

**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 7TH NOVEMBER 2015**

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 11th Japanese Ambassador's National Judo Tournament.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Zambia Judo Association for having successfully organized the tournament, the sponsors for providing financial and all the other forms of assistance, as well as the competitors for the high level of Judo skills.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year was a very significant year for Japan and Zambia, as it marked the Golden Jubilee of the independence of Zambia as well as the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Zambia. Our two countries have maintained a cordial and steadfast relationship since the independence of Zambia. Now, I believe it is important that our friendly relationship will be enhanced even more in the next 50 years stemming from 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 fields of culture, arts and sports.

Judo was originated in Japan in the late 1800s, and now, Judo has become 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 more than eight million Kwacha in total, was handed over to the Zambia Judo Association in 2002 and 2010. I have also been told that there are now over 3,000 Judokas here in Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When Tokyo was selected to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Japan launched a new initiative called “Sport for Tomorrow” and committed to providing prioritized assistance to further contribute to the promotion of world peace and international understanding through sport, over the period until 2020. In upholding this noble initiative of “Sport for Tomorrow”, I would like to continue to expand our assistance towards spreading and promoting the Olympic movement among people of all generations including the youth, who represent the future. 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,

In closing, I would like to congratulate the finalists and wish all of them the very best as they compete for the topmost position. 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 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.