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<OBITUARY>

Mr. Toshimichi Nemoto: Secretary-General of MWCS in Tanzania

Kazuhiko Hosaka

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Mr. Toshimichi Nemoto passed away suddenly from heart disease at a hospital in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on the 24th of February 2017 at the age of 63. He had been the secretary-general of Mahale Wildlife Conservation Society (MWCS) since it was founded as an NGO authorized by the Tanzanian government on the 12th of August 1994. His contribution to the establishment and management of MWCS was so great that, without his efforts, the society could not achieve most of its community-based conservation activities involving construction of a primary school and a dispensary in Katumbi, a neighboring village to the north of Mahale Mountains National Park. His last appearance as an MWCS member was at the 50th



Figure 1. Mr. Nemoto laughs with Tongwe friends from Mahale (Photo: H. Sakuragi).

anniversary event of Mahale Mountains Chimpanzee Research Project held in Kigoma on the 26th of November 2015 (Figure 1).

Mr. Nemoto's major was history. After graduating from the Division of History, Faculty of Letters, Kyoto University, he spent 6 years teaching at a high school in Ichikawa, Japan. Then, he moved to Tanzania in 1984 to study African history at the University of Dar es Salaam. His determination originated in his involvement in a Japan-based anti-apartheid movement and his first journey to East Africa as an undergraduate student in 1975 (Nemoto 2011). He made friends with primatologists from Japan including the late Professor Toshisada Nishida. I met Mr. Nemoto for the first time in August 1991 when he taught at Dar es Salaam Japanese Class. Since then, there have been many cases in which I had to solicit his advice to escape from various difficulties I faced while travelling in Tanzania. The Mahale Team's reliance on him grew after he visited Mahale for the first time in 1992 and two years later accepted Prof. Nishida's request that he act as the MWCS secretary-general. In 1999, he founded Japan Tanzania Tours Ltd. (JATA Tours) and started to assist researchers not only as a friend but also as a professional tour agent.

On the 3rd of June 2017, more than 300 people gathered to remember him in Tokyo. There I had a chance to know how extensive and deep a friendship he had cherished, and what kind of man he was. Not only researchers of various disciplines but also diplomats, businesspersons, young students interested in Tanzanian people and culture, etc. regretted his too early passing. His wife, Asami, in her final speech as a representative of the surviving family, revealed that Mr. Nemoto had been determined to retire from his tourist company in November 2018 and concentrate on compiling his lifework about African history. On behalf of MWCS, I would like to express our sin-

cere appreciation for his sharing of our passion for long-term research and conservation of Mahale chimpanzees. We vow to continue our endeavors and pass them on to the next generation.

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Nemoto T 2011. *Living in Tanzania: Records of the Nation and the People from the Inner Side*. Showa-do, Kyoto (in Japanese).

<NOTE>

Grooming Hand Clasp by Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) in the Issa Valley, Western Tanzania

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INTRODUCTION

Despite over 300 years of combined study of wild chimpanzees, reports of social customs continue to emerge (e.g., social scratch, Nakamura *et al.* 2000), especially given an increased use of remote monitoring of behaviour of unhabituated communities, revealing behaviour like stone throwing that have never before been described (Kühl *et al.* 2016). However, it was the grooming hand clasp (GHC) that was first described as a social custom (McGrew & Tutin 1978), reported in chimpanzees