

United Nations Development Programme

Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي / برنامج مساعدة الشعب الفلسطيني



PRESS RELEASE

Japan steps up contribution to Agricultural sector in Gaza through UNDP

Jerusalem, March 02, 2007 - As part of its continuing effort to mitigate the effects of the ongoing economic crisis in the Gaza Strip, the Government of Japan announced that it would assist the Palestinian people through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP/PAPP) with a package of US\$3.6 million to fund the CAP 2007 Agricultural project.

This fund is part of the new Japanese emergency grant aid package of US\$7.2 million to improve the humanitarian situation in the oPt, and implemented through UNDP, UNRWA, and UNFPA.

The principle aim of the CAP 2007 Agricultural project is to generate the maximum number of jobs through the rehabilitation of destroyed agricultural facilities and infrastructure in the Gaza Strip, and revitalize the main pillars of the agricultural sector. The programme implemented by UNDP/PAPP will include the construction and rehabilitation of 62 ground water wells, 234 greenhouses and will generate over 70,000 workdays.

The agricultural