

**MESSAGE FROM H.E. Mr. MOTEGI Toshimitsu
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I express my solidarity with Palestine, with my strong hope for overcoming the numerous challenges currently facing Palestine, broadening prospects for Middle East peace, and the arrival of the day when an independent Palestinian state and Israel can live side by side in peace and security.

Since October 2023, numerous civilians have been killed in the Gaza Strip. Even now, residents are amid a critical humanitarian situation. I am deeply concerned about this dire situation on the ground. On this occasion, I would like to once again express our condolences for the loss of people's lives during this time, and offer our deepest sympathies to the bereaved families.

The international community must unite to alleviate the suffering of the people in Gaza as soon as possible, restore peaceful lives for its residents, and rebuild a new Gaza. The agreement based on the "Comprehensive Plan", developed under the leadership of President Trump of the United States, serves as a brake on the deteriorating situation in Gaza and provides an opportunity for the international community to cooperate toward a future of coexistence between Israel and Palestine. It is of critical importance that all parties act in accordance with the Plan.

In the West Bank, unilateral actions such as settlement expansion plans including E1 and steps towards annexation are entirely unacceptable to Japan. In addition, there are also severe security and socio-economic conditions, such as a decline in economic activity due to restrictions on movement, and I am concerned about the worsening situation.

Even amid these difficult circumstances, Japan intends to play a realistic and proactive role in bringing the goal of a two-state solution one step closer.

Since the 1993 Oslo Accords, Japan has provided approximately \$2.6 billion in aid to Palestine. Of this amount, \$240 million has been disbursed since October 2023, covering diverse sectors including financial support to the Palestinian Authority (PA), health and sanitation, food, rubble removal, waste management, and infrastructure.

We will continue to focus our support on humanitarian assistance, early recovery and reconstruction support for Gaza, personnel dispatch to the interim governance mechanism, backing Palestinian Authority reforms, and support centered on Palestinian “state-building”.

Also, it is paramount to ensure environment enabling humanitarian assistance by international organization including United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in a sustainable manner. Japan will continue supporting UNRWA's activities and efforts to improve its governance.

Furthermore, this past July, together with Palestine and East Asian countries including Malaysia, Japan held the fourth ministerial meeting of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD) in Kuala Lumpur. There, we confirmed our commitment to collaborate on expanding and diversifying support for Palestine based on our respective strengths.

For lasting peace and stability in the Middle East, there is no solution other than Israel and Palestine coexisting peacefully, and no solution can be achieved through force. The international community should redouble its utmost efforts toward this goal.

Japan will continue to stand by the Palestinian people in their quest to make progress towards peace, and we earnestly hope that a two-state solution, where Palestine and Israel coexist in peace and security, will be realized in the not-too-distant future.