

Welcome remarks by Mr. NAITO Yasushi, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi at the welcome & farewell reception in honor of incoming and outgoing IMF Resident Representatives in Malawi

- Dr. Nelnan Koumtingue, outgoing IMF Resident Representative in Malawi,
- Mr. Yugo Koshima, new IMF Representative arrived on Thursday last week,
- Dr Cliff Chiunda, The Secretary to the Treasury,
- Dr. George Partridge, Governor of Reserve Bank of Malawi,
- Dr. Kusu Simwaka, Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank, Operation,
- Your Excellencies, the Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Heads of Development Cooperation,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to start on a light note by congratulating Malawi's national women's football team, the Scorchers for winning their match against Ghana in the Women's Africa Cup of Nation WAFCON quarter finals last night. Not only have they qualified for the WAFCON semi-finals, but they have also secured qualification for the FIFA Women's World Cup in Brazil in June next year. Following their historic victory against ten times champions Nigeria, every match has become a part of history in the making and attracting attention from the world, attention including Japan. It is a great source of excitement

to the nation and congratulation to all Malawians.

Thank you for joining us tonight for joint the Welcome and Farewell reception for Nelnan and Yugo outgoing and incoming IMF Resident Representatives in Malawi.

I have the honor and pleasure of hosting the event on behalf of all of us gathered here tonight, and to sincerely thank Dr. Nelnan Koumtingue for his contribution for the past three years including the difficult decision and role. And he is particularly excited with the recent development of facilitating the start of the new IMF program that is the critical for the future of Malawi.

I also wish to welcome Mr. Yugo Koshima who arrived in Malawi just last week. He brings with him extensive knowledge and experience, including his contribution to the Executive Board's decision to provide ECF to Guinea Bissau last year, and contributing to the stability and growth of the economy.

I wish to invite Nelnan to say a few words, followed by Yugo and wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury on behalf of Hon Minister, who unfortunately could not join us this evening due the funeral of the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Director General, who sadly passed away on Saturday. The Minister has sent his sincere apologies for his absence.

(after the speeches)

Thank you very much. We all understand the critical importance of the next journey of economic recovery of Malawi, in cognizant of the positive direction we have seen, and the opportunity for turnaround.

I hope we can all agree to avail ourselves to support the IMF and Malawi Government in reach of the best outcome out of the process.

Now please enjoy the rest of evening and try some special food and Sake from Japan, where Yugo comes from.

Thank you very much.

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