Statement by H.E. Mr. Rokuichiro MICHII, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Nauru, At the Handing over Ceremony for the “Project for the Provision of Winch for Anibare Harbor” and “Project for the Procurement of Crane Truck” to the Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority, 30 January 2024, at 16:00 pm

Mr. Peter Diema – Chairman of the Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority,

Distinguished members of the Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon, Omo yekwo,

and konnichiwa to you all.

Firstly, I wish to convey my sincere appreciation to the respective Nauru officials for the warm hospitality extended to us as, well as for organizing this auspicious occasion today. I would also like to convey my gratitude to the people of Nauru for making us feel at home with their warm welcome and friendliness since our arrival here.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Government and people of Japan, it is my great honour and pleasure to hand over a winch and a crane truck to the Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA).

We came to know that an additional winch was needed as the NFMRA has been facing serious challenges in efficiently operating the harbour in order to meet the demands of the community because the number of boats using the winch had increased. Additionally, the request for the crane truck was made as NFMRA needs more capacity so that it could lift bigger boats and heavy equipment properly and safely at the harbour. Also, the number of boats using the small port has been increasing, and the winch and the crane truck would provide additional means for the community to deploy and retrieve their boats.

We recognize the importance of fishing as a means of self-sufficiency and livelihoods. Thus, the Government of Japan, to support the Fisheries sector in Nauru, has provided funding for the procurement of a new winch, worth approximately Seventy-Eight Thousand Australian dollars (AUD $ 78,683) and a crane truck worth approximately One hundred and Ninety Five Thousand Australian dollars (AUD $ 195,000).

The new winch will, we hope, be of great assistance to NFMRA and the local community, as it would make it easier to launch and retrieve their boats without much effort. Similarly, the new crane truck will allow more efficiency in moving heavy equipment for various projects at NFMRA. One project that necessitates heavy lifting would be the Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) programme. In order to load heavy ropes, the anchor, and chains onto the boat for deploying this device, we hope this crane truck would help NFMRA to construct the FADs in broader scale.

Both funded projects are expected to reduce delays and queues in the local communities' fishing operations in Nauru as well. Overall, this project, which is a part of the Japan-Nauru Fisheries Cooperation, would, we hope, contribute to Nauru's sustainability and self-reliance. Our aim is to improve food security, raise living standards, and increase the productivity and efficiency of the fisheries industry.

The two projects have been implemented by the Government of Japan through its Grassroots Grant Assistance Projects Scheme or the GGP. I am pleased to highlight that since 2006, Japan has funded 21 GGP projects for Nauru, which are collectively worth more than 2 million US dollars.

In broader terms, the Government of Japan has closely supported Nauru in various sectors. In particular, for the fisheries sector, the construction of Anibare Harbour in 2000, through Japan’s Grant Aid. This Anibare Harbor serves as the main community boat harbour and is the key for the development and sustainability of local fisheries in Nauru. I would also like to recall that the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan (OFCF) installed the existing winch at the Harbour in 2005.

At this juncture, I wish to highlight that our cooperation in the fisheries sector is also in line with the successful outcome of the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) held on July 2, 2021. At the PALM9, upon the announcement of Japan Pacific Bond Policy or Kizuna Policy, the respective leaders of Pacific Island Countries and Japan agreed to further enhance partnership. Under the initiative of "Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law" -this is one of the five prioritized cooperation areas under the KIZUNA Policy- the PALM9 confirmed the support of the Pacific Islands by consensus and provided direction for fisheries cooperation and development.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to emphasise that, when offering assistance, Japan respects our partner countries' sovereignty and needs to the fullest extent possible. Our connection is not that of donor-recipient relations, but we see that our collaboration is the one among equal partners.

Japan remains dedicated to assisting Nauru's socioeconomic development in order to foster economic prosperity and address challenges along with the Pacific way, as was also envisioned by Japan's new plan for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. We take great pride in continuing to contribute towards improving the quality of lives of the people of Nauru through our assistance programme.

I would like to conclude that today’s ceremony will be kept in our memory as something strengthening the foundations of resilience and sustainable development of Nauru and further enhancing friendship between Japan and Nauru and their people.

Thank You, Tubwa Kor, Arigatougozaimasu.

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