

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kentaro Sonoura,
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,
at the Opening Remarks for the Fifth Ministerial-Level Meeting
of the Four-Party Consultative Unit for the “Corridor for Peace
and Prosperity”, 7 September 2016

It is my great pleasure to visit Palestine again as the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and to open the Meeting of the Four-party Consultative Unit for the “Corridor for Peace and Prosperity” Initiative, which will take place for the first time in three years.

Junichiro KOIZUMI, then Prime Minister of Japan, first visited here in 2006 to propose the concept “Corridor for Peace and Prosperity”, and then Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro ASO established the framework in 2007 in which these four parties meet regularly.

Ten years have passed since then. In the intervening years, the Middle East Peace Process has experienced a series of ups and downs. Peace conferences have alternated with conflicts such as the Gaza war while peace negotiations have both broken down and resumed apace.

Even under such circumstances, we, the four of us, have cooperated to steadily develop the Palestinian economy, based on this concept.

Today, we can see significant progress. The flagship project, Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP), has increased employment after it commenced operations last year. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and respect for their patient effort and dedication by the parties concerned. Cooperation with Jordan will be increasingly important for the distribution of JAIP products in near future.

I would like to reiterate the importance of an independent Palestinian economy in achieving a two-state solution. I am confident that today's meeting, its outcome and further progress of JAIP will become a guiding light for the citizens of Israel and Palestine as well as all concerned parties in the international community who aspire to create peace.

Thank you very much, Shukran jazilan, Toada rava and Arigatou gozaimashita.