

**Remarks by Ambassador Akio Egawa
At the Swearing-in Ceremony for the Graduating Students of
The School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia
Lusaka, 5 September 2012**

Dr. David Shamulenge, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of
Agriculture and Livestock,
Prof. Stephen Simukanga, Vice Chancellor, University of Zambia,
Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine,
Government Officials,
Distinguished Professors and Officials of the University of
Zambia,
Graduating Students,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to be invited to this auspicious occasion
to say a few congratulatory words.

I would first like to congratulate the graduating students for
successfully completing six years of studies.

Veterinary medicine plays a crucial role in the sound development
of the livestock and animal industry, which is a vital sector in
Zambia's economy. For instance, failure in controlling endemics
might even cause destruction of the entire industry. Your School
of Veterinary Medicine has made immense contributions to the
development of Zambia's livestock and animal industry over the
years. I hope the graduating students will emulate this tradition.

The School of Veterinary Medicine has also become a major driving force in the progress of veterinary medicine beyond Zambia's borders. I hope the School will become a bigger and more important regional and even continental centre of veterinary medicine.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am proud that Japan has long been involved with the growth of this prestigious institution, the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia.

Japan's involvement dates back to the mid-1980s when the School of Veterinary Medicine was established at the University of Zambia with grant aid assistance from the Government of Japan. Ever since, Japan has steadfastly supported the School in various ways and Hokkaido University has consistently played a key role.

The longstanding relationship between the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia and Hokkaido University resulted in the signing of a formal university-wide exchange agreement last year and this year's opening of Hokkaido University Lusaka Office, which is located right here at the

School of Veterinary Medicine buildings. These welcome developments will hopefully lead to expansion of their collaboration to broader horizons.

Over the years, numerous students and scholars from the School of Veterinary Medicine visited and studied at Hokkaido University and vice versa. Many students from Zambia went with Japanese Government scholarship. In fact, the Zambian alumni association of Japanese Government Scholarship students is literally dominated by those from the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia. These exchanges have added much to the friendship between Japan and Zambia.

A seedling that was planted some 30 years ago has grown to become a large tree and has born many rich fruits. The successful and growing partnership between the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zambia and Hokkaido University has become an invaluable asset in the bilateral relations between our two countries. Indeed, the bond tying the University of Zambia and Japan has become a pillar in the overall friendly relations between Japan and Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan's current challenges combined with the re-building after the unprecedented earthquake and tsunami that struck the eastern part of Japan in March last year have not seen a waning of Japan's commitment to the economic and social development of Zambia and Africa. On the contrary, the Government of Japan will host the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) in June next year. The Conference will hopefully come up with new bold initiatives to accelerate the development of African countries.

It is my hope that today's graduating students will make good contributions to the nation's development and will also give fresh impetus to further strengthening of the friendship between Japan and Zambia.

Congratulations, once again, graduating students!

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