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Signing and Exchange of Notes concerning General Cultural Grant Assistance to Palestine

1. On September 6, Mr. Takeshi OKUBO, Ambassador for the Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to the Palestinian Authority, and Mr. Shukri BISHARA, Minister of Finance and Planning, signed and exchanged notes in Ramallah, regarding General Cultural Grant Assistance of up to one billion two hundred thirty-five Million Yen (¥ 1.235.000.000 almost US$ 12 Millions) related to the Project for the Construction of the Protective Shelter and the Presentation of the Great Bath at Hisham's Palace, in the presence of Mr. Kentaro SONOURA, Vice Foreign Minister of Japan, and Dr. Rami HAMDALLAH Prime Minister of Palestine. Simultaneously, Ms. Yuko MITSUI, Chief Representative of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) Palestine Office, and Ms. Rula MA'AYAH, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, signed Grant Agreement for the concerned project.

2. Hisham's Palace, a cultural heritage and touristic site representing Islamic construction in Jericho, lacks facilities to preserve and exhibit the precious mosaic floor of its Great Bath because of financial difficulties and other reasons. It is concerned that there is a risk of deterioration of and damage to the mosaic floor. This project on this occasion is to fund a plan to build such facilities.

3. This project funded by the General Cultural Grant Assistance is expected to assist tourism development in Palestine and lead to sustainable economic growth. Furthermore, this project is supposed to contribute to the establishment of the "Corridor for Tourism" under the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative, which aims to support economic and social development in Jericho and the Jordan Valley through intraregional cooperation involving Japan, Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. (End)

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