

Statement by the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,
Mr. Nobuo Kishi
(23rd April, 2017, Jericho)

H.E. Abeer Odeh, Minister of National Economy,
Mr. Nabil Sarraf, Chairman of the Board of Directors, JAIP Co.,
Mr. Hitham Kayali, Founder and CEO of Palolea,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to have an opportunity to be here in Jericho once again. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the kind invitation from the Palestinian people.

When I visited Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP) in 2014, I saw only a large plain over the horizon. Now, I see that the dream which I imagined then has been fully materialized. I am greatly impressed by the fact that 6 Palestinian companies have started their operation and production. I have confidence that JAIP is about to enter a phase of delivering the fruit of economic development to the Palestinian people. I admire the efforts by the people who have devoted themselves to the project.

JAIP was launched in 2007 as a flagship project of the “Peace and Prosperity” initiative proposed by Japan in 2006. Although it took 10 years to develop JAIP to this stage, I am optimistic for the future. JAIP is now a symbol of hope to the Palestinian people. In cooperation with Israel and Jordan, we four parties have deliberated extensively and worked with patience

throughout this process. It might be said that this long-term work is perfectly fit for the Japanese who are characterized by patience. There are various challenges to advance this project for further development. Nonetheless, the scope of cooperation among the parties has grown solidly and unwaveringly like piled annual rings of a tree. Japan always took steps alongside on a path of the development of JAIP and will keep watch over its continued success.

24 years has passed since the Oslo Accords. The international community including Japan is discouraged by the fact that peace has not been achieved yet. Nevertheless, we should stop being pessimistic over the situation of the Middle East peace process. We may need to change our minds to realize that the challenges can become opportunities for all of us.

Japan has extended nearly 1.8 billion US dollars to assist Palestine, focusing especially on state building. I would like to ask the Palestinian Authority for its hard work on state building at this moment for a coming future when a lasting solution will be achieved. There is no other way but to utilize the promising Palestinian youth for state building. JAIP is just a model case that represents hope. I firmly believe that JAIP will be managed by the Palestinians themselves in the future and that another JAIP will be built and developed by the Palestinians. Japan is pleased to assist in such endeavor.

Japan, as a country experienced reconciliation with the United States that Japan once fought over 70 years ago and the miraculous recovery from the war-torn situation, should stress that it is able to build a proud nation in the region as long as the Palestinians aspire to create the region of peace and

prosperity. JAIP must be a help for that. Japan will be with the Palestinians for the development of Palestine and the happiness of the Palestinian people.

Thank you for your attention.