

**Speech by Mr. HIGUCHI Yoshihiro,  
Chargé d’Affaires ad interim of Japan  
In the Kingdom of Cambodia  
At the Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for  
Japan’s Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects  
February 24, 2013**

- Mr. LACH Chan Sovan, President of Cambodia Karate-Do Federation,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to attend this ceremony today for the signing of the contract of the Grant Assistance for the construction of a Gymnasium for Japanese martial arts. I am particularly glad that this signing is conducted on the occasion of Karate Demonstration at the Japan-Cambodia Kizuna Festival which celebrates the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan-Cambodia Friendship.

This project aims to promote Japanese martial arts in Cambodia, by constructing a new two-story concrete building as well as providing necessary materials and equipment for official matches. The grant to be provided for this project amounts to USD 120,780. It is expected that, by attracting increasing Cambodian practitioners, the new Gymnasium will develop as a key site for Japanese martial arts.

Japanese martial arts try not only to develop our physical strength, but also to cultivate our mind, in particular, sense of improving oneself, endurance, humility and social etiquette. I believe that cultivation of mind is very much important for the young generation who will underpin the development of the Cambodian society today and in the future.

Since 1992, the Government of Japan has been assisting the education sector in Cambodia both in terms of hardware and software. I hope that the project for which we proceed to sign the grant contract today will be implemented smoothly and effectively by our partner, Cambodia Karate-Do Federation, and maintained properly so that as many trainees and trainers as possible can benefit from the project, and Japanese martial arts, together with their underlying spiritual values, will further expand in Cambodia.

Last but not least, I hope that the project will further strengthen the friendly relations existing between the Japanese and Cambodian peoples.

Thank you for your attention.