

**MESSAGE FROM H.E. MR. FUMIO KISHIDA
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

29 November 2015

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express once again, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, my sincere hope for the realization of peace in the Middle East wherein a future independent Palestinian State and Israel can co-exist in peace and security.

Japan understands the Palestinians' aspiration for state-building and supports a two-state solution through negotiations. To end the chain of hatred in the region including in Jerusalem and search for a breakthrough, it is urgently required that both parties act in earnest to resolve the issue and regain trust. Israeli settlement activities are a violation of international law which leads to deepened confrontation. Japan has repeatedly called upon Israel to completely freeze settlement activities.

In addition to political efforts, economic and social development in Palestine is required more than ever to break the current stalemate. In particular, the seamless efforts of the international community to support early reconstruction and development in Gaza are urgently needed.

Japan has made assistance to the people of Palestine focusing on humanitarian aid, assistance for state-building and reform, confidence building, and enhancing economic self-sustainability. Japan has extended assistance of approximately 1.6 billion US dollars in total since 1993. Furthermore, I recently announced Japan's new assistance of 12 million US dollars at the expanded Quartet representative meeting held on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly.

Regarding the Jericho Agro Industrial Park, a flagship project of the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" Initiative, the first company has already started its operations. I expect more companies start full scale operations in the Park, and create many employment opportunities and facilitate economic development in the region.

Japan is continuing assistance in support of the efforts to build a future independent and sustainable Palestinian state. In this context, Japan launched the "Conference on Cooperation among East Asian countries for the Palestinian Development (CEAPAD)" aimed at utilizing the knowledge and experience of economic development in East Asian countries.

Japan will remain actively engaged both politically and economically to support progress in the peace process in cooperation with the international community.