

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY H.E. MR. BARAKA LUVANDA,
AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO JAPAN
AT THE RECEPTION TO COMMEMORATE 59TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE UNION OF TANZANIA, THE OKURA TOKYO, 26TH APRIL 2023**

- Our Guest of Honour, Mister TAKAGI Kei,
The Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
- Ambassador SAIDA Shinichi,
Assistant Minister/Director General of African Affairs Department,
Gaimusho
- Mister OKUMOTO Masakatsu,
Director General of Second Africa Division of JICA
- H.E. Mr. Estifanos Afeworki Haile,
Dean of the African Heads of Missions in Tokyo
- Excellencies Ambassadors and *Charge d' Affaires'*,
- Invited Guests,
- Dear Friends,
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Jambo! Konnichiwa! A very good evening!

It is a great pleasure for me to propose these welcoming remarks this evening.

I want to thank you, Your Excellency Vice-Minister TAKAGI Kei for accepting our invitation to grace this occasion. Thank you very much, Mister Vice-Minister.

I also want to thank everyone here present for making time for us. Your presence here this evening matters a lot and we do not take it for granted.

Distinguished Guests,

I have been informed that for this reception to be memorable, there will be enough food and drinks all prepared for you. I therefore have no intention, at all, of dampening your appetite, in any way.

Afterall, they say speaking at a reception like this is not a good proposition. Because if you speak before people have eaten, you are accused of keeping them away from their food. But again, if you speak after they have eaten, you are accused of giving them indigestion. So, both ways you lose.

I will therefore cut down the losses by confining myself to just a few etiquette and substantive issues as follows:

First, As I have said at the beginning, we consider your presence of all of you here today as a special honour to us and I wish to thank you, once again, for honouring us with your presence.

Secondly, let me once again thank the Guest of Honour for accepting our invitation to come and grace this occasion. When we wrote to the Ministry requesting for your presence, we knew well that it wasn't going to be any easy task, given the timing of the event against Japan's Presidency this year in the G7.

Indeed, we know and are aware of how taxing this Presidency can be, and we know that every minute at this time counts and is important, especially with the Ministerial Meetings and G7 Summit coming up early next month.

We hope that this evening has not disrupted and caused too much damage to your schedule of work. And that is why we decided to keep our programme reasonably short.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Tanzania, I wish you a very successful Summit as well as a successful mandate as President of G7.

Thirdly, let me also thank all those who supported us in various ways without which we could not have prevailed in our intention to host this reception and especially have a *Special National Day Supplement*. We thank you profoundly. But we also treasure on your continued support in future.

It would be a remiss on my part, if I did not express my sincere appreciations to "*those behind the scenes*" who have worked hard to prepare for this colorful event. Thank you very much.

Dear Friends,

On o day like this next year, i.e., 26th April 2024, we (Tanzania) will be marking the **60th Anniversary** of the Union between the then State of Tanganyika and State of Zanzibar.

It seems to me that that day will obviously be a fitting occasion to speak at length, capturing perhaps the rationale and the history behind our iconic Union. This is another reason for my being brief today.

But Friends, let me underscore fact that the diplomatic relations between Japan and Tanzania have grown from strength to strength over the past **60+** years now.

Japan recognized the then Tanganyika immediately after its independence in 1961 and started to assist Tanzania's development endeavors as early as 1966 with its first concessional credit.

In 1967 the first young volunteers were dispatched to Tanzania to work in a variety of development projects in both rural and urban areas. Since then, this long and rewarding relationship has thrived to high ground with mutual benefits.

Today, Japan and Tanzania continue to see eye to eye in a variety of ways at both bilateral and at multilateral level.

And there is great hope that our bilateral cooperation will thrive for innumerable period, and this is evident from the perspective of the present interactions through Government to Government; Government to Business and, also through people-to-people connections.

You may wish to learn that throughout all these years our historical, cultural, and emotional ties with Japan have continued to bind us together so firmly.

We (in Tanzania) are indeed grateful to Japan as our role model and credible friend especially, in our quest for development. The famous African proverbs

perhaps caps it all and I want to use it here: *“There is no better mirror than the best friend.”* Japan, for us, remains that best friend.

And indeed, as this year’s motto for these celebrations captures thus far and I want to quote here: *“59 Years of Our Union: Unity and Solidarity are Pillars in Promoting Our Economy,”* Japan is naturally expected to support us on that front.

Friends,

I would like to end the same way as I started, by thanking profoundly our Guest of Honour, and each one of you for availing your precious time to us. *Thank you so much.*

Thank you for your kind attention; Asanteni sana; Domo Arigato Gozaimashita