



من الشعب الياباني
From the People of Japan

PRESS RELEASE

Support from Japan for Gaza

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East Jerusalem

The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) accepted a generous contribution of US\$ 4.5 million from the Government of Japan.

"This important gesture again illustrates Japan's long-lasting commitment to international humanitarian efforts," Mr. Krähenbühl noted, "There are special links between Japan and the people of Gaza. For example, through kite flying events, children have regularly expressed their solidarity with the Japanese people affected by the tsunami disaster in 2011. The support from Japan is invaluable to the people of Gaza in particular in this time of severe crisis. Needs and challenges are immense and yet, with the generous support of the international community and of Japan we will provide concrete and much needed support to the people affected by this conflict.

The Japanese contribution will support UNRWA's distribution of daily food rations as well as non-food items such as blankets, mattresses, hygiene kits, and diapers to all IDPs in UNRWA shelters. It will also enable UNRWA health centres to provide quality health care through provision of medicines.

Mr. Junya Matsuura, Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative to the Palestinian Authority explained that the US\$ 4.5 million contribution to UNRWA was part of Japan's assistance to Palestinians in Gaza affected by the conflict. Ambassador Matsuura further emphasized that Japan continues to make efforts to achieve a lasting ceasefire in coordination with the international community.

The Government of Japan has been a major UNRWA partner for many years, and has responded generously to support UNRWA programmes throughout the region. As a member of the UNRWA Advisory Commission since 1973, Japan has also provided valued advice and support to the Agency's Commissioner-General.

– Ends –

Background information

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some five million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty. As a result, the Agency's General Fund (GF), supporting UNRWA's core activities and 97 per cent reliant on voluntary contributions, has begun each year with a large projected deficit. Currently the deficit stands at US\$ 70.5 million.

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