

**Launching Ceremony of
“The Project for Institutional Capacity Development of
South Sudan TV and Radio”
Speech by Mr. Takeshi Akamatsu, Special Representative,
Head of the Liaison Office of Japan in Juba**

Honorable Minister, Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,

Honorable Deputy Minister, Mr. Atem Yaak Atem, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,

Director General of Information, Mr. Mustafa Biong Majak, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,

Chief Representative of the JICA South Sudan Office, Mr. Atsushi Hanatani,

Sub Leader of JICA expert team, Mr. Yoshinori Sawa,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be given an opportunity to say a few words at the launching of “The Project for Institutional Capacity Development of South Sudan TV and Radio”. This project is funded by the Government of Japan with a total cost amounting to approximately about 5.5 million US dollars, under Japanese Technical Cooperation.

First and foremost, let me congratulate all those who have worked hard to materialize this project, especially the honorable Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Dr. Barnaba Marial Benjamin, whose visit to Japan gave an initiation to the project, as well as his colleagues at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, JICA and Japanese expert team from NHK International.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all well know, Japan has been boasting of its advanced technology,

especially in the field of consumer electronics. Many of Japan's products, from radio receivers, TV sets to DVD players, are abundant here in South Sudan. But maybe it is worth stating that Television was indeed one of the areas where Japanese contribution played a key role in its development: it was in 1926 that fully electronic TV system was created by Dr. Kenichiro Takayanagi, who demonstrated his new invention by transmitting an Japanese character of "I" –the first letter in Japanese alphabet–, over radio wave to appear on a receiving monitor screen.

So it might have been with a bit of emotional feeling that Japan, whose first character appearing on the first TV system that has marked an opening to a new era of Television broadcasting, has decided to extend its cooperation in the same field to this new born nation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Public broadcasting, Radios and TVs, have long become the most influential forms of mass media today, surpassing newspapers. As a means to provide the people with accurate information in a rapid manner, upon which the proper function of democracy is dependent, the place and the role of Public broadcasting among various forms of mass media has not diminished even in the era of cyberspace today.

This is even more true in a new born country like South Sudan, where many of the population still have a very limited access to information and relies much of their knowledge on the primitive form of word-of-mouth communication. Therefore, as the provider of accurate information in time at the most needed moment, the important role Public Broadcasting to play in this young democracy cannot be overemphasized. It is indeed one of the major means of giving solid basis for assuring sound development of democracy and achieving enhancement of "Good Governance" in this country.

Promotion and enhancement of "Good Governance" have been one of the major pillars of Japan's cooperation towards South Sudan. Our cooperation, with currently 5 projects underway, so far encompasses such fields as improvements in custom service, border control and migration management, as well as the fields of justice and police, with a total exceeding 15 Million US dollars.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

South Sudan, now into second year after its independence, will face another big challenge in nation building in two years' time. General and Presidential elections are scheduled to take place in 2015. And therefore enhancement of the capacity of South Sudan TV and Radio as a firm basis for nation-wide provision of information is, we believe, indeed a prerequisite condition for carrying out a fair and open election in 2015.

We sincerely hope that through our cooperation to the SSTV and Radio will help people of South Sudan in obtaining accurate and impartial information during the election campaign, helping them to make their decisions on the future of this country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The media in South Sudan, including SSTV and Radio, are young as this nation, and may require support from in and out of the country. But let us not forget what Corazon Aquino, former President of the Philippines once said about the media.

“The media’s power is frail. Without the people’s support, it can be shut off with the ease of turning a light switch.”

So we hope that through this project, enhanced SSTV and Radio will continue to enjoy the support of the people of South Sudan and will function as a solid basis for establishing democracy and contributing to nation building of this new born country.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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