

**REMARKS BY H. E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA,
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S
JUDO TOURNAMENT AT OLYMPIC YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
CENTER, LUSAKA 29TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Mrs. Matilda Mwaba, Board Member of National Sports Council of Zambia,

Mr. Alfred Foloko, President of the Zambia Judo Association,
Representatives from the National Sports Council of Zambia

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to hold the 10th Japanese Ambassador's National Judo Tournament.

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 Gentelemen,

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, as well as H.E. Mr. Kazuyuki Nakane, Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan attended Zambia's 50th Independence Anniversary Celebrations, so that our cordial relationship was further strengthened.

Japan and Zambia have maintained a cordial and steadfast relationship since the independence of Zambia. Now, I believe that it is important that the friendly relationship between the two countries is enhanced even more in the next 50 years on the basis of the good relations which we have enjoyed over the last 50 years. From this point of view, I would like to continue to promote interaction of people between our two countries, not only in economic fields, but also in the field of culture, arts and sports.

Judo was originated in Japan in the late 1800s, but now, Judo is a worldwide sport and more than 200 countries and regions belong to the International Judo Federation. I have been told that Judo was introduced to Zambia in the 1970s. Since then, the Japanese Government has been associated with Judo in Zambia and provided the first grant for Judo equipment including Judo uniforms and Judo mats in 1998. On top of that, the additional Judo equipment, which is worth about four million five hundred thousand Kwacha in total, were handed over to the Zambia Judo Association in 2002 and 2010. I have been also told that there are now over 3,000 Judokas here in Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, Tokyo was selected to host the 2020 Olympic and

Paralympic Games. Considering that Judo was adopted as an official Olympic sport in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic, I believe the 2020 Tokyo Olympics will be meaningful in the history of Judo. Among Japanese martial arts, Judo is the only one which has been adopted as a formal event at the Olympic Games. It is my sincere hope that Zambian Judokas will reap medals in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Executive Committee of the Zambia Judo Association for having successfully organised today's tournament; the sponsors for providing financial and other forms of assistance; as well as the competitors for the high level of Judo skills they have displayed during the contest.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the finalists and wish all of them the very best as they compete for the topmost position this afternoon. May I also commend all the Judo clubs that have taken part in this year's competition, without whose participation the tournament would not have been possible.

It is said that the basic underlying philosophy of Judo is "mutual prosperity between oneself and others". It is about gaining respect for civility and trusting each other. It is significant to the development of Zambia that we learn about Japan and build up a spirit of mutual prosperity through Judo training, because it will lead to establishing a society of mutual support. I believe Japan and Zambia will continue the cooperative relationship under such spirit. I hope everyone will become an accomplished Judoka through increased training.

Thank you.