

Remarks by Ambassador Kiyoshi Koinuma
On the Occasion of the Reception
to Celebrate the Birthday of H.M. the Emperor of Japan
Ambassador's Residence, Lusaka, 26 November 2014

Guest of Honor, Hon. Nicholas Banda, MP, Deputy Minister of
Local Government and Housing,
Honorable Ministers present,
Honorable Deputy Ministers present,
Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the reception to
celebrate the 81st birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt
condolences to the Government and the people of the Republic of
Zambia, following the passing of His Excellency Mr. Michael
Chilufya Sata, President of the Republic of Zambia. The Late
President is vividly remembered for his great contribution to
development of cordial relations between Japan and Zambia. I
offer my heartfelt prayers for the repose of President Sata's soul,
recalling the tremendous contributions made by the late
President.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1964, Zambia won its independence after years of relentless
struggle and sacrifices by many Zambians, most particularly the
“freedom fighters”. Since then, Zambia has sustained its
solidarity and stability under the slogan of “One Zambia, One
Nation”. Evidently, Zambia has continued to develop its economy
to higher heights, and dedicated herself to contributing to the

independence and peace among some neighboring nations. With great praise for the admirable achievements of Zambia, I would like to congratulate the government and people of Zambia on this memorable 50th Anniversary of the Independence of your country. I also would like to mention that His Majesty the Emperor of Japan has sent a congratulatory message on the 50th Anniversary of the Independence to the people of Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me immense pleasure to simultaneously celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Zambia and Japan as well as the Independence of Zambia. I am pleased to note that remarkable strides have been made in our quest to promote and strengthen the bilateral relations between Japan and Zambia in various fields in this significant year.

You may recall that Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino visited Zambia in June and July this year, and met with several leading officials of Zambia, including His Excellency Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, First President of the Republic of Zambia. Their Imperial Highnesses also visited the splendid Victoria Falls, which is a UNESCO World Heritage, University of Zambia and other places. Last month, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Kazuyuki Nakane attended Zambia's 50th Independence Anniversary Celebrations. From Zambia, Honourable Robert Sichinga, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry attended the Japan- Africa Business Forum 2014, which was held in Tokyo, Japan, in June. Also, the Acting Chief Justice, Madam Chief Justice L.P. Chibesakunda paid an official visit to Japan in October.

In the field of culture, we invited music artists from Japan to hold a Japanese Drum Concert in September. Also, the Japan Film Festival 2014 was harmonized with the Japanese Cultural Experience event during the JAPAN WEEK. Here, people had the

opportunity to experience some aspects of the Japanese culture, such as the Japanese Tea Ceremony and the Origami Paper Folding, for a period of three days. This Saturday, we will hold the annual Judo tournament. I am delighted to note the pace at which this sport is becoming increasingly popular here in Zambia.

From the economic perspective, Japan hosted the Zambia-Japan Trade and Investment Promotion Forum in January this year. The participants comprised 23 Japanese companies and 42 Zambian companies. Since the forum, there has been a notable gradual increase in Investment from Japanese companies. One Japanese major corporation, NEC, has signed a contract with Zamtel, amounting to 18 million US dollars. We have set up a Japanese exhibition booth today. Please feel free to see and touch Japanese products and purchase as you like.

From the economic cooperation perspective, the Project for upgrading of Lusaka Health Center started this year. Exchange of Notes for Grant Aid for the Project for Groundwater Development in Luapula Province Phase3 and the Handover Ceremony for the Project for Expansion of the Cold Chain system also took place this year. The object of the latter project is to ensure refrigeration and preservation of various kinds of vaccines and expand the coverage of vaccination for children. The Inner Ring Road construction is expected to be completed soon. Once the construction is completed, it is expected that there will be a massive reduction of heavy traffic in Lusaka roads.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The bilateral relations between Japan and Zambia, moreover the relations between Japan and Africa have drastically changed over the past two or three years. Since the 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V), the Government of Japan has been focusing on enhancing economic exchange including trade and investment between Japan and Africa as well

as rendering economic assistance to Africa. In line with this policy, our Embassy is placing great emphasis on promoting trade and investment between Japan and Zambia and focusing on assisting infrastructure projects in Zambia, especially electricity projects and transportation projects. It is also being considered that the mission of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industries in the Republic of South Africa will visit Zambia early next year to look for investment opportunities in the country.

In addition to these commitments to contributing to the economic and social development of Zambia, I believe that Japan and Zambia should promote interaction of people and mutual understanding from cultural and other aspects between the two countries, in order to enhance even further the bilateral relationship between the two countries in the next 50 years. From this point of view, we will further offer scholarship programmes for the younger generation to study in Japan, who will in future assume responsibilities for the future of Zambia and promote the exchange of academic institutions including universities between the two countries.

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