

**Closing Remarks by Mr. NAITO Yasushi, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi
At the 7th Japanese Ambassador's Karate Championship Closing Ceremony
(25th July 2026, at ABC Blue Gym in Lilongwe)**

- ◆ The Guest of Honor, Madam Mary Waya, Deputy Director of Sports, representing Hon. Alfred Gangata, Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture,
- ◆ Hon. Charles Chilambula, Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation,
- ◆ Mr. Kelvin Mulezo, Commissioner, the Malawi Police Service,
- ◆ Your Worship Councillor Alex Peter Banda, Mayor of Lilongwe City,
- ◆ Mr. Denis Kumuwenda, Vice SG, Malawi Olympic Committee,
- ◆ Ms Bertha Liphava, Malawi National Council of Sports,
- ◆ Mr. Joseph Kawerama, President, Malawi Karate Federation,
- ◆ All the Government officials and Karate officials,
- ◆ All Judges,
- ◆ Members of Media,
- ◆ All Friends of Karate, and Ladies and Gentlemen,

こんにちは。 **Konnichiwa**
Mwaswera bwanji Nonse.

It is with much joy and honour that I welcome you all to the 7th Japanese Ambassador's Karate Championship in Malawi, which started in 2017. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Malawi Karate Federation, all karateka, coaches, judges, officials, sponsors, and distinguished guests for your great contribution to the sport. As I watched the opening ceremony, I was impressed to see more than one hundred karate athletes lined up from all over Malawi, including Ntcheu, Blantyre, Kasungu, Lilongwe, and Zomba.

I would like to congratulate all the Karate athletes who have joined the competition today. I have been impressed by the matches, both kata and kumite. The skill, determination, discipline, and sportsmanship demonstrated by the competitors have been truly inspiring.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Karate was formed and developed as an unarmed self-defence technique over 500 years ago in Japan. Since then, it has grown into a globally recognised martial art and sport, practised by millions of people around the world. It also evolved into an Olympic sport and was featured at the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2021. Like other Japanese martial arts, discipline and mutual respect are the most important elements of Karate. Karate-do, or the "Way of Karate",

places emphasis on courtesy, moral development, control of one's emotions, sympathy for the pain of others, and a sense of responsibility to society. It nurtures patience, humility, and self-discipline.

It is therefore my sincere pleasure to know that the karate-practising population in Malawi has grown dramatically in recent years. The Malawi Karate Federation hosted the first National Karate Championship in June last year and even won medals at regional games in July. In recognition of these achievements, my predecessor, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi, Mr. OYA Yoichi, conferred a Certificate of Commendation upon the Malawi Karate Federation in August last year for its distinguished service in deepening mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and Malawi. It is encouraging to see more and more young people embracing Karate and the values of respect and discipline.

I look forward to seeing Karate become even more popular across the country and to witnessing more karateka from Malawi participating in international competitions. I am confident that Malawi has the talent and potential to excel on the international stage. To this end, the Embassy of Japan is committed to promoting sport as an enabler of the country's socioeconomic growth and to further strengthening the friendship between Japan and Malawi.

Distinguished guests,

In conclusion, I extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who has contributed to the success of today's championship. Congratulations to all those who won medals, congratulations to all the karate athletes who participated, and my sincere appreciation to all of you for your kind presence.

ありがとうございました。 **Arigatou Gozaimashita.**

Zikomo kwambiri.

End