

Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendations are awarded to two Tanzanians for the first time in the history

The Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendations are awarded to individuals and groups with outstanding achievements in international fields, in order to acknowledge their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas. The Commendations also aim to promote the understanding and support of the Japanese public for the activities of the recipients.

This Japanese fiscal year 2019, the Commendations are awarded to 206 individuals and 63 groups (31 individuals and 8 groups reside in Japan, and 175 individuals and 55 groups reside overseas). From the United Republic of Tanzania, Dr. Edwin P. Mhede, Commissioner General, TRA (Tanzania Revenue Authority) and Professor Ahmed Mohamed Said, Former Professor of Osaka University of Foreign Study (Present Osaka University).

This is the first time for Tanzanians to receive the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendations.

The awarding ceremony for Dr. Edwin P. Mhede will be hosted by H.E. Mr. Shinichi Goto, Ambassador of Japan to the United Republic of Tanzania on Monday, 2 September 2019 at the Japanese Ambassador's Residence. The awarding ceremony for Professor Ahmed Mohamed Said will take place separately at a later date.

Dr. Mhede's contribution: Promotion of economic relations between Japan and Tanzania.

Dr. Edwin P. Mhede completed the Master's program of GRIPS in 2010 as a JICA/FASID Scholarship student. Then, he returned to his country, the United Republic of Tanzania, and immediately he initiated a Kaizen Project for strengthening product quality and productivity improvement in the manufacturing enterprises. He became the first Head of the Tanzania Kaizen Unit (TKU) under the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT). Indeed, during his tenure, Dr. Mhede made great efforts to promote 5S Kaizen in Tanzania. After that, he won the MEXT Scholarship and completed his Ph.D. in 2018 under the guidance of Prof. Tetsushi Sonobe, who is a leading researcher of Kaizen. Based on his academic studies and experiences in Japan, Dr. Mhede significantly contributed (and continues) to promote economic relations between Japan and the United Republic of Tanzania.

[Note: Abbreviations]

- GRIPS: National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Japan

- JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency
- FASID: Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development, Japan
- MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan

Professor Said' contribution: Promotion of Kiswahili in Japan. Dr. Said is one of the most renowned linguists and authors in Tanzania. He taught at then Osaka University of Foreign Study (currently known as Osaka University) as a professor of Kiswahili between 1990 and 1997. He has written over 60 books, many of which have been adapted in the textbooks in Tanzania and provided precious opportunities for Kiswahili learners in Japan to learn the language and culture. Through his devotion to teaching and writing in Kiswahili Dr. Said significantly contributed to promote the mutual understanding among people between Japan and Tanzania.