

**REMARKS BY H.E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE GRANT CONTRACT
WITH JOICFP
EMBASSY OF JAPAN
WEDNESDAY 3rd DECEMBER, 2014**

Ms. Amane Funabashi, Program Officer of Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP),

Mr. Edford Mutuma, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ),

Staff Member of JOICFP,

Members of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here today, representing the Government of Japan at this signing ceremony for Grant Assistance to JOICFP.

Today, the Government of Japan will provide a grant amounting to 751,253 United States dollars, or approximately 4.7 million Zambian Kwacha, to JOICFP. The purpose of the grant is to enable JOICFP to implement **The Maternal Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) One Stop Service Project in Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts in Zambia**. This is the first year, Phase One, of the three-year community-based comprehensive project within ten project areas of Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts, namely Mutaba, Mikata and Kalweo.

Under Phase One of the Project, a One-Stop Service Site will be established. Here, the community will have access to a comprehensive selection of medical

services at a single location, in Mutaba, Masaiti District. In Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts, a large number of pregnant women are forced to give birth at home because the hospital is quite remote from their residences. I heard that many of them lose their lives during the process of delivery, due to lack of proper medical attention.

In order to tackle the challenges these Districts are facing, JOICFP will construct a maternity ward and a maternity waiting house, the building where expectant mothers can stay in the period leading up to childbirth, within the Mutaba health centre. In addition, JOICFP will provide the Mutaba health centre with medical equipment necessary for safe delivery. These efforts by JOICFP will enable more expectant women in the area to have access to the facility-based delivery with appropriate medical treatment. Consequently, it is expected that the project by JOICFP will contribute to the reduction of the mortality rate of mothers and babies in Zambia.

Moreover, many women in Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts are forced to carry out unwanted pregnancies because both women and men in the community are lacking opportunities to gain knowledge regarding pregnancy, childbirth and family planning. Considering this situation, JOICFP will train members of Safe Motherhood Action Group (SMAG) who will provide useful information on pregnancy, childbirth and family planning to the community. SMAG are expected to play a significant role in mitigating the risks of unplanned pregnancies in Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The project by JOICFP is in alignment with policy goals in the health sector set by the Government of Japan, which constitute reduction of child mortality and improvement of maternal health, aimed towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS). In 2010, the Government of Japan proposed the maternal and child healthcare model called EMBRACE model, or “Ensure Mothers and Babies Regular Access to Care” model in *Japan’s Global Health Policy 2011-2015*. Through the framework of EMBRACE model, the Government of Japan aims at intervening effectively in order to save lives of mothers and babies in partnership with all stakeholders.

Japan’s Strategy on Global Health Diplomacy, which was published in June 2013, emphasised that the Government of Japan is committed to establishing Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in the African continent. As part of efforts to fulfill policy goals set by the Government of Japan, the project by JOICFP is expected to contribute to the establishment of universal access to appropriate care and support for expectant mothers in Masaiti and Mpongwe Districts.

The Government of Japan is also committed to playing a leading role in promoting the empowerment of women in developing countries with realization of the importance of the role which maternal, newborn and child health plays. When Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made an address at the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2013, he proposed a theory called “womenomics”. “Womenomics” maintains that the more the advance of women in society is promoted, the higher the growth rate becomes. Based on this theory, Prime Minister Abe stated that the Government of Japan will implement Official Development Aid in excess of US \$ 3 billion over the next three years, based on three pillars, (i) promotion of women’s

participation in society, (ii) women's participation and protection in the areas of peace and security and (iii) efforts in the field of health and medical care for women.

Women in Zambia are expected to play a significant part towards the development of the country. It is my sincere hope that the project by JOICFP will not only contribute to women's participation in society but also bring peace and prosperity to the Republic of Zambia.

In closing, please allow me to emphasise that the funds that were used to undertake this Project came from Japanese taxpayers. It is therefore my sincere hope that the facilities being provided will be well utilized and maintained so that they will have a positive long-lasting impact on people in the region, and will symbolize the cordial relationship between the people of Japan and Zambia.

Thank you.