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**REMARKS BY H.E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA, AMBASSADOR OF
JAPAN TO ZAMBIA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE ZAMBIA-JAPAN
TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION FORUM**

LUSAKA, 29TH JANUARY, 2014

Hon. Emmanuel T. Chenda, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry

Hon. Richwell Siamunene, Deputy Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry

Mr. Siazongo Siakalenge, Permanent Secretary of Commerce, Trade and
Industry

Dr. Andrew Chipwende, Director General, Zambia Development Agency

Mr. Kimio Inaba, Executive Director, Japan External Trade Organization,
Johannesburg

Mr. Hiroshi Okado, Vice Chairman, Japan Chamber of Commerce and
Industries in South Africa

(Excellencies,)

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour and pleasure to share this memorable occasion with you all – to hold the first-ever Zambia-Japan Trade and Investment Promotion Forum here in Lusaka, in co-sponsoring with Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) and Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) Johannesburg Office. I am pleased to inform you that we have 21 participants from 13 Japanese companies operating in South Africa, 15 participants from 10 Japanese companies based in Zambia, and 62 participants from 48 Zambian companies and organizations. The total number of participants is 138. I would like to thank the staff of ZDA, JETRO Johannesburg office as well as our Embassy for their efforts in making this all-important forum possible. I also would like to express

my sincere appreciation to all participants from the Zambian side for attending this forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you may all know, Zambia is located at the centre of the Southern Africa region, where remarkable economic growths have recently been recorded, and also at a juncture of several important international corridors, such as Nacala Corridor and North-South Corridor. Zambia is also renowned for its huge deposits and world-class production of natural resources such as copper and cobalt. Moreover, 40 percent of water resources in this region are reserved in Zambia, so it has huge potential for growth in such areas as agriculture and hydroelectric power generation.

In the last decade, Zambia has successfully turned this potential into robust economic growth. Zambia's economy has been recording about 6 to 7 % annual growths every year since 2004. This high growth was led by such industries as construction, transportation, information and telecommunication, agriculture and mining. The Government of Zambia, under the sixth national development plan, has been promoting infrastructure development, economic diversification, rural development, poverty reduction and human development. I believe that, considering the huge potential of Zambia that I have mentioned, the economic growth in the last decade is a mere prologue of long lasting economic expansion of this country.

I also would like to emphasize that Zambia's economic growth is not limited to Zambia alone. It will stimulate the economic growth of 8 neighbouring countries surrounding Zambia. Those countries' economic expansion will also accelerate Zambia's economic development. This synergy effect will make it possible for all countries in the region to equitably develop as a whole. This balanced economic growth, free and active flow of goods and people in and out of the region, and affluent, happy and lively people – this is what we envisage for the Southern Africa region in the next 10 to 20 years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We would like to work hand in hand with Zambian people, keeping such lively and affluent images in mind, for creating a bright future for Zambia and the Southern Africa region. As we may all be aware, the Japanese Government has been assisting Zambia's economic development through our Official Development Aid since 1970. We have provided 213.9 billion yen (about USD 2.1 billion) up until March 2012. Our assistance covers wide areas ranging from the construction of roads, water supply facilities and hospitals, to health, education and agriculture. You may be well aware of the Great East Road, the Lusaka Inner Ring Road, and a project for upgrading Lusaka Health Centres to District Hospitals, implemented by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The Japanese Government will continue to assist Zambia through our ODA projects. However, at the same time, we would like to attach similar importance to promoting trade and investment by Japanese companies, for assisting Zambia's economic development. We believe that trade and investment promotion will make it possible for both Zambian and Japanese companies to share profits, to create jobs in Zambia, to facilitate technological transfer, and eventually to assist sustainable economic development of Zambia.

As a matter of course, Japan is a country with a free economy. The Government cannot control private businesses. They make overseas investment and business operations based upon their own judgment. Business environment of recipient countries would be an important factor for their decision making. On the other hand, as the saying 'Seeing is believing' goes, sound judgment for investment would be impossible without visiting the recipient country, namely Zambia, observing the reality, communicating and interacting with officials and business people here. The Japanese Government is keen to help facilitating such dialogues and interactions. This is the underlying theme of this forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This forum is closely linked and synchronized with TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) V held in Yokohama, Japan, last June, and its follow-up process. The Japanese Government announced at the TICAD V, as a part of its foreign policy toward Africa, that it would assist to 'boost the growth of Africa through trade and investment of private sector' and

‘contribute to the growth of Africa, utilizing private and public means of up to approx. JPY 3.2 trillion (about USD 32 billion) in the next 5 years’.

Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, as a follow-up of TICAD V, visited Africa, namely Cote d’Ivoire, Mozambique and Ethiopia, from the 10th to 14th of this month. One of the objectives of his visit was to promote investment in Africa through public-private partnership, and to request the improvement of business environment for supporting Japanese companies’ investment. While in Mozambique, Prime Minister Abe told President Guebuza that Japan is ready to provide 70 billion Yen (USD 700 million) in the next 5 years to further support the development along Nacala Corridor. This additional support will have a positive implication for the economic development of Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe, as well as that of Northern Mozambique.

Looking at the fact that our Prime Minister visited Africa for the first time in the last 8 years, and announced additional assistance measures, you may realize the seriousness to which the Japanese Government attaches importance to promoting trade and investment with Africa. Against the backdrop of this serious approach, Zambia and Japan now have a great opportunity to promote trade and investment. I sincerely hope that all of the participants in this forum will take this opportunity of engaging in business activities in Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In closing, I would like to gladly announce that this year marks the 50th anniversary of Zambia-Japan diplomatic relations as well as the golden jubilee of Zambia’s independence. This forum is also the first event organized by our Embassy to commemorate the 50th anniversary. Our Embassy prepared a small booklet looking back our diplomatic relationship in the half a century and looking ahead at our future relations. It is included in the handouts. Please read it when you have time.

I sincerely hope that today’s conference and tomorrow’s site tour will lead to meaningful and active dialogues and exchanges between the two sides, thereby enhancing further investment and trade between the two countries.

Thank you for your attention.

