

REMARKS BY H.E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA, AMBASSADOR
OF JAPAN TO ZAMBIA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OPENING CEREMONY OF KAIZEN INSTITUTE OF ZAMBIA

LUSKA, 19th JUNE, 2014

Dr. Roland Msiska, Secretary to Cabinet
Mr. Chola Mwitwa, Acting Chief Executive Officer, KIZ
Mr. Bernard Chiwala, Chief Executive Officer, RDA
JICA Expert,
Private Sector,
KIZ Kaizen consultant,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning,

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to KIZ for the invitation to the opening ceremony today.

I am glad to report, Ladies and Gentlemen, that Japan today is very focused on providing support to create a better investment and business environment in Africa. In the same vein, Japan is supporting the government of Zambia in creating investment promotion through Private Development Programme under the Country Assistance Policy.

In order to enhance domestic industry competitiveness in Zambia, productivity must be improved. Since 2008, JICA has dispatched senior volunteers to the Zambia Association for Manufacturers and also dispatched a KAIZEN Expert to assist in the investment promotion project, namely the Triangle of Hope (TOH) Project. The KAIZEN Conference has so far been held four times.

Now, in order to promote KAIZEN movement in Zambia, the Government of Zambia decided to open the KAIZEN institute of Zambia. Under the initiative of Cabinet Office, today , KIZ has

officially opened under the headship of MCTI.

I would like to emphasise that the capacity building of domestic Small and Medium Enterprises is key for the improvement of Zambia's business environment and economic growth. Japan has learnt this through our own experience in boosting the economic power back in the 1950s. It was the robust manufacturing and service industry that has made our economic miracle possible.

Innovation is indeed an important factor for Japanese industries in order to promote better products and services. However, developing new things is not the only driving force of our industry. The more important element has been the spirit and effort to make an improvement to the existing resources and products. One good example is the television industry, where they started up with Braun tube television and achieved to develop high-definition flat television.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Quality Control Cycle, namely QCC, has been the core part of KAIZEN activities. QCC is a small group activity by first line workers to improve quality of their work, products, and services. It was originally proposed by Japan Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) in 1962 and was introduced to a number of manufacturing organizations, and was applied to administration and sales organization and now to service sector enterprises. In 1971, the first KAIZEN conference was held in Japan. Today, QCC is applied to a number of enterprises in various industries around the world.

One of QCC's unique features is that the workers themselves progressively perform the quality improvement activities. . For example, in the case of a manufacturing company, first line workers who actually make or assemble the products are the ones who make a team to work on quality improvement. In other words,

they have more responsibilities in producing better quality goods, and that triggers their motivation to make effort to improve their attitude towards their work.

QCC maintains the bottom-up practice and the process where problem solving skills are developed among workers. The bottom-up empowerment builds up the overall capacity of the company itself, resulting in improved competitiveness. Every company should have a management capacity to empower the bottom lines of its function.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, the empowerment of SMEs through KAIZEN activities is a very important element in order to strengthen the fundamental part of Zambia's business and investment environment. For this reason, Activity of KIZ whose opening ceremony is today, not only caters for the private sector who are taking part in KAIZEN activities, but also their activities which will in turn improve the productivity of the public sector. KIZ should be a key institute for the facilitation of Zambian economic development and prosperity. I sincerely hope for the sustainable development of KIZ and for improved competitiveness of Zambia's industries and economy.

Thank you