

REMARKS BY H.E. KIYOSHI KOINUMA
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE HANDOVER OF THE PROJECT
FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING ENVIRONMENT OF
THE SOUTHERN AREA OF LUSAKA
(12th December, 2014)

Hon. Emmanuel T. Chenda, Minister of Local Government and
Housing,

Hon. Phillip Kosamu, Minister of Lusaka Province,

Cllr. Mulenga Sata, His Worship the Lusaka,

*****, Permanent Secretary, *****

Distinguished guests;

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.

It is my great pleasure and honor to be here with you today at this momentous handover of the project for the improvement of living environment of the Southern Area of Lusaka, so called the Inner Ring Road.

This project commenced with the Exchange of Notes in June, 2011, amounting up to 2.7 billion Japanese Yen (US\$27.6 million) as grant aid cooperation. The project is designed to construct a 15km

Inner Ring Road, aiming to promote the economic and industrial development to improve the living environment in the Southern area of Lusaka. At the same time, it is expected that an undeveloped drainage will be installed together with the road construction so as to improve the sanitation system around the area. This project falls under the Comprehensive Urban Development Master Plan which was adopted in 2009. It is hoped that the completion of the Inner Ring Road will contribute to mitigating heavy traffic congestion that continues to increase along with the city's economic development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Japan has been supporting construction of main roads in Lusaka, such as Great East Road, Great North Road and Cairo Road and the total length of these roads has reached 142km. The Inner Ring Road was constructed by a Japanese leading construction company, Shimizu Corporation which, for many years, has had a sound track record of supporting economic activities in Lusaka.

If you allow me, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make a few remarks about an episode which occurred during the construction. You may know that once asphalt is installed, it makes the road much smoother and easier for people and vehicles to use. One day, one of the workers met a mother who was pushing a wheel chair that was carrying her handicapped son. When the worker said "Good Afternoon" to the mother, she replied "Thank you" to the worker. The mother further explained that her son was so happy that he could now be able to go out onto the road after the construction, as it was very challenging to do so when the road had many potholes before the construction. At the construction site, workers often received complaints rather than appreciation; however this "Thank you" touched the workers' hearts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It has been found that Africa's infrastructure development requires 93 billion USD annually. The Government of Japan will continuously extend its support and assistance to develop infrastructure. In this context, we are considering to develop an Urban Traffic Master Plan to improve the traffic situation in Lusaka city. Furthermore, we are considering the implementation of Inner Ring Phase 2, as well as the Outer Ring Road Plan in the future.

At the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) last June, the Government of Japan committed its support to improving the basic economic infrastructures which promote the trade and investment towards Africa. This project has great potential to serve as the hub of industry, since the Inner Ring Road is designed to be connected to the Lusaka South Multi Facilities Economic Zone (MFEZ). Promotion of smooth logistics plays an important role in promoting the trade and investment in this region.

In concluding, I would like to say that it is my earnest hope that through this project, the partnership between our two countries will be further strengthened and foster a strong spirit of our never-ending cooperation, symbolic with the completed Inner Ring Road.

Thank you very much for your attention.