

MEDIA RELEASE

The Government and People of Japan Commit USD 1 million in support of children in Gaza

Jerusalem, 6 August 2014 – The Government and people of Japan have contributed USD 1 million to support UNICEF's emergency response to the water, sanitation and hygiene emergency needs of children and women in Gaza during on-going conflict.

'Up to now, we had been witnessing a rapidly unfolding catastrophe in Gaza due to the lack of sufficient, safe, and continued humanitarian access for routine operations and repairs of water and sanitation services', said June Kunugi, UNICEF Special Representative, State of Palestine. 'Access to clean water for drinking, personal hygiene, and domestic use, can make the difference between life and death for children and their families. 'For this we thank the people and the Government of Japan for their enduring and generous commitment and support to Palestinian children,' she added.

Mr. Junya Matsuura, Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative to the Palestinian Authority of the Government of Japan explained that the Government and people of Japan have contributed USD 1 million through UNICEF, as part of Japan's assistance to the Palestinian people and especially in Gaza, who were affected by the confrontation between Israel and militants in Gaza strip. Furthermore, Ambassador Matsuura emphasized that Japan continues to make efforts to achieve a ceasefire in coordination with the international community.

The Japanese grant will allow UNICEF to enable water tankering, provide baby and family hygiene kits, and needed supplies to repair damaged water, wastewater networks, wells and generators. Since the beginning of the conflict in July, more than 285,000 people, of whom 50 per cent are children, are sheltered at 90 UNRWA and 19 public schools, and are in dire need of drinking water, water storage containers, and family and baby hygiene kits. An estimated 1.5 million people who are not taking shelter in designated internally displaced areas have extremely restricted access to water, as water service providers cannot access the facilities to conduct their daily operations and carry out urgently needed repairs and maintenance.

For further information:

Catherine Weibel, UNICEF, mobile: 054 778 7604

Monica Awad, UNICEF, mobile: 054 778 7605

