REMARKS BY HON. PROF. KITILA ALEXANDER MKUMBO (MP.)

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AT THE TANZANIA INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS SEMINAR

Tokyo, Japan | 7 September 2026

Mr. Suzuki Tafakumi, Executive Vice President, Japan External Trade Organization;

H.E. Ambassador Anderson Mutatembwa, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to Japan;

Representatives of JETRO, UNDP, JICA, TISEZA and ZIPA;

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Japanese Business Community;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good afternoon.

It is a great pleasure and honour to be here in Tokyo and to engage with the Japanese business community at this important Tanzania Investment and Business Seminar.

I also wish to express my appreciation to **JETRO, UNDP, JICA, the Embassy of Tanzania in Japan, TISEZA and ZIPA** for bringing us together.

This is more than a seminar.**It is an opportunity to turn a longstanding friendship between Tanzania and Japan into a deeper economic partnership—one defined by investment, industrial cooperation, technology, jobs and shared prosperity.**

And I have come to Tokyo with a very simple message from the Government of Tanzania: **Tanzania is open for business, ready for investment and committed to building long-term partnerships with Japanese companies.**

TANZANIA'S NEW PHASE OF ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Tanzania is entering a new phase of economic transformation. Our long-term ambition is articulated in **Tanzania Development Vision 2050**, which seeks to transform Tanzania into a competitive, prosperous and inclusive upper-middle-income economy. The focus is clear: **economic transformation, productive employment, industrialisation, competitiveness, infrastructure, innovation, digitalisation and sustainable development.**

For us, investment is not an end in itself. We want investment thatn**creates productive jobs, develops skills, introduces technology, strengthens local industries, increases exports and connects Tanzania to global and regional value chains.**

We also recognise an important reality: **Investors need more than opportunities. They need confidence.** They need predictability. They need transparency. They need efficiency.

And, above all, they need to know that when they encounter a problem, there is a Government that will listen and work with them to find solutions. That is why we are undertaking reforms to improve the business and investment environment.

One of the most important institutional reforms has been the establishment of the **Tanzania Investment and Special Economic Zones Authority—TISEZA**, bringing together the investment facilitation functions of the former Tanzania Investment Centre and the Export Processing Zones Authority.

Through TISEZA, we are strengthening the One-Stop Facilitation Centre, improving coordination among Government institutions, accelerating investment facilitation and strengthening investor aftercare.

Our philosophy is straightforward: **The Government should not simply welcome an investor at the door and then leave them to navigate the system alone. The Government must navigate with the investor.**

We want to remain a partner throughout the investment lifecycle—from project identification and approval to implementation, expansion and reinvestment.

TANZANIA: A GATEWAY TO A MUCH LARGER AFRICAN MARKET

Distinguished Guests,

This brings me to the central proposition I would like to make to Japanese investors today. **When you invest in Tanzania, you are not investing only in Tanzania.** You are positioning yourself in one of the most strategically located countries for accessing the wider African market.

Tanzania sits on the Indian Ocean, providing a natural gateway between global markets and the African interior. We are a member of both the **East African Community and the Southern African Development Community**, connecting Tanzania to two of Africa's major regional economic blocs. Together, these markets provide access to **approximately 300 million consumers.**

This creates an opportunity for Japanese companies to establish in Tanzania not simply as a domestic operation, but as a **regional production, supply and distribution base for Africa.** This is particularly important for companies seeking to diversify their global production and supply chains.

Our proposition is therefore not simply: **"Come and sell in Tanzania."** It is: **"Come and produce in Tanzania, add value in Tanzania, build supply chains in Tanzania—and reach Africa from Tanzania."**

FROM RAW MATERIALS TO VALUE CHAINS

We are particularly interested in partnerships that help us move from the export of raw materials towards **value addition, manufacturing and**

regional value-chain integration. There are significant opportunities for Japanese companies in:

- agro-processing and food manufacturing;
- automotive assembly and components;
- electronics and electrical equipment;
- pharmaceuticals and medical products;
- machinery and engineering;
- logistics and transport;
- energy and renewable energy;
- ICT and digital services;
- infrastructure;
- tourism and hospitality; and
- the wider Blue Economy.

We also have a number of **bankable investment projects** that are ready for serious investors and strategic partners.

Our objective is not simply to attract more projects. **Our objective is to build industries.** Industries that employ Tanzanians. Industries that develop local suppliers. Industries that transfer technology. Industries that export.

And industries that can compete not only in Tanzania, but across Africa and globally.

WHY JAPAN?

