Remarks by Naito Yasushi, Ambassador of Japan to Malawi at the Site Visit to Futures Inc Clean Cooking Project (18th Sept)

- The Guest of Honour, Hon. Patricia Wiskes M.P., Minister of Natural Resources,
- Dr. Misheck Munthali, Principal Secretary for Natural Resources,
- Mr. Aubrey Kamuyambeni, Acting Director, Futures Inc,
- Ms. Happiness Zidana, Programme Officer, OSSEDI,
- Ms. Deborah Mushani, Forestry Officer,
- All Chiefs present,
- Distinguished officials from the Ministry of Natural Resources,
- Representatives from Futures Inc., and most importantly, the beneficiaries of this remarkable project,
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon.

It is a great honor for me to be here in Dowa today alongside the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources to witness the positive impact of the Futures Inc. Clean Cooking Project. I sincerely thank you for your warm welcome and for the opportunity to see firsthand the progress being made in this community.

The "Mbaula za Makono, Banja la Thanzi" project is an outstanding example of innovation meeting community needs. We celebrate the successful installation of 72,500 improved cookstoves across the district following the project's pilot phase in 2024. These cookstoves are more than just household appliances; they are instruments of positive change. They reduce firewood consumption by more than 50 percent and help lower carbon emissions while easing pressure on Malawi's natural resources. They have also reduced the time spent collecting firewood, allowing families, especially women, to engage in more productive activities.

Furthermore, these cookstoves reduce daily exposure to harmful smoke, significantly improving the health and well-being of women and children. In addition, the project has created more

than 200 local jobs, demonstrating how climate action can go hand in hand with economic empowerment and community development. Through this project, 90,000 tons of CO2 is reduced per year and therefore, a total of 900,000 tons reduced over 10 years which is the duration of the project.

The carbon credits generated through this initiative are an important contribution to global climate action and support Malawi's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They also create opportunities for more green investment, renewable energy development, natural resource conservation, and climate-smart agriculture. This project shows how environmental sustainability can contribute directly to economic growth and improved livelihoods.

Futures Inc.'s representative has explained to us about upscaling of the project to also to Balaka, Mchinji, Salima and Ncheu to cover 200,000 households. The plan is a clear contribution to Malawi's Third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0), the commitment submitted to UNFCCC in July, a path to implement Paris Agreement obligation while advancing the country's development aspiration.

As such, the Government of Japan strongly encourages Japanese companies such as Futures Inc. to invest in Malawi. We believe such partnerships create shared values for sustainable development. We therefore look forward to the Government of Malawi's continued collaboration in promoting opportunities arising from participation in carbon markets.

To the community gathered here, pitilizani kutenga nawo mbali pa ntchitoyi. Kudzipereka kwanu n'kofunikira poteteza chilengedwe, kulimbikitsa thanzi la mabanja anu, komanso kumanga tsogolo labwino kwa mibadwo ikubwerayi. (*I encourage you to continue embracing this project and actively participate in its success. Your commitment is essential to protecting the environment, improving family health, and creating a brighter future for the next generation).*

And to Futures Inc., I commend your vision, dedication, and partnership with Malawi. Your investment will make a difference in the lives of thousands of families. I encourage you to continue this important work and to build on this success as a model for sustainable development and climate action.

Finally, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Malawi for its continued support and cooperation, which has helped create an enabling environment for investments such as this one by Futures Inc. Through strong collaboration between government, communities, and the private sector, we can continue delivering meaningful benefits to the people of Malawi.

The success of this project stands as a symbol of the strong partnership between Japan and Malawi. Together, let us continue working hand in hand toward a healthier, greener, and more prosperous future for all.

Zikomo Kwambiri,
Thank you for your attention.

End