

Speech by NAITO Yasushi, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi at the
Launch of UN Women Bio-fertilizer Project in Dzaleka Refugee
Camp (17 September)

- General Maulana, Commissioner for Refugees, Ministry of
Homeland Security,
- Ms Fatima Mohamed, Country Representative a.i. UN Women,
- Dr. Ronald Mhango, Director of Health and Social Services,
Dowa District Council,
- Members of SOFERES
- Women of Dzaleka Refugee Camp,
- Members of Police,
- Members of Media,

It is an honour to join you today for the official opening of the Bio-Fertilizer Unit under the project “Strengthening food security and economic resilience for refugee women in Dzaleka Refugee Camp”. On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I extend warm greetings and express our deep admiration for the resilience, determination, and strength demonstrated by the people of Dzaleka Refugee Camp.

I wish to begin by thanking UN Women for leading this important initiative. I also wish to recognize the Ministry of Homeland Security, Dowa District authorities, UNHCR and all partners whose collaboration has made this project possible.

In the past years Japan has built 500 houses in Dzaleka Refugee Camp and is currently upgrading the New Katubza reticulated water supply system by drilling and solarizing one borehole through UNHCR. I am happy to see the legacy of late Mme Sadoko Ogata, former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, is very much alive. I had the privilege of working with Mme Ogata when I was in JICA and I have deep respect for her commitment to embrace humanity. She is a strong lady who stood high and fought for refugees. When you go to Rwanda, you find many ladies calling themselves “Ogatasadako” named after Mme Ogata 30 years ago.

We gather today at a time of significant challenges. Dzaleka Refugee Camp now hosts over 63,000 refugees and asylum seekers far beyond its original capacity. At the same time, humanitarian resources are under increasing strain globally, while rising food prices and limited livelihood opportunities continue to place pressure on vulnerable households.

Climate-related shocks and environmental degradation further threaten food production and livelihoods. Yet, despite these difficulties, we see remarkable courage, determination and potential. Women in Dzaleka continue to demonstrate that when given the right opportunities and support, you can grow food, build businesses, support your families, and contribute positively to your communities.

It is this potential that Japan is proud to support. Through a contribution of USD 106,666, Japan is partnering with UN Women to strengthen climate-disaster-resilient agriculture and livelihood opportunities for 300 refugee women through February 2027. The

goal is to improve household food security, enhance economic resilience, and reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance.

Today's official opening of the Bio-Fertilizer Unit is more than the handover of agricultural inputs. It is an investment in skills, productivity, resilience, and hope. It is a demonstration of our shared belief that sustainable solutions come from empowering people with the tools and opportunities they need to shape their own future.

I would also like to acknowledge Tokyo 8 Global, a Japanese company to become a partner of UN-Women supporting the introduction of production of Bio-organic fertilizer. Such practical and innovative approaches can improve environmental sustainability. They are examples of how international cooperation can deliver tangible benefits to communities on the ground.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, partnership remains essential to the success of this initiative. We are encouraged by the strong collaboration among UN Women, government institutions, civil society organizations and community leaders. Together, we can ensure that livelihood support compliments broader efforts to improve protection, food security and social cohesion.

To the Government of Malawi, I wish to express sincere appreciation for the generosity and commitment shown over many years in hosting refugees and asylum seekers. Japan values this partnership and remains committed to supporting efforts that promote self-reliance, stability and peaceful coexistence between the refugees and host communities.

May the knowledge and skills gained create lasting partnerships we build become the foundations of lasting resilience. And may the spirit of cooperation we celebrate today continue to lead in this Camp and beyond.

Thank you for your attention.

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