USD 4.3 million Funding from Japan to support projects in the Gaza Strip through UNDP

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Jerusalem, 18 March 2016 – As part of their continuous efforts to support the Palestinian people, the Government of Japan entrusted UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) with a USD 4.3 million contribution targeting the Gaza Strip. The new contribution will address environmental sustainability and employment generation for youth in the Gaza Strip.

"It's our concern as well to accelerate the reconstruction in Gaza and to stabilize people's living there, including increasing job opportunities for youth. I believe the projects will contribute to the improvement of people's lives in Gaza said Mr. Takeshi Okubo, Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to the Palestinian Authority. "As Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe announced on the occasion of the recent visit of President Mahmoud Abbas to Japan, Japan has decided to provide the new package

of assistance to the Palestinians amounting to USD 78,210,200 mainly through the international organizations including UNDP which is one of the important partners" he added.

"The Government and people of Japan have shown extraordinary leadership in heeding calls to support the development of the Palestinian people," said Roberto Valent, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator. "Japan has been working closely with UNDP since the 1993 and this new contribution will create much needed job opportunities and improve people's livelihoods in the Gaza Strip," he added.

The first project will improve the environment and health conditions of the Gaza population by providing safe drinking water, while simultaneously improving the system efficiency of water and wastewater networks. The USD 1.5 million "improved water and waste water supply and wastewater system in Rafah and Middle Area" project will provide an equitable water supply to over 40,000 residents in the Tal Al Sultan area and reduce the suffering of another 5000 people from sewage flooding. In addition, wastewater services will be increased through the construction of 2500m of wastewater networks in Rafah and 2300m sewage pressure line between Al Sawarha and Deir Al Balah areas. The project will also enable storm water harvesting and mitigate flooding risks in Khan Younis through the excavation and shaping of a new infiltration lagoon.

The second project addresses the energy sector needs in the Gaza Strip, as the majority of the population has been experiencing blackouts for two-thirds of the day over the past three years. The USD 2 million project includes the rehabilitation of the electricity power distribution network in four affected areas; in addition to 70 kilometers of cables rehabilitated in Beit Hanoun, Gaza, Khuza'a and Fukhari.

The last project, worth USD 800,000, will support early recovery efforts and strengthening social cohesion through the creation of rapid employment opportunities for 430 young women and men, in the areas of Geographical Information System (GIS) municipal works, public and social services. Approximately 35,000 working days will be generated using different schemes and job placements for skilled youth, new graduates, and people with disabilities.

It is worth noting that the Government of Japan is considered one of UNDP/PAPP's largest partners and has provided more than USD 344 million since 1993 for project implementation in the areas of infrastructure, rubble removal, health, education, agriculture, access to justice, and others.

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