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**Speech by H.E. Mr. Rokuichiro MICHII, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Fiji, at the Handing Over Ceremony for Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development**

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at 10:00am, 25th September, 2025 at Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development

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Vanua Kubuna na Turaga Bale na Tui Kaba na Vunivalu

Honorable **Ifereimi Vasu**, Minister for iTaukei Affairs,

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Mr. Jone Navakamocea - Permanent Secretary

Mr. **Aporosa Silatolu**, Director for the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Bula Vinaka, Good morning, and Ohayo Gozaimasu.

I convey my sincere appreciation to the **Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development (CATD)** for their warm welcome and generous hospitality. I also wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the Honorable Minister Vasu for iTaukei Affairs, for honoring us with his presence this morning.

Today, on behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I am honored to officially handover a furnished classroom building and a dormitory to CATD, which is worth approximately One million and Forty One Thousand Fijian dollars (FJD 1,040,876.46). This achievement reflects the collaborative spirit of the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, CATD, and the people of Japan, united in our commitment to education and development.

Recognizing the vital role CATD plays in empowering youth from rural communities, Japan supported the construction of these facilities—designed to accommodate up to 100 students and equipped with essential amenities—under our Grassroots Grant Assistance program, widely known as GGP. Since 1990, Japan has funded 423 GGP projects in Fiji, totaling over USD 32 million, in pursuit of sustainable development.

The new dormitory will provide safe and inclusive accommodation for students from remote areas, with dedicated spaces for female students. The existing dormitory will be repurposed to further **enhance gender inclusivity and access to education.**

The addition of three purpose-built **classrooms** marks a significant advancement in CATD's educational infrastructure. By distinguishing theoretical instruction from practical training, these spaces **foster a more adaptive and enriched learning environment**—one that values both contemplation and experience. As the saying goes, “In theory, everything is calm; in practice, things come alive.” Today, that balance is beautifully realized.

I am especially pleased to learn that CATD **carpentry students contributed to the construction process.** This hands-on

involvement exemplifies the harmony between learning and doing, and I commend all who participated.

Having seen the completed facilities, I am confident that CATD nurtures exceptional educators and students. The quality of workmanship is truly commendable.

Moreover, I am delighted that **two CATD graduates**—who are present with us today—will **soon begin careers in Japan's automotive industry**. This is a powerful symbol of global opportunity and shared progress.

Beyond today's handover, Japan continues to support Fiji through a wide range of development and resilience-building initiatives, including:

- **Tamavua-i-Wai Bridge Reconstruction:** Enhancing connectivity and serving as a vital lifeline during emergencies.

- **Nadi River Flood Management Project:** A comprehensive master plan has been developed, and the construction of flood protection embankments is under consideration.
- **Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation Yen Loan:** A concessional loan agreement of FJD 71.5 million at an interest rate of 0.4%, with rapid disbursement available within 48 hours in the event of a disaster.
- **Michibiki Satellite Pilot Project:** Testing advanced disaster warning systems tailored to Fiji's needs using Japan's Quasi-Zenith Satellite System "Michibiki."
- **Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS) Support:** Building on past projects in 1995, 1996, and 2012, Japan has committed to constructing a new multi-purpose facility adjacent to the current FMS building in Nadi, which will include a training center, an instrumentation center, and a disaster prevention awareness exhibition space, with completion expected by 2027.
- **Tsunami Warning Sirens (Upcoming Support):** Provision of early warning tsunami sirens under the ESDP scheme to strengthen Fiji's disaster alert infrastructure.
- **Fisheries Research Vessel:** Planned provision of a research vessel to the Ministry of Fisheries in Vanua Levu to support sustainable marine resource management.
- **Official Security Assistance (OSA) :** Under this new initiative, Japan has provided the Fiji Navy with three patrol boats, security equipment to enhance maritime safety and regional stability.

In closing, I trust this project will contribute meaningfully to the economic empowerment of the iTaukei people, uplift rural communities, and further strengthen the enduring friendship between Fiji and Japan. Honorable Minister Vasu, CATD community—thank you for being at the heart of this promising new chapter in our bilateral partnership.

Vinaka Vakalevu, Thank You, and Arigatou Gozaimasu

**END.**