SPEECH DELIVERED BY HON. KEN KANDODO, M.P., MINISTER OF FINANCE, AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF EXCHANGE OF NOTES BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF MALAWI AND JAPAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF "THE IMPROVEMENT OF CAPABILITIES TO COPE WITH NATURAL DISASTERS BY CLIMATE CHANGE" PROJECT.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2010 AT 10:00 AM

MINISTRY OF FINANCE CONFERENCE ROOM

- Mr. Hiroshi Matsumoto, the Charge d' Affaire at the Japanese Embassy in Malawi and your Delegation;
- Senior Government officials;
- Members of the Press;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am pleased to welcome all of you to the signing of the Exchange of Notes between the Government of the Republic of Malawi and the Government of Japan for the improvement of capabilities to cope with natural disasters caused by climate change. Let me extend a very special welcome to Mr. Matsumoto, the Charge d' Affaires at the Japanese Embassy, who has represented the Ambassador who could not be here with us today as he had to urgently travel back to Japan to attend to his sick mother. It is my prayer that she gets well soon.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The signing of the Exchange of Notes today marks yet another important milestone in the cooperation between Malawi and Japan as it testifies to the common belief and values that the two Governments have on matters concerning climate change. Malawi, just like Japan, believes that it is for the good of humanity to address the serious climate change challenges being faced in the world with a sense of urgency. Our failure to act today will be a testament of our failure in the many years to come. On the international level, Malawi acknowledges the important role that the different conventions play to promote the fight against such issues as global warming which is a direct consequence of climate change.

This is why our State President Ngwazi Prof. Bingu wa Mutharika, as Chairman of the AU, has made the fight against climate change as one of his main priorities during his tenure of office. At the national level, Government recognises the serious impact that climate change can have on the national economy if it is not negated. Issues of droughts, floods, adverse weather conditions etc, can have negative impact on economic development of a country and this is why Government has put the fight against climate change as one of the priority areas to be addressed in its development agenda.

It is for this reason, therefore, that I would like to express Government's profound gratitude to the Government of Japan for the grant amounting to 500 million Japanese Yen (approx. MK900 million) which is aimed at improving Malawi's capacity to cope with natural disasters caused by climate change. You wish may wish to recall that in May this year, I also signed with the Japanese Government another Exchange of Notes for a grant amounting to 1.7 billion Japanese Yen (approx. 3 billion), under the Asia – Africa Energy Assistance for

Climate Change to support the implementation of a forestry preservation and conservation programme as one way of addressing issues of climate change. I understand that out of all the beneficiaries under this initiative, Malawi got the largest share.

The project to be implemented with these funds is aimed at strengthening Government capacity for mitigating the impact of natural disasters that occur as a result of climate change. As you are aware, in recent years Malawi has experienced natural disasters such as drought, floods, earthquakes, hailstorms, etc, leading to loss of life and property, damage to infrastructure resulting in huge financial and social consequences.

The project will support the rebuilding of water supply and sanitation facilities to ensure that people have access to clean and safe water through the drilling of boreholes in areas affected by natural disasters such as the Lower Shire, Karonga and other areas. The project will also assist in development of small-scale irrigation projects in these affected areas to enable the people cultivate their own food.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At this juncture, let me thank the Japanese Government for this timely assistance which will go a long way in complimenting Government's efforts to assist all those that are directly affected by effects of climate change. I also want to thank the Japanese Government for all the support that it is providing to Malawi through numerous projects which are making a positive contribution to lives of the many Malawians. I am aware that the Japanese Government has just conducted a demand survey for projects that it should take on board for funding in the next cycle of assistance to Malawi. I am informed that you had exhaustive

discussions with the various Government ministries and departments and key projects were submitted for your funding consideration. I therefore look forward to receiving a positive feed-back from your Government on the list of projects that were submitted.

Once again, I thank you all for coming to this ceremony today.
Thank you for your attention.