



## **Press Release**

### **The People of Japan Support UN Mine Action Work in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan**

*NEW YORK, New York, 11 March 2014* — Japan donated US \$ 13.3 million to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action at the end of February. Maintaining its strong support for humanitarian demining, Japan is the leading donor to the United Nations efforts to eradicate landmines and explosive remnants of war.

“For the last 60 years Japan has been an important 'development donor' and a reliable UN partner. The United Nations system as a whole benefits from this generous support, in particular, UN humanitarian mine action across the world. In 2013 Japan was the top donor to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action. Japan’s significant contribution saves lives and helps clear the way for early peacebuilding, greater stability and sustainable development,” stated Hervé Ladsous the Under-Secretary-General for peacekeeping operations and Chair of the United Nations Mine Action Inter-Agency Coordination Group.

The Government of Japan assists the United Nations mine action work with more than just financial contributions. In January 2014 Japan assumed the Chair of the Mine Action Support Group (MASG), a group of donor countries contributing to mine action, in order to ensure that assistance to UN mine action work remains robust and well coordinated.

“Greater coherence for greater impact” is one of the themes which Japan will advocate in the MASG, in New York, Geneva and other contexts relevant to such collective efforts.

“Japan is a stalwart and consistent friend to UN mine action work. We are very grateful for their active participation promoting the UN vision of a world free from the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war. The People of Japan have given millions of dollars for humanitarian mine clearance over the past 20 years. Their strong commitment has helped bring greater security to many nations,” explained Agnès Marcaillou the Director of the Mine Action Service.

The contribution from Japan will support five humanitarian demining programmes led by UNMAS. In Libya, US \$ 5.2 million will be used to support clearance and explosive ordnance disposal. Since March 2011, the UNMAS programme in Libya, with support from Japan and other donors, has cleared or destroyed a total of 768,642 mines and explosive remnants of war. The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan received US \$ 3.6 million to enable clearance in dozens of contaminated areas. In South Sudan US \$ 2.5 million will be used to help the United Nations with emergency response and the rapid deployment of multi-tasking explosive ordnance teams around the country. US \$ 1 million will be used in the Democratic Republic of

the Congo to support peace consolidation through on-going humanitarian demining. And in Somalia US \$ 1 million will be used to help promote explosive ordnance disposal capability in the Somali Police Service.

UNMAS is the United Nations focal point for mine action. It currently supports programmes in the Abyei area (Sudan/South Sudan), Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mali, State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Darfur Sudan, Syria and Western Sahara (MINURSO).

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