

MESSAGE FROM H.E. Ms. KAMIKAWA Yoko
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to reiterate, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, my sincere hope for the realization of Middle East peace at the earliest possible date when an independent Palestinian state and Israel can live side by side in peace and security.

Japan is paying close attention to the situation in the Gaza Strip, Palestine, with deep concern. On this occasion, I would like to offer my sincerest condolences once again to the citizens who have lost their lives and the bereaved families and express my heartfelt sympathy to the injured in the current situation.

The humanitarian situation in Palestine is devastating. I am deeply saddened by the serious humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, especially the fact that children, women and the elderly are suffering. It is also our priority to deliver necessary assistance to each individual in Gaza as soon as possible, and to this end, Japan fully supports humanitarian pauses to facilitate urgently needed assistance. Therefore, Japan made various diplomatic efforts for the adoption of UNSC resolution 2712, which calls for humanitarian pauses and humanitarian corridors to enable humanitarian assistance throughout the Gaza strip and demands that all parties comply with their obligation under international law. Japan works hard for providing humanitarian aid amounting to around USD 65 million as well as relief supplies through JICA for Palestine, in addition to the already-decided Emergency Grant Aid worth USD 10 million.

Furthermore, when working to improve the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and to calm down the situation as soon as possible towards the subsequent recovery and reconstruction, it is important to take into account the WPS (Women, Peace and Security) perspective to achieve sustainable peace. Japan continues to cooperate with relevant countries and international

organizations to this end.

At the same time, Japan unequivocally condemns the terror attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian militants, and has consistently called for the immediate release of hostages, for the secured and securing safety of civilians to be ensured, and all the parties to act in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian law. Japan calls for all parties to act faithfully based on the UNSC resolution.

Japan understands the Palestinians' longstanding aspirations for statehood and supports a "two-state solution" to be achieved through negotiations. This position of Japan remains unchanged. Unilateral measures that undermine the realization of a "two-state solution," such as Israeli settlement activities, which violate international law, should end immediately. We believe that a truly peaceful resolution cannot be achieved through violence, but through dialogue based on mutual trust among the parties.

The Gaza Strip is an indivisible piece of a "two-state solution". Japan hopes that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be governed under a reformed and reinforced Palestinian Authority in the near future.

The rise in extremist settler violence committed against Palestinians is unacceptable, undermines security in the West Bank, and threatens prospects for a lasting peace.

Japan has continuously contributed to trust-building between the parties as well as assistance toward Palestinians for their future nation-building. The "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative, launched by Japan 17 years ago, is an effort to promote confidence-building among parties through economic development projects and to bring the "dividends of peace" to the region in the form of economic benefits.

Japan is also promoting support for the establishment of a future independent and self-sustaining Palestinian state. The Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD), which Japan launched to apply the experience of East Asian countries that have achieved economic growth to the development of

Palestine, is part of such efforts. Japan will continue to contribute to self-reliance of the Palestinian economy through these initiatives.

For lasting peace and stability in the Middle East, there is no solution other than the peaceful coexistence of Israel and Palestine. We must not allow the current conflict to block the path to peace in the Middle East. The international community should continue to make utmost efforts to bring about this peaceful coexistence. Japan as a member of the Security Council will continue to be actively involved in this issue with the international community, toward the advancement of the Middle East Peace Process.

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