

**SPEECH TO BE DELIVERED BY H.E. MR YOSHI TENDAI HIRAISHI,
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO ZIMBABWE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
SIGNING OF GRANT CONTRACTS FOR “THE PROJECT FOR CONSTRUCTION
OF AGRICULTURAL TRAINING CENTRE IN SHURUGWI DISTRICT”**

AUGUST 27, 2015

(Salutation)

MANGWANANI Mamuka sei ?

**Mr. Manyakaidze, Director of Shurugwi Partners, his colleague,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

This morning we welcome our good friends, Shurugwi Partners, to our Embassy again, where we have just signed the Grant Contracts to extend a grant up to 87,000 dollars for “The Project for Construction of Agricultural Training Centre in Shurugwi District”.

This grant is to be used for the construction and equipping of an agricultural training centre at a central point of the district where local farmers can learn various agricultural skills including sustainable crop cultivation and value addition.

Over the years, it has become increasingly difficult for local farmers to secure enough maize yields due to low rainfall caused mainly by climate change. On the other hand, 30% of annual crop in the district has to be disposed due to lack of knowledge and skills for proper storage and processing. In this situation, it is crucial for farmers to acquire necessary agricultural skills for the production of horticultural produce as well as for proper storage and processing.

This project, therefore, is expected to contribute greatly to easing the plight of local farmers who cannot currently access enough opportunities for agricultural training due to lack of a proper facility and equipment in the district. It is our hope that this project will benefit the current 1,680 farmers in Shurugwi District Horticultural Association and more farmers who will join the Association in the future.

It is also notable that this project will complement Shurugwi Partners’ previous project about wetlands conservation and integrated livelihoods for biodiversity conservation supported by UNDP and the project of organic farming training supported by SNV Netherlands. This project will enable local farmers to

upgrade their skills about organic farming with wetlands and biodiversity conservation.

We highly appreciate Shurugwi Partners for their commitment to the local community. Since their previous project of drilling 13 boreholes which we supported proved to be quite successful, we have no doubt that the funds being disbursed will be spent in an efficient manner, thus making a very positive impact on the livelihoods of local people.

Finally I personally look forward to visiting Shurugwi again once the project has been completed.

MAKOROKOTO. TATENDA.