



## *Representative Office of Japan to the Palestinian Authority*

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### Press Release

#### Japan-Palestine Joint Press Release

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Mahmoud Abbas met in Tokyo on February 15th, 2016, to discuss relations between Japan and Palestine as well as Israeli-Palestinian conflict

#### 1. Relation between Japan and Palestine

- (1) Prime Minister Abe and President Abbas shared their views on the importance of continued dialogues between the two sides through visits by high-level and working-level officials, to exchange views on a broad range of fields, not only in economic cooperation but also in political affairs, economy, security, culture and education.
- (2) Both sides reaffirmed that Japan's unique initiative of "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" contributes to peace and development in the region, and welcomed that the first Palestinian company commenced its operation in the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP). Both sides committed themselves to enhancing their efforts towards full operation of JAIP in collaboration with other relevant states of this initiative. In this regard, both sides welcomed the "Palestine Business Forum" which was held in Tokyo for promoting the progress of JAIP.
- (3) Both sides affirmed that tourism in Palestine has potential and thus developing its resources and industry is important. In this context, both sides welcomed that the notes concerning the "Project for the Construction of the Protective Shelter and the Presentation of the Great Bath at Hisham's Palace, Jericho (Detailed Design)" which composes a part of "Corridor for Tourism" initiative were signed and exchanged.



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- (4) Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's intention to continue its political and economic support so that Palestine will be an independent, democratic, viable and contiguous state. As part of such support, Prime Minister Abe announced that Japan will provide more than 78 million US dollars for an additional economic assistance package to Palestine. President Abbas expressed his utmost gratitude to Japan for its support to Palestine amounting to more than 1.7 billion US dollars since 1993, including the new assistance.
- (5) Both sides welcomed success in the Senior Officials' Meeting of Conference on the cooperation among East Asian countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD) on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 in Hakone, Japan. Both sides affirmed that they strengthen cooperation with Asian countries towards the next ministerial meeting.
- (6) President Abbas expressed his appreciation for the Palestinian-Israeli youth invitation program that has been hosted by the Government of Japan for more than 20 years. He also recognized that similar programs organized by Japanese municipalities also contribute to promoting mutual understanding and confidence at the grass-root level between Japan and Palestine.
- (7) Prime Minister Abe expressed concern about deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza caused by the continuous blockage and delay of reconstruction, as well as the difficult situation including a high unemployment rate which the young generation is facing, and stated that Japan continues its support to tackle with those problems in corporation with the international community. Prime Minister Abe welcomed friendship exchanges between children in Gaza, who have suffered from repeated wars in the past, and children in the City of Kamaishi, Iwate Prefecture of Japan, who have been affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Prime Minister Abe also expressed his gratitude to children in Gaza for encouraging people in the affected area every year since the earthquake.



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### 2. Israeli-Palestinian conflict

- (1) Both sides shared the view that, amid difficulties in the region, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains as one of the core issues in the region and that its solution is indispensable for achieving peace and stability in the whole region. They affirmed their support for a two-state solution whereby an independent Palestinian state and Israel live side by side in peace and security based on the 1967 lines.
  
- (2) Prime Minister Abe expressed grave concern about the lack of mutual trust between Palestine and Israel and the current deteriorating security situation, which has led to the loss of many civilian lives. Prime Minister Abe urged Palestinians and Israelis to exercise restraint and deny all acts of violence.
  
- (3) Prime Minister Abe, while appreciating the efforts made by President Abbas to contain the violence on the ground through maintaining the non-violence as well as the security coordination between Palestine and Israel, stressed upon the importance of the Palestinian reconciliation which is indispensable for the just and transparent elections
  
- (4) President Abbas reiterated his commitment to a two-state solution and his constructive roles toward peace.
  
- (5) Noting the special status of the holy city of Jerusalem, both sides stressed that any actions prejudging its final status should be denied and any acts of violence or incitement should be refrained from.
  
- (6) Both sides shared the view that settlement activities by Israel in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem are against international law and constitute a considerable obstacle to a two state solution and that Israel should fully freeze its settlement policy.



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- (7) Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan, as the chairman of G7 and a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, further contributes to easing the sufferings of the Palestinians and realizing a two-state solution.
- (8) Prime Minister Abe, based on the idea that the international community should proactively support the peace in the Middle East, stated that Japan welcomed the idea of convening the multilateral talks on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and announced Japan's readiness to be actively engaged in the multilateral mechanism in cooperation with the regional stakeholders when it is convened.
- (9) President Abbas appreciated Japan's contribution to the Middle East Peace Process and expressed his expectation to the unique role of Japan. On the other hand, Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan is ready to play her unique role in Gaza reconstruction process and dealing with problems from which Palestinian young generation is suffering. Considering that, Prime Minister Abe mentioned to send Mr. Masaharu KOHNO, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for the Middle East Peace to the region in the near future.

(end)