

Monsieur Dissake Mbarga, Représentant du Ministre des Sports et de l'Education Physique (MINSEP),

Madame Kamgang Bougche Constance Clarisse, Représentant du Ministre des Domaines, du Cadastre et des Affaires Foncières (MINDCAF),

Monsieur EKANGA Michel, Représentant du Délégué Général à la Sûreté Nationale (DGSN),

Monsieur David Ojong, Représentant du Comité National Olympique et Sportif du Cameroun (CNOSC),

Monsieur Dieudonné Ayissi, Président de la Fédération Camerounaise de Tir (FECATIR),

Honorables invités,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

It is a great honor for me to host today the ceremony of granting shooting clothing to the Cameroon Shooting Federation.

Many important guests have gathered here at this residence, where Japan and Cameroon are strongly united by the bonds of friendship that sport brings. Today, in the presence of Monsieur Dissake Mbarga, I would like to touch upon the history of exchanges in the field of sports between our two countries.

Cameroon, which became independent in 1960, first participated in the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964. The warm applause of the Japanese audience for Mr. David Njitock, the only Cameroonian athlete who participated in the Olympics, is still talked about by the people involved at that time.

Then, in 2002, the Cameroon national team participated in the FIFA World Cup in Japan and Korea choosing Nakatsue Village in Oita Prefecture as their camp site. For more than 20 years since then, exchanges between Oita Prefecture and Cameroon has continued, and at last year's World Cup, Nakatsue village sent a strong message of support to the Cameroon team via YouTube, contributing in one way or another to that dramatic victory over Brazil.

I had the honor to attend the opening ceremony of a Judo Dojo built by Japan with His Excellency MOUELLE KOMBI in Soa last year. Since then, I hosted the Judo Ambassador's cup at the dojo in February this year. I would like to thank the representative of Minister of Sports and Physical Education, Mr. Dissake Mbarga, for coming our Judo competitions. I was very much impressed by the enthusiasm and strength of these young Cameroonian Judoka, men and women, who all have displayed great sportsmanship. We all hope that in the future, Cameroonian and Japanese Judoka will compete on the world stage.

I would like to mention the fact that this handover of the shooting clothe was made possible by the personal initiative of Mr. Dieudonné Ayissi, President of the Cameroon Shooting Federation. In August 2022, his important letter addressed to Mr. Kiichiro Ishimaru, President of the Japan Rifle Association was entrusted to the Cameroonian Ambassador to Japan, H.E. Mr. Pierre Ndzenge. In that letter Mr. Ayissi proposed Cameroonian – Japanese cooperation to further sports exchange and promote shooting in Cameroon. Therefore, I am glad to handover these shooting coats and pants, five of them on behalf of Mr. Kiichiro Ishimaru.

I am looking forward to seeing the Cameroonian athletes having practiced with these shooting clothes compete for gold medals on the international stage with Japanese athletes in the future.

Thank you for your attention.