

**Speech by H.E. Mr. Kiyoshi Koinuma, Ambassador of Japan to
the Republic of Zambia on the occasion of the Japanese Drum
Concert at INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL on 2nd September**

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to hold the Japanese Drum Concert tonight. 2014 is a very significant year for Japan and Zambia, as it marks the Golden Jubilee of the independence of Zambia as well as the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Zambia. To celebrate this milestone in the history of Japan and Zambia, Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino visited Zambia at the end of June this year and our cordial relationship was further developed.

Japan and Zambia have maintained a cordial and steadfast relationship since the independence of Zambia. Now, I believe that it is of importance that the friendly relationship between the two countries is enhanced even more in the next 50 years on the basis of our cordial relations over the last 50 years. From this point of view, it is significant to promote interaction of people between our two countries not only in economic fields, but also in the field of culture and arts. Thus, it is my great delight that we can invite Japanese Drum artists to Zambia during this historic year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This evening's key form of artistic expression is an ancient Japanese style of percussion using large drums which are called "TAIKO" in Japanese. One of TAIKO's most defining aspects is its dynamic playing style which involves a lot of choreographed movements. The modern art of Taiko performance has been very popular in Japan until now. Tonight, accompanying the Taiko

performance, the mellow sound of Japanese bamboo flute and Japanese dancing will add grace to the performance. I hope this concert will transport you on a trip to Japan and afford you with a rich and meaningful cultural experience.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Music is a good example of cultural interaction involving harmony of different cultures. Rock, Classical or Jazz might be different in music genres, but music can easily cross the ocean and bridge cultures. We might have different nationalities, but music can bring home to us how closely we are sharing the same values. It is my sincere hope that this concert will enrich the relationship between Japan and Zambia by bringing about a better understanding of Japanese culture and arts.

In closing, I would like to thank you all for attending this anniversary occasion. Please enjoy this evening's Drum performance.

Thank you for your attention.

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