Distinguished Guests,

Why are we particularly interested in Japanese investment? Because Tanzania is looking for **more than capital.** We are looking for **long-term partners.** Japan brings strengths that are closely aligned with the transformation we want to achieve: advanced technology, manufacturing excellence, engineering, infrastructure, logistics, research and development, human capital development, innovation and world-class quality management.

These are precisely the capabilities that Tanzania needs as we implement Dira 2050. We therefore want to see more than conventional investment relationships.

We want to see:

- **joint ventures;**
- **technology partnerships;**
- **research and development cooperation;**
- **skills development;**
- **local supplier development;**
- and **business-to-business partnerships between Tanzanian and Japanese companies.**

We want a Japanese manufacturer operating in Tanzania to have Tanzanian suppliers. We want Tanzanian engineers and technicians working alongside Japanese experts. We want Tanzanian companies entering Japanese and global value chains.

And we want Japanese technology helping Tanzanian businesses become more productive and competitive. That is what we mean when we talk about **strategic investment partnership.**

THE PARTNERSHIP IS ALREADY UNDERWAY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our partnership with Japan is not starting from zero. There is already a foundation upon which we can build. Through our investment facilitation framework, **24 investment projects with Japanese interest have been registered in Tanzania**, representing approximately **US$42.7 million in registered investment capital and around 1,182 jobs**, across agriculture, manufacturing, services, construction, tourism and transport.

We appreciate the confidence that these investors have already demonstrated. But let me be very candid: **We believe this is far below the potential of the Tanzania–Japan economic relationship.** As we commence implementation of Dira 2050, we have therefore set ourselves a clear ambition: **We want to at least double the existing Japanese investment portfolio—from 24 registered projects to not less than 48 projects.**

But even that is only a starting point. Our ambition is to see **more Japanese companies in Tanzania, more Tanzanian companies connected to Japanese value chains, more technology transfer, more skilled jobs, more exports and more value created in both countries.**

A GOVERNMENT READY TO PARTNER

Distinguished Guests,

Let me assure you that the Government of Tanzania understands that investment decisions are ultimately business decisions.

Investors must be able to see a credible business case. Our responsibility as Government is to create the conditions under which that business case can succeed. We will therefore continue working to improve the regulatory environment, strengthen investment facilitation, improve infrastructure, enhance skills, expand industrial capacity and address constraints that affect the cost and ease of doing business.

And where challenges arise, we want our institutions to engage with investors **constructively, transparently and within the law** to find solutions.

We also intend to change the way we measure investment facilitation.

Investment success cannot be measured simply by the number of investment certificates issued.

The real measure is:

- **How many projects are implemented?**
- **How many factories are operating?**
- **How many people are employed?**
- **How much technology is transferred?**
- **How much is exported?**
- **How many local companies are integrated into supply chains?**
- **And how much do those investments contribute to Tanzania's economic transformation?**

That is the standard by which we want to measure ourselves.

LET US TAKE THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Tanzania and Japan have enjoyed many years of friendship, mutual respect and development cooperation. We are grateful for that history.

But today, I believe we have an opportunity to write the **next chapter** of this relationship. A chapter in which development cooperation is complemented by **deeper trade and investment, industrial partnerships, technology transfer and private-sector-to-private-sector engagement.**

Tanzania has what investors need:

- **Strategic location.**
- **Natural resources.**
- **A growing market.**
- **A young workforce.**
- **Access to major regional markets.**
- **Industrial and infrastructure opportunities.**

And, most importantly, **a Government with a clear long-term vision for economic transformation.** Through **Dira 2050**, we have our long-term ambition. Through **FYDP IV**, we have our medium-term implementation framework.

Through **TISEZA**, we are strengthening the institutional gateway for investment.

And through our engagement with the private sector, we are committed to making investment easier, faster and more productive.

So, to the Japanese business community, I would like to leave you with three invitations.

First: Come to Tanzania.

See the opportunities for yourselves.

Second: Invest in Tanzania.

Do not look at Tanzania only as a market, but as a production and investment base for Africa.

Third: Grow with us.

Bring your capital, yes—but also bring your technology, your expertise, your standards, your innovation and your long-term commitment.

Because we are not looking for investors who simply want to do business **in** Tanzania. **We are looking for partners who want to build businesses, industries and value chains with Tanzania—and from Tanzania, reach Africa.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Indian Ocean is not a boundary between Japan and Africa. It is a bridge. And Tanzania is positioned to be one of the principal gateways across that bridge.

Let us therefore move from friendship to deeper economic partnership. Let us move from opportunity to investment. Let us move from investment to production. And let us move from production to shared prosperity.

Come to Tanzania.

Invest with us.

Build with us.

Grow with Tanzania—and grow across Africa.

And, most importantly, **come with a long-term perspective.**

Arigatou gozaimasu.

Thank you very much.