

**SPEECH BY H.E. Mr. KAZUYA OGAWA, AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE PROJECT “INCOME GENERATION THROUGH PC TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES LIVING IN KIGALI CITY” AT ONE LOVE ON 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015**

-Honorable Rusiha Gastone, Member of Parliament

-Vice Mayor of Gasabo

-Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentleman,

**Mwaramutse, Ohayou gozaimasu, Good Morning,**

It is a great honor to attend this opening ceremony for the project entitled “Income generation through PC training for people with disabilities living in Kigali City”. I thank Tohoku Fukushi University and Mulindi / Japan One Love Project to have kindly invited me to today’s ceremony.

I would like to start my remarks by commending the MULINDI JAPAN ONE LOVE PROJECT, particularly Mr. Gatera Rudasingwa and Ms. Mami Yoshida Rudasingwa to have been dedicating time and efforts to help people with disabilities in

Rwanda since 1996. They started their activities here, in this place where there used to be a marshland. They made bricks from soil and constructed a manufacturing factory of artificial limbs. I heard, so far, they have supplied more than 8,000 disabled people with artificial limbs, crutches, wheelchairs, and other medical devices free of charge. These days, their activities are expanding to Burundi as well. And up to now, in total 8 Rwandans were sent to Japan for 7 months training to acquire a technique of manufacturing artificial limbs, and now they are working here as technicians. I would like to praise their organization and I am very proud of their achievement as the Ambassador of Japan.

Tohoku Fukushi University is one of the famous and leading universities in terms of social welfare, and there is a long cooperation relationship between one love and this university since 2002. Rwanda is the first country among Africa that the university implements this training project with JICA partnership program. I think the decision to choose Rwanda for

their project is very insightful.

As you know, ICT is one of the high priority agendas for the economic development in Rwanda. The Rwandan government has been putting lots of efforts into ICT sector in order to become a regional ICT hub in East Africa and beyond.

First elementary class of this project has just started from 16<sup>th</sup> February with 10 Rwandan students, five women and five men, who have more or less a certain physical disabilities. I would like to encourage them to work hard and acquire high skill of ICT through this training. Later, another class will start for middle and upper level, from July and August respectively.

One of the most important problems is how to find or create jobs for the people with disabilities. As one example, in Japanese society, there is a law known as the 'Act on the Promotion of the Employment of Disabled Persons', thus every employer

encourages the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities at least 2% out of total employees. I know that Rwanda also has a similar law, so I hope all people with disabilities could integrate into economic activities to bring their contribution to society.

I would like to introduce you Mr. Shimizu who is a JICA expert of National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD). He has significant experiences in this field, thus he will support people with disabilities and could bring massive impact to make the situation better.

Believing you all are able to utilize the acquired skill for income generating activities in near future, I hope you will learn a lot and enjoy great success. Good luck.

**Murakoze.** Thank you for your attention.