

**Speech by H.E. Mr. Kazuya OGAWA, Ambassador of Japan,
on the Occasion of the Japanese Film Festival
at the Goethe-Institut Kigali
on 25th February, 2015**

Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament;
Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
Distinguished Representatives of International Organizations;
Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

Murakaza neza.

Welcome and good evening.

First of all, I would like to thank all of you here tonight for joining our Japanese Film Festival. This time, the Embassy of Japan in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Kigali is organizing three days Film Festival from today to Friday. In total six films will be screened over this period.

The Embassy and the Goethe-Institut organized a Classical Concert last December at Serena hotel, and this is the second time we are organizing a cultural event together. So, I would like to thank the Goethe-Institut for its kind collaboration.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Japanese film industry is one of the oldest and largest in the World. Films have been produced in Japan since 1897, when the

first foreign cameramen arrived. Therefore, Japan's film history spans over 100 years, and it is currently ranked fourth in terms of national film production.

It was 1951 when the Japanese film *Rashomon* directed by Akira Kurosawa was awarded the Golden Lion in Venice International Film Festival and also the Academy Honorary Award for the first time. Akira Kurosawa is actually one of the famous film makers in the world. But there are some other Japanese directors like Takeshi Kitano and Hayao Miyazaki. Anyway, since the first award in 1951, Japan has won the Academy Honorary Award three times, and the Academy Award for the Best Foreign Language Film one time. This number is more than any other country in Asia. The Embassy of Japan and the Goethe-Institut are therefore very interested in promoting Japanese films in Rwanda, and we hope all of you would enjoy them, even if they are not directed by any of them I mentioned.

Tonight, we are going to show you two films. I especially look forward to watching the second one, which story is based on the Japanese comedy novel published in early 19th century, and a very famous Kabuki actor plays in this film. So please do not leave during the interval, we prepare some snacks including Japanese rice cracker, please stay with us till the end. And if you enjoy these films tonight, please come back tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, too.

Thank you for your attention.

Murakoze cyane.