

## **P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

**February 5, 2013**

### **JAPAN DONATES TO CHILDLINE ZIMBABWE**

At a signing ceremony held in Harare today, the Embassy of Japan extended a grant of USD86,254 (eighty-six thousand, two hundred and fifty-four dollars) to Childline Zimbabwe. The Ambassador of Japan to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr Yonezo Fukuda and the Director of Childline Zimbabwe, Ms Tara Miller, signed the agreement entitled “The Project for Construction of an Emergency Call Centre and Children's Drop-in Centres”.

The grant is to be used for the construction of a Call Centre in Harare to respond the requests of support from the children in a timely manner. Drop-in Centres in Chiredzi, Mutasa and Mutare aim to tackle the problem of child abuse, which is reported more rampant in rural settings than in urban areas.

Childline Zimbabwe has been operating a telephone-based Helpline service designed for sexually, emotionally and physically abused and neglected children. It is a toll-free confidential service operating 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year staffed by 30 members including social workers and trained counselors. Since its inception in 1997, the helpline has taken calls from over a million children in distress. It works in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, the Department of Social Services and the Victim Friendly Police Unit.

Speaking at the occasion, H.E. Mr Fukuda noted the unfortunate situation of child abuse, which has been on the increase. He expressed his fervent hope that the children in Zimbabwe will be able to enjoy their fundamental rights, through this project for the enhancement of the capacity of child protection.