultural Research Institute,
Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here today on behalf of the Government of Japan and to hand over to the Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI) the plant protection and quarantine facilities under the Project for Upgrading of Plant Protection and Quarantine Facilities and Irrigation System for Improving Insect Pests and Diseases Control. It was in April 2010, that the Government of Japan agreed to allocate to this project counter-part funds amounting to K650 million, equivalent to approximately 140,000 US dollars.

The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacity of the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division of ZARI for improving service delivery on insect pests and diseases identification and control strategies. Specifically, the fund has been used for the improvement of ZARI capacity in early detection of virus diseases and multiplication of disease-free planting materials. It is also

used for the improvement of the irrigation system for the proper management of the multiplication nurseries.

It is my sincere hope that the set-up of the facilities will accelerate the implementation of the agricultural project and that its completion will contribute significantly to the activities of ZARI for agricultural skills transfer.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan has been extending its development assistance to the agriculture sector in Zambia based on the belief that improvement of agricultural knowledge has a direct impact on the attainment of sustainable food security, and thus the poverty alleviation, for the people of Zambia.

Japan started its cooperation for Zambia's agriculture sector in 1980. For six years from October 2006 to February 2012, Japan supported the farming communities in rural areas of Zambia by promoting non-maize food crops such as root, tubers and legumes for crop diversification through the FODIS & the FODIS II Projects. Through implementation of these projects, the importance of minimizing crop losses due to viral diseases was recognized anew. From this point of view, this project, which we gathered for today, contributes very effectively and efficiently to ZARI and agricultural development in Zambia. It is my pleasure to tell you that, from the end of this month, for three years, the government of Japan and JICA will start a

new project 'FODIS-R', where R stands for rice, with ZARI to further support crop diversification through promotion of rice cropping. We hope that the result of these long-term projects will give the Zambian crop diversification policy the huge benefits and profits.

Japan appreciates the strenuous efforts being made by the Government of the Republic of Zambia towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this light, I sincerely hope that these projects will have a positive impact on the initiatives being undertaken by the Government of Zambia, aimed at the realisation of food security, and thus poverty reduction, in Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over one year has passed since Japan was hit by one of the most powerful earthquakes in recorded history. The human toll and physical damage were extraordinary. We are still faced with huge challenges, but Japan is today on a steady path towards recovery and we remain committed to international cooperation. We will support Zambia for the economic and social development of the country. Japan will strengthen its partnership with African countries under the framework of TICAD (Tokyo International Conference for African Development). The Government of Japan will host TICAD V in Japan from 1st to 3rd in June next year.

In closing, please allow me to state my sincere hope that these facilities will be effectively utilised and well maintained so that they can serve many people for many years to come. I believe they will lead to higher productivity, improved food security for the people of Zambia, and the social and economic development of the country. I also hope that the Project will further strengthen the cordial friendship that exists between Japan and Zambia.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

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