

**Speech by H.E. Mr. KUMAMARU Yuji,  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan  
To the Kingdom of Cambodia  
At the Grant Contract Signing Ceremony  
for the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects  
7 March 2015**

- H.E. Mr. Samedy Sivathana, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports,
- H.E. Mr. Vath Chamroeun, Secretary General of National Olympic Committee of Cambodia,
- Mr. Nang Ravuth, President of Cambodia Aikido Association,
- Mr. Hok Chheang Kim, General Secretary of Cambodia Bokator Federation,
- Mr. Yean Nguon, President of Cambodia Kobudo and Jodo Federation,
- MR.MORI Itaru, President of Phnom Penh Kendo Club,
- MR. IZAKI Hiroshi, Chief Representative of JICA Cambodia Office,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to hold this signing ceremony of the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects, “The Project for Constructing Cambodia-Japan Traditional Martial Arts Center in Phnom Penh”, to Cambodia Aikido Association.

In order to promote Japanese and Cambodian traditional martial arts, Cambodia Aikido Association will implement a project for constructing Cambodia-Japan Traditional Martial Arts Center in Phnom Penh. The Government of Japan provides US\$102,780 to Cambodia Aikido Association with this project.

Sport contributes to health improvement and health development for youth greatly. In the same way, Cambodia has programs for physical education and

sports development in the education strategic plan, and has the accelerating trend of sports promotion. In this situation, I am so glad that Japanese martial arts, which train both physical and mental health and emphasize to moral and courtesy, attract Cambodian people recently and there are a lots of Cambodians who love Japanese martial arts without distinction of age or sex.

In addition, martial arts express country's history and culture a lot, and it is so delightful that both Japanese and Cambodian try to understand each other through martial arts, under the circumstances that Japanese society is expanding rapidly in Cambodia.

The Government of Japan has supported to Cambodian sports sector through many kinds of projects, such as a project for constructing sports facilities and dispatching Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and Senior Volunteers from JICA. We have also dispatched Senior Volunteers from JICA for about 10 years to Cambodia Aikido Association. And we also implement positively human exchange programs between Japan and Cambodia through sports, such as a youth exchange program called "JENESYS2.0". We will have further supports these projects, with recognizing the excellence of sports, which train and connect human. Especially in 2020, the Olympics and the Paralympics will be held in Tokyo, and in 2023, South East Asian Games will be hold in Cambodia. With this in mind, I hope that the sports exchange between Japan and Cambodia will become more and more popular.

Finally, the Grant Assistance for the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects which implement cultural and higher educational projects and benefit to people in grass-roots level. I hope that Cambodia-Japan Traditional Martial Arts Center will benefit to Cambodian martial arts player, and further strengthen the friendly relations existing between the Japanese and Cambodian peoples.

Thank you.