

Joint Statement  
between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs  
of Japan and of the Republic of Tunisia

1 H.E. Dr. Rafik Abdessalem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, has paid an official visit to Japan from June 24 to 27, 2012 as a guest of H.E. Mr. Koichiro Gamba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. The two Ministers had a meeting on June 26 and expressed their willingness to further strengthen bilateral relations and to cherish the solidarity between the two countries which was reaffirmed notably in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Minister Gamba welcomed the progress of the democratization process in Tunisia, including the success of the National Constituent Assembly's election held in October 2011.

2 The two Ministers also shared the intention to establish a mutually beneficial relationship building upon the past excellent bilateral relations through high-level visits, meetings of the Japan-Tunisia Joint Committee, Japan's economic cooperation, triangular technical cooperation, academic cooperation and the defense exchanges.

I Bilateral relations

a. Political relations

3 Minister Abdessalem expressed his determination to actively advance political, economic and social reforms, including the formulation of a new constitution, in a transparent manner in order to build a free, fair and vibrant society, taking into account the rights of women and the minorities. Minister Abdessalem acknowledged that it will be essential to address challenges, including the unemployment of the youth and regional disparities, in order to realize such a society.

4 Minister Gamba welcomed the progress of the democratization process in

Tunisia and expressed his willingness to support Tunisian efforts to overcome its economic and social challenges.

5 The two Ministers shared the view that regular meetings of the Japan-Tunisia Joint Committee and exchanges of high-level visits have an important role to play in strengthening bilateral relations and establishing mutually beneficial relationship. They also expressed their intention to conduct an appropriate follow-up of the previous session of the Committee and to hold the next session during the first half of 2013.

b. Economic relations

6 Minister Abdesslem reaffirmed his intention to work further to ensure security, to develop infrastructure and to promote the transparency of administrative procedures as well as to make efforts for attracting foreign investments, for example, through organizing investment seminars. Minister Gemba expressed that Japan will support the Tunisian efforts.

7 The two Ministers reaffirmed their intention to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of solar energy based on the Joint Statement concerning Cooperation in the Development of Concentrating Solar Power Project signed on the occasion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Japan-Arab Economic Forum, held in Tunis in 2010.

8 Minister Abdesslem expressed Tunisia's intention to receive the provision of guarantee under the GATE facility of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in case the Tunisian government issues yen-denominated bonds (Samurai Bond) in the Tokyo market. The two Ministers confirmed that the consultation has been ongoing among those concerned.

c. Economic cooperation

9 Minister Gemba reiterated that Japan will support, building on the G8 Deauville Partnership, the efforts toward reforms and democratization in the Middle-East and North Africa including Tunisia. He expressed his intention to provide support to Tunisia with a focus on democratization, regional disparities,

industrial promotion and job creation for the youth, based on its longstanding past support.

10 Minister Gemba expressed Japan's intention to extend a yen loan for "Rural Cities Water Environment Improvement Project", which aims to contribute to addressing regional disparities and creating employment.

11 The two Ministers shared their intention to accelerate discussions in relation to an Agreement on Technical Cooperation which will help to facilitate the implementation of Japanese technical cooperation to Tunisia. Minister Gemba expressed that Japan will provide technical cooperation for the new nation-building and economic development in Tunisia.

12 Minister Abdesslem highly appreciated Japanese support in Borj Cedria Science and Technology Construction Project and expressed his determination to complete its construction of the part borne by the Japanese yen loan by the end of 2015. The two Ministers confirmed that they will cooperate to make this Center a hub for industrial promotion and academic exchanges as well as capacity building in the field of science and technology for Tunisia and the rest of African countries including the Maghreb countries.

13 Minister Gemba expressed Japan's decision to implement technical assistance for the "Project for Strengthening the Capacity for Tourism" in order to support Tunisian efforts for promoting tourism and attracting Japanese tourists.

14 Minister Gemba appreciated Tunisian efforts to advance triangular cooperation to sub-Saharan and Middle Eastern countries. He also reaffirmed his decision to implement three new triangular cooperation projects in the field of health, water and public management, namely "Reproductive Health and Prevention of HIV/AIDS", "Waste Water Management for Iraq" and "Strengthening Revenue Collection Capacity for African Countries". The two Ministers shared their intention to further promote the triangular cooperation with other Middle Eastern and African countries.

## II Regional and international affairs / Cooperation in the international arena

### a. Regional and international affairs

15 The two Ministers emphasized the importance of development in the Middle East and North Africa, and the need to work together to provide the elements of stability while upholding the principles of democracy, freedom and respect for human rights. To this end, they also reaffirmed the importance of the issue of Middle East Peace being resolved promptly through a two-state solution, based on the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, the Madrid Principles, the Roadmap, the agreements previously reached by the parties and the Arab Peace Initiative to achieve just, inclusive and permanent peace. In this regard, Minister Abdessalem highly appreciated and endorsed the political and economic efforts made by Japan on this issue. They also stressed the need for the immediate cessation of all violence in Syria and for the protection of the Syrian people and for the realization of their aspirations to achieve serious, profound and inclusive reforms as soon as possible. The two Ministers shared the importance of concerted regional and international efforts in order to prepare the ground for a Syrian-led, inclusive political transition. They shared the intention to intensify cooperation on such issues.

16 Minister Abdessalem expressed his willingness to play a leading role in further strengthening the efforts towards regional integration among the Maghreb countries in accordance with an approach based on the initiative of the Five Freedoms of the citizens of the region and through hosting the Arab Maghreb Union summit in Tunis in October 2012, which is expected to set a foundation for further regional integration, and to push forward economic integration with Arab countries through such frameworks as GAFTA and the Agadir Agreement. Minister Gemba appreciated the initiative taken by Tunisia for regional integration. As regional integration plays an important role in advancing the regional economic development, Minister Gemba also expressed that Japan will support, through such frameworks as the G8 Deauville Partnership, the efforts made by Arab and Maghreb countries, including Tunisia, toward regional integration.

17 The two Ministers shared their intention to work together towards the 3<sup>rd</sup> Japan-Arab Economic Forum, as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Japan Maghreb Ministerial Meeting, to be held in December 2012 in Tokyo. Minister Abdessalem confirmed a ministerial-level participation in both meetings and the importance of strengthening economic and social contents for both meetings to serve the common interests of both countries and to promote security, stability and peace in the region.

18 The two Ministers reaffirmed that they will work together for the success of TICAD V. Minister Abdessalem confirmed that Tunisia will be represented at the highest level possible at TICAD V.

19 The two Ministers shared the concern about the intensification of activities of “Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb” (AQIM) and reaffirmed that they will work together in advancing international cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism.

#### b. Cooperation in the international arena

20 The two Ministers confirmed the importance of achieving an early reform of the UN Security Council. Minister Abdessalem expressed Tunisia’s support for Japan’s permanent membership in a reformed Security Council.

21 The two Ministers expressed their support to the UN Security Council Presidential Statement on 16 April, 2012, which strongly condemned the launch of a missile by North Korea. They strongly urged North Korea to comply with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and its commitments under the 2005 Six-Party Talks Joint Statement, and not to conduct any further provocation. Minister Gemba stressed the importance of solving the abductions issue and Minister Abdessalem expressed Tunisia’s support to the Japan’s position. In this context, Minister Gemba expressed Japan’s gratitude for Tunisian support for the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea that was adopted on December 19, 2011. The two Ministers confirmed their continuous cooperation on the Resolution.

Signed at Tokyo, June 26, 2012

Koichiro Gamba  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

Rafik Abdessalem  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Tunisia