

Statement by Mr. Manabu HORII,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the Extraordinary Ministerial Conference “Preserving Dignity and
Sharing Responsibility – Mobilizing Collective Action for UNRWA”

Mr. and Madame Co-chairs,

Distinguished Delegates,

We are deeply concerned about the situation of Palestinian refugees affected by ongoing circumstances in the region such as the Syrian crisis and the setback in the Middle East peace process.

Under these circumstances, the role of UNRWA to provide critical humanitarian support for Palestinian refugees is more crucial than ever. Japan places great importance on UNRWA's activities not only in supporting the refugees but also for its contribution to regional stabilization. From this point of view, it is extremely important for the international community to address the challenge of UNRWA's financial situation and to ensure sustainable, robust and long-term solutions for UNRWA to continue to carry out its activities.

In view of the current serious financial situation of UNRWA,

Japan would like to renew its commitment to fully support UNRWA. First, in February, Japan decided to contribute approximately 23.5 million US dollars to UNRWA. Second, considering the urgent need to address this situation, we will disburse our regular contribution for Fiscal Year 2018, amounting to approximately 1.7 million US dollars, at the earliest possible time after National Diet approval is obtained. Third, Japan is ready to consider making an additional financial contribution to UNRWA in areas such as health and sanitation, by making use of other budgetary resources including emergency grant aid.

In addition, Japan deems it important for UNRWA to expand its donor base. In this regard, Japan welcomes the "dignity is priceless" campaign led by Commissioner-General Krähenbühl for mobilizing resources from diverse stakeholders. Japan is willing to assist UNRWA's efforts for this objective. Japan is ready to call for further cooperation with UNRWA by Asian countries and others at occasions such as the Ministerial Conference on Cooperation among East Asian countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD), which is Japan's initiative for assisting Palestine, by

utilizing the resources and knowledge on economic development of East Asian countries.

Thank you.

(End)