

**SPEECH BY H.E. MR. KUNIO HATANAKA, AMBASSADOR OF
JAPAN IN THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA ON THE OCCASION OF
THE JAPANESE DRUM CONCERT ON 9 OCTOBER 2012 [Concert]**

Honourable Minister of Sports and Culture Protais K. MITALI, Honorable Ministers, Honourable Members of Parliament, Excellencies Ambassadors, Distinguished representatives of International Organizations and NGOs, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you who kindly came to participate in tonight's event on the occasion of celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Republic of Rwanda. To celebrate this significant year, with the sponsorship of the Japan Foundation, the Embassy of Japan invited a professional music group from Tokyo headed by Mr. Shuichi HIDANO, a famous Japanese drummer. The feature of this group is the mixture and harmony of traditional and modern instruments.

Before the concert, please allow me to explain the historical backgrounds of the Japanese drums. In fact, the Japanese drums, called "Wadaiko", have a long history. It is said that the drum already existed 10,000 years ago. We, the Japanese, were mostly farmers in the Medieval Period and developed the drum culture to pray for fertility or a good

harvest in the communities. Amazingly, it is said that, all these Japanese drums were originally from Africa. According to the musicians who are going to play tonight, the drums were brought to Japan from Africa through the Silk Road and we developed our own rhythm in Japan. They hope that you will feel somehow the African spirit through this concert. I hope you all will enjoy the sound of Japanese drums and find differences and similarities in both countries' drum cultures.

Thank you for your attention.

Now I would like to introduce Hon. Protais MITALI, the Minister of Sports and Culture who is our Guest of Honour tonight. Ladies and Gentlemen, please give him a big hand.