

Remarks by Ambassador Kiyoshi Koinuma
On the Occasion of the Reception
to Celebrate the Birthday of H.M. the Emperor of Japan
Ambassador's Residence, Lusaka, 3 December 2015

Guest of Honor, Hon. Sydney Mushanga, MP, Deputy Minister of Higher Education

Honorable Ministers present,

Honorable Deputy Ministers present,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the reception to celebrate the 82nd Birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1964, Zambia won its independence after years of relentless struggle and sacrifices by many Zambians. Since then, Zambia has sustained its solidarity and stability under the slogan of "One Zambia, One Nation". Evidently, Zambia has continued to develop its economy to higher heights, and dedicated herself to contributing to the independence and peace among some neighboring nations. I would like to mention that Japan highly appreciates the admirable achievements of Zambia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to note that remarkable strides have been made in our quest to promote and strengthen the bilateral relations between Japan and Zambia in various fields in this year.

You may recall that Her Honour, Mrs. Inonge Wina, Vice President of the Republic of Zambia visited Sendai-city, Japan in March this year to attend the Third UN World Conference on

Disaster Risk Reduction. The Vice President had talks with His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. Also, Honourable Christopher Yaluma, Minister of Mines, Energy and Water Development of the Republic of Zambia visited Japan to attend the Second Japan-Africa Ministerial Meeting for Resources Development, that was held in Tokyo in May this year, to discuss resource development in Africa.

From the economic perspective, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry-Zambia Business Mission co-sponsored by JETRO Johannesburg Office and the Embassy of Japan in Zambia visited Lusaka in March this year. The participants comprised 14 Japanese companies and 70 Zambian companies. The Business Mission provided Japanese companies with significant opportunities, such as a business networking reception, a session to exchange opinions and a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Edgar Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia. Since the Business Mission, there has been a notable gradual increase in investment from Japanese companies. One Japanese major corporation, TOYOTA TSUSHO, has undertaken agribusiness in partnership with Amatheon Agri Zambia Ltd. this year. Another Japanese major corporation, UCC, has started to import Kasama coffee beans. Also JICA has sent a Technical Advisor for Investment Promotion to Zambia. We have set up a Japanese exhibition booth today. Feel free to see the various Japanese products.

From the economic cooperation perspective, the Handover Ceremony for Japanese grant aid project for Inner Ring Road took place in Lusaka last December. The Lusaka City Council has named the Road 'Tokyo Way'. Also the project for Groundwater Development in Luapula Province Phase 3 has been implemented this year. Furthermore, we are planning to supply screening equipment for Ebola Virus Disease to Zambia and implement the grant aid for Poverty Reduction Strategy Phase 3.

In the field of culture, in September, we hosted the Japanese Culture Exhibition Event, called “JAPAN DAY” and Japan Film Festival under the sponsorship of Japanese enterprises and Japan Foundation. These events provided good opportunities of experiencing, watching or tasting various aspects of Japanese culture in Zambia. It was also a great pleasure to continue to host tournaments of Judo and Karate which are Japanese traditional martial arts.

In the field of academic exchanges, this year, we welcomed “Study Abroad Coordinators” from Hokkaido University to Zambia. The coordinators are based at UNZA, working on increasing the number of students from the Sub-Saharan Africa including Zambia, who go to study in Japan. This new initiative is a significant step towards expanding academic exchanges. It is my sincere hope that it will promote international exchanges between Japan and African countries and contribute to human resource development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I understand that general elections will be held in Zambia next year. I am confident that the elections will be conducted in a democratic and peaceful manner like previous elections. Moreover, I would like to mention that the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development, TICAD VI, will be held in the Republic of Kenya. This conference will be the first TICAD to take place in Africa. I am strongly expecting active participation from the Republic of Zambia in the conference.

The bilateral relations between Japan and Zambia have been strongly enhanced. Last year was a remarkable year for both Zambia and Japan as the Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Zambia as well as the 50th Anniversary of diplomatic relationship between the two countries. I strongly believe that it is extremely

important that the friendly relationship between the two countries is enhanced even further in the next 50years starting this year on the basis of our cordial relations in the last 50years. Our Embassy will continue to support social and economic development of Zambia in close collaboration with the private sector. In addition, we would like to promote interaction of people, especially the youth, and academic exchange between Zambia and Japan. It is also our intention to strengthen mutual exchange in the fields of culture, art and sports.

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