

REMARKS BY H.E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA, AMBASSADOR
OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY
FOR THE PROJECT FOR UPGRADING OF LUSAKA HEALTH
CENTRES IN THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, 11th JULY 2014

The Guest of Honour, Hon. Dr. Joseph Kasonde, MP, Minister of Health;
Honourable Emmerine Kabanshi, MP, Minister of Community
Development, Mother and Child Health;
Mr. Yoshihide Teranishi, Resident Representative, JICA Zambia Office;
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here today on behalf of the Government of Japan at this momentous ground-breaking ceremony for the project for Upgrading of Lusaka Health Centres in the Republic of Zambia.

The aim of this project is to improve and upgrade Matero and Chilenje urban health centres of Lusaka to district hospitals. The project includes construction of 8 wards and related facilities, provision of medical equipment and transfer of skills in the operation and maintenance of the medical equipment. It will therefore allow for improved access to facilities at the district hospitals of the people in Lusaka and reduce congestion at the University Teaching Hospital, UTH, which will in turn re-establish itself as the top referral hospital.

The Government of Japan is providing a grant of 19.99 billion yen, equivalent approximately to 19 million U.S. dollars or 104 million Kwacha for this project and the construction period is estimated to be 13 months.

Upon implementation of this project, two health centres will become district hospitals; Matero, which currently treats about 77,000 people, will have the capacity to treat approximately 247,000. Chilenje will be able to treat approximately 359,000 from the current 77, 000 people. Besides, because Matero and Chilenje will be able to perform district hospital level of operations such as Caesarean operation, they will consequently not need to depend on UTH. It is expected that there will be a 40% reduction of district hospital level operations at obstetrics department at UTH. Further, they will be able to perform basic operations, so I hope that this will contribute to greatly reduce congestion at UTH. In addition, with the increased number of people who will be able to have basic medical care, I trust that it will greatly reduce maternal mortality and child mortality rates.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the years, Japan has made remarkable contributions to the improvement of health for the people of Zambia. Our focuses have been on mother and child health, HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, health infrastructure and human resources development.

The Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) held last June in Yokohama, Japan, accentuated that private sector-led growth is necessary for Africa's growth. Improving the local investment environment in Zambia, and above all establishing a free and secure investment environment, is essential to expand trade and investment by the private sector. Japan will support Zambia's efforts through various means, including through development of infrastructure and human resources as well as assistance for legal systems.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, please allow me to emphasise that the funds that were used for this project came from Japanese taxpayers. Japanese people have been committed to the economic and social development of Zambia since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1964. You may recall that in 2013, the Government of Japan hosted TICAD V with participation of heads of states and governments from Africa where the government of Japan announced expansion of its aid for Africa's growth and development. In addition, Japanese Imperial Highnesses, Prince and Princess Akishino made a visit to Zambia last month to commemorate Zambia's Golden Jubilee of Independence and also the 50th anniversary of Zambia-Japan diplomatic relations. This clearly demonstrates the importance that Japan attaches to its relationship with Zambia.

In closing, it is my sincere hope that Matero and Chilenje's facilities will be well utilised and maintained. It is also my hope that the friendship existing between Zambia and Japan will further be strengthened through the project.

Thank you very much.

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