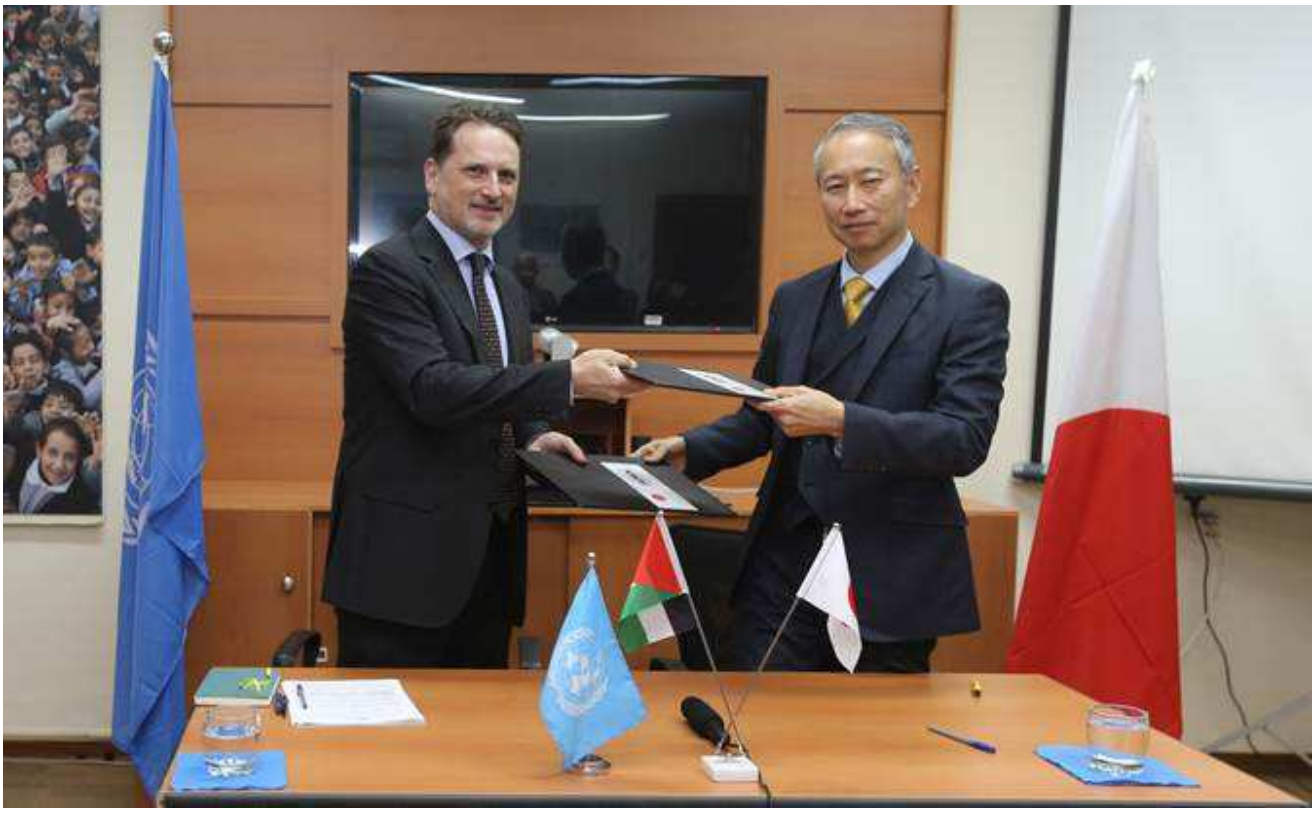
PRESS RELEASE

# Japan Contributes US$ 28.4 Million to UNRWA in Support of Palestine Refugees



*UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl and the Japanese Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to the Palestinian Authority, Takeshi Okubo, at the signing ceremony on 24 February 2017 for Japan's US$ 28.4 million contribution to UNRWA. © 2017 UNRWA Photo by Isabel de la Cruz*

24 February 2017

East Jerusalem

The Government of Japan has contributed US$ 28.4 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in support of the Agency's core programmes, emergency response efforts and priority projects.

Of the total contribution, US$ 17.7 million will go towards the Agency's core programmes and services, encompassing education for half a million Palestine refugee children and youth, health care for more than 3.5 million patients, and social services for nearly 300,000 vulnerable refugees. US$ 5.2 million will support the Agency's emergency operations in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), including the West Bank and Gaza, while US$ 3.5 million will go towards UNRWA emergency interventions in response to the ongoing crisis in Syria. The final US$ 2 million will help fund UNRWA projects in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza.

The contribution agreement was signed on 23 February by the UNRWA Commissioner-General, Pierre Krähenbühl, and the Japanese Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to the Palestinian Authority, Takeshi Okubo, at UNRWA Headquarters in East Jerusalem.

"The Government and people of Japan are remarkable partners of UNRWA, and we remain ever grateful for their support and their demonstrated solidarity with Palestine refugees," said Mr. Krähenbühl. "The partnership with Japan remains critical, not only in addressing the most critical challenges facing Palestine refugees today, but also in preserving opportunities and hope, particularly for the youth."

"The 5.3 million Palestinian refugees residing in UNRWA's five fields need much more support than ever from the international community, especially in Gaza and Syria, given the worsening socioeconomic conditions, as well as an increased demand for services resulting from the growing population," said Mr. Okubo, Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and Representative of Japan to the Palestinian Authority. "We appreciate UNRWA's commitment and dedication to the protection of human rights and enhancement of human dignity of Palestinian refugees through its services. I hope people in dire situations will receive our message through UNRWA's assistance that the international community stands beside them at all times."

In 2016, Japan contributed approximately US$ 44 million to UNRWA, including US$ 29 million to the Agency's core programmes and services, US$ 10 million to the Agency's Emergency Appeals for the oPt and the Syria Regional Crisis, and US$ 4 million for food assistance for abject-poor Palestine refugees in Gaza. They were among the top 5 donors to the Agency's core programmes in 2016 and have

been a member of the UNRWA Advisory Commission, which advises and assists the UNRWA Commissioner-General in carrying out the Agency's mandate, since 1973.

– Ends –

## Background Information

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA Programme Budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall. UNRWA encourages all Member States to work collectively to exert all possible efforts to fully fund the Agency's Programme Budget. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

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