

**Speech by H.E. Kazuya OGAWA, Ambassador of JAPAN,  
on the Occasion of the Annual General Assembly Meeting  
of JICA Alumni Association of Rwanda  
at Umubano Hotel on 6<sup>h</sup> July 2014**

Mr. Anicet Rwama, President of JAAR, members of the Management Committee,

And all other member of the association,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mwaramutse, Ohayo gozaimasu, Good morning,

It is my great honour to attend this special session of the Assembly General of the JICA Alumni Association of Rwanda (JAAR) again this year. I thank Mr. Anicet Rwama and the committee members of JAAR to have kindly invited me to today's assembly.

First of all, I would like to congratulate you since JAAR has officially obtained a NGO status from Rwanda Governance Board last month. I respect your enlightened mind for further development of the association, and expect the broadening of your activities in the future.

As you may know, more than one year has passed since I assumed my duties as Japanese Ambassador to Rwanda. I am amazed how fast the time goes by. When I look back over the past one year, the Embassy had some opportunities to work with JAAR. One of them is

the “Umuganda” we did together last November. Thanks to JAAR, I and my wife could join the “Umuganda” in Kicukiro District together with Hon. Seraphine Mukantabana, Minister of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs, and Mr. Paul Ndamage, Mayor of Kicukiro District. We did tree plantation with people in the community. Through that activity, I strongly realized that by fostering a sense of solidarity and working harmoniously in each village, Rwandans have rebuilt this nation from the devastation. In that sense, “Umuganda” is beneficial not only for economic effect but also for reinforcement of social cohesion in community. It was absolutely a great opportunity for me to participate to this activity, and I appreciate JAAR offering us this chance.

Another one was at our cultural event last February. Some members of JAAR participated to the cultural event organized by the Embassy as speakers and shared their experiences in Japan with high school students. I heard that some students became interested in studying in Japan because of your presentation. I am very glad to have this kind of collaboration with you, and look forward to having another one near future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I learned that JAAR is now planning to implement a new pilot project

named “National Center for capacity in food transformation” which will be implemented by your selves in 2014. I believe the contents of this project will be shared and discussed at today’s assembly as well. I really look forward to successful future of the “JAAR Center for Capacity Building” and your first project in the center, “Empowering processors for Efficient and Safe Food handling”. I sincerely hope your project will be effective, and the outcome of your training experiences in Japan will be expanded across the country through the project.

Lastly, I thank all members of JAAR for your contribution for deepening the relationship between our two countries so far, and I would like to ask you to keep on being one of the greatest assets for our friendship. I hope we can cooperate to further strengthen the already existing friendly relationship between Japan and Rwanda. For that, the Embassy together with JICA is always ready to work hand in hand with all of you here, so please remember that JICA and the Embassy are good supporters and advisors to JAAR.

I wish you will have a fruitful assembly today.

Thank you for your attention.

Murakoze cyane, Arigatou, Thank you.