

Speech Mr. NAITO Yasushi, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi at the
Food Assistance Exchange of Notes Signing Ceremony (12th August)

- ❖ Honourable Roza Fatch Mbilizi M.P, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development,
- ❖ Madam Erica Maganga, Secretary for Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development,
- ❖ Mr. Wilson Moleni, Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs in the Office of the President and Cabinet (DoDMA),
- ❖ Dr. Hyoung-Joon Lim, WFP Country Director and Representative,
- ❖ Members of Media,
- ❖ Distinguished guests,
- ❖ Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is my great pleasure and honor to join you today for this important occasion marking the signing of the Exchange of Notes for Food Assistance Fiscal Year 2026. This ceremony represents not only a formal agreement among the Government of Japan, Government of Malawi, and WFP but also a reaffirmation of our shared commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable communities and addressing the challenge of food insecurity and strengthen preparedness and resilience against anticipated Super El Nino.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The significance of today's signing becomes even clearer when we consider the food security situation facing the country. According to the food security assessment by the Government of Malawi issued last week, 2.6 million will not be able to meet their food requirement in the 2006/2007 lean period due to cumulative effects of droughts, flood and food shortages. In several districts, particularly in the Southern Region, households continue to experience difficulties in accessing sufficient food to meet their daily nutritional requirements.

Furthermore, meteorological forecasts indicate an increased likelihood of El Niño conditions affecting weather patterns in this region during the coming season. His Excellency President Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika instructed the government to strengthen preparedness and resilience against climate change, particularly in anticipation of the impacts of super El Niño. I am convinced that our contribution that we sign today will support comprehensive National Preparedness Plan of the Government of Malawi to mitigate the impacts and strengthen the resilience.

The Government of Japan will provide its assistance amounting to **300 million Japanese Yen, approximately 1.9 million US dollars** which will be channeled through the World Food Programme (WFP) to procure 1900 metric tons of rice to support vulnerable people in Malawi.

We are bringing together our resources focusing this critical timing to enhance preparedness. In March this year, I visited WFP's distributing point in Blantyre where 1300 metric tons of maize procured by Japan's Food Aid of 1.9 million US dollars were

distributed. In June, we handed over 1900 metric tons of rice procured by Japan's Food Aid of 1.9 million US dollars at WFP warehouse in Blantyre. And today we will sign yet another 1.9 million US dollars of Japan's Food Assistance to procure 1900 metric tons of rice, expected to arrive for this lean season.

In conclusion, I wish to express our appreciation to the Government of Malawi and WFP for our partnership to safeguard food security and to protect livelihoods of those most vulnerable to climate-related shocks.

In March, I visited food distribution point together with WFP and DoDOMA interviewing the some of the recipients and I was impressed how our food aid was effectively alleviating the suffering and strengthening the local community to rebuild from food shortages caused by dry spells.

Government of Japan remains committed to supporting the Government of Malawi, working with food assistance partners such as WFP to ensure to strengthen food security and build more resilient communities.

Zikomo Kwambiri!

End