

**REMARKS BY H. E. MR. KIYOSHI KOINUMA,  
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO ZAMBIA,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 5<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL KAIZEN CONFERENCE  
AT MULUNGUSHI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE  
ON TUESDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015**

Honorable Secretary to Cabinet, Dr. Roland Msiska,

Honorable Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Mrs Margaret Mwanakatwe,

Mrs. Seblewongel Haregewein, Director of Leather & Textile Industries, Ethiopia  
Kaizen Institute,

Mr. Chola Mwitwa, Interim Chief Executive Officer of Kaizen Institute of Zambia,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning,

It is my great pleasure to be here today on behalf of the Government of Japan to witness the opening of the 5<sup>th</sup> National Kaizen Conference in Zambia. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Kaizen Institute of Zambia, and all the stakeholders involved in organizing this conference which has become an annual event.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Kaizen Conference is indeed a memorable one. It is the very first conference organized by the dedicated team of the Kaizen Institute of Zambia, or KIZ, which was established in 2014 with the aim to promote Kaizen activities. KIZ's achievement led to obtaining sufficient funding from the national budget and it is expected to increase further next year. The same commitment was expressed by H.E. President Lungu in his speech at the opening of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the 11<sup>th</sup> National Assembly. I would like to pay my humble respect to the strong commitment by the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the development of the Zambian economy, Small and Medium Enterprises are crucial. This is the experience that Japan learnt in its history. After World War II, Japan could not have enjoyed rapid economic growth, without the strong manufacturing and service sector, which was led by the Small and Medium Enterprises.

The unique feature of Japanese enterprises is that it not only values innovation, which breaks free from old ideas, but also embraces continuous improvement of existent products and services, which is KAIZEN. In the past, the long paths of KAIZEN activities eventually led to the evolution from tube television to digital TV. Today, you are all witness to the many Japanese cars in the streets of Lusaka, which are the fruit of the growth of the Japanese automotive industry, which was largely driven by the KAIZEN activities of workers right on the manufacturing floor. Such continuous effort by the workers is the Japanese magic ingredient to remain successful in the global competition.

In Zambia, the KAIZEN activities started in 2008 through the works of Japanese volunteers and experts who promoted quality circles at workplaces. Since then, 4 national conferences have been successfully held. Through the 'National KAIZEN Project in the Republic of Zambia' implemented in February 2014, KIZ was established. A total of 19 organizations were supported in the implementation of KAIZEN activities, including 10 public institutions, 5 manufacturing enterprises and 4 non-manufacturing enterprises. In addition, 10 Zambian KAIZEN consultants were trained through on-the-job-training, including 5 full-time staff of KIZ and 5 seconded staff. Furthermore, KAIZEN seminars that were held in the cities of Kabwe and Livingstone each attracted around 100 participants, and the Training Program in Ethiopia, enabled valuable exchange of ideas among the KAIZEN teams and like-minded enterprises both within and outside Zambia.

Moving forward, I hope to see more and more enterprises participating in KAIZEN activities. Businesses do not work individually but are inter-dependent. Therefore, I hope the participants in this conference will promote KAIZEN to other businesses and continue to enrich each other's activities. As you may recall the business mission by the Japanese Companies based in South Africa that visited Zambia in March this year, the Japanese companies are taking note of the development in the investment climate in Zambia. One of the key issues is the improvement of workers' productivities and quality of products, which is the main theme of this conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Japanese Government is committed to promoting trade and investment between the two countries. Next year, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), will be held here in Africa for the first time. And, capacity development and enhancing productivity in the industrial sector are expected to be one of the important pillars of Japanese development cooperation. I am confident that, with the commitment from the Government of Zambia and the Japanese technical support, we can achieve industrial growth and economic diversification in Zambia.

In closing, I would like to encourage the participants of the conference gathered here today to be proud of yourselves that you are the pioneers who will elevate the competitiveness of Zambian enterprises. It is also my sincere hope that the KAIZEN activities will symbolize the cordial relationship between the people of Japan and Zambia. I look forward to hearing your presentations of the achievement from the KAIZEN activities. Good luck.

Thank you.

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