
**Address by: His Excellency, Mr. Rokuichiro MICHII, Ambassador of Japan, at the
Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for the Provision of School Bus in Funafuti and
Vaitupu.**

at 1 pm on 18th February 2025

The Honourable Dr. Maina Talia, Minister for Home Affairs,
Climate Change and Environment,

Dr. Eselealofa Apinelu, the High Commissioner Designate of
Tuvalu to Fiji,

Distinguished delegates from Tuvalu, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Talofa, Good afternoon and Konichiwa.

Firstly, I wish to convey my sincere appreciation to the
representatives of the Government of Tuvalu, Funafuti and
Vaitupu for gathering here today in Fiji. I would also like to
extend warm greetings to Dr. Eselealofa Apinelu, for her is
gracious presence here this morning despite her demanding
schedule.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today on behalf of the Government
and people of Japan, it is my great honor to formalize with
Funafuti Kaupule and Vaitupu Kaupule the Japanese

Government's Grant Assistance for "The Project for the Provision of School Bus in Funafuti Atoll" and "The Project for the Provision of School Bus in Vaitupu Island". These grants shows Japan's unwavering commitment to supporting Tuvalu through grassroots development. This moment marks not only a formal agreement between our nations but also a testament to the enduring partnership and shared vision for a sustainable and prosperous future.

I am pleased to say that the Government of Japan will provide the approximate funding worth Two Hundred Two Thousand Australian Dollars (AUD \$201,985) for this two projects, which are going to be implemented under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects Program or the GGP Program. It gives me great joy to highlight that since 1992, the GGP Program has been extensively implemented in key sectors of Tuvalu such as public infrastructure, health, education, water supply, and social economic development. Including this two new projects, to date we have funded 53 GGP projects, which are collectively worth approximately Three Million Eight Hundred Thousand

US Dollars (USD \$3.8 million).

Japan has long been a steadfast partner in the development journey of Tuvalu, recognizing the unique challenges faced by this resilient island nation. From climate change to limited resources. Yet it is precisely in the face of such challenges that the strength of international cooperation and solidarity shines brightest.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this two contracts signifies Japan's dedication to empowering the Funafuti and Vaitupu Kaupule at the grassroots level—by investing in the communities and the people, that form the backbone of Tuvaluan society. Through this agreement, Japan will support projects that prioritize education, healthcare, and sustainable livelihoods.

Currently, the students from Funafuti and Vaitupu walk long distances under the extreme heat to attend school on a daily basis. I wish to urge the distinguished recipients and representatives present here today to ensure the timely and successful completion of the respective projects. I am sure

the new two school buses will guarantee safety and access to education to the students.

I conclude with confidence as we sign this contracts today, will serve towards strengthening friendship between the Governments and peoples of Tuvalu and Japan. Let us reaffirm our shared commitment to grassroot development, mutual respect, and the power of collaboration. Let us celebrate the bonds of friendship that unite Tuvalu and Japan, with the Honorable Minister Maina Talia and the people of Funafuti and Vaitupu at the center stage of this newest avenue of ascending Tuvaluan-Japan relations.

Fakafetai Iasi, Arigato Gozaimasu and Thank You.

The End.