

REMARKS BY H.E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA, AMBASSADOR
OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE HANDOVER CEREMONY FOR THE
PROJECT FOR EXPANSION OF THE COLD CHAIN

LUSAKA, 15th October, 2014

Honourable Emerine Kabanshi, Minister of Community Development,
Mother and Child Health

Dr. Hamid El-Bashir Ibrahim, UNICEF Zambia's Representative

Professor Elwyn Chomba, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Community
Development, Mother and Child Health

Senior Government officials

Officer in Charge, Health and Nutrition Section

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here today on behalf of the Government of Japan
at this momentous handover ceremony for the Project for Expansion of the
Cold Chain.

This project aims to promote child health through improved access to quality
and effective immunization against Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPDs).
Under this project, a total of 423 refrigerators and 500 cold boxes will be
procured. In addition, in order to strengthen the capacity for the maintenance

of the cold chain system, workshops will be held for the technical staff. Therefore, it is expected that the district and health facility cold chain will have an expanded capacity of 59,550 litres from the current total of 45,200 litres by 2015. To meet this objective, Japan is providing a grant of 221 million Japanese Yen, equivalent approximately to 2.2 million US dollars or 10 million Zambian Kwacha. Implementation of the project will be entrusted to UNICEF.

Issues of health and population are fundamental in a developing country as they have a direct effect on a society's economic well-being, and may ultimately lead to poverty at national level if not well addressed. Japan believes that the achievement of improved health services, being one of the Millennium Development Goals, is extremely important as this will promote the economic welfare of communities and enhance poverty reduction.

In this project,

- (1) 550,000 newly born children will be vaccinated and protected against VPDs annually by 2015.
- (2) A total of 65 technical staff will be trained to gain knowledge and skills on the sustainability of the cold chain system.

I am certain that this project will make a significant contribution to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 4, that is, reduction of child mortality in Zambia.

Honourable Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan has a longstanding reputation in assisting with the cold chain and immunization. In 2001 and 2006, Japan provided grant aid for the procurement of 830 refrigerators and 560 cold boxes in total. In 2007 and 2008, Japan, in cooperation with WHO, assisted in the training of medical and technical staff of the Ministry of Health as well as Provincial and District Health Offices in cold chain management and maintenance. As you might be aware; Japan has now begun to upgrade Matero and Chilenje health centres. These projects commenced in July this year. Japan promotes Universal Health Coverage to ensure that all people have access to health services. Accordingly, we support Zambia's vision which is "Equitable access to quality health care for all by 2030".

Honourable Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health and UNICEF will work hand-in-hand in this project. I am confident the project is in capable hands. Japan and UNICEF have successfully partnered in numerous child health projects worldwide and UNICEF has a very good track record in assisting in the previous cold chain expansions in Zambia. The Ministry also has a key role to play, especially in ensuring the sustainability of the cold chain system.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere hope that with this tripartite partnership, the project will successfully improve child health in Zambia. Children are the hope for the future of Zambia. To enhance child health is to

promote the future growth and development of the country. I also hope that the project will further strengthen the cordial friendship existing among Japan, Zambia and UNICEF.

Thank you very much.

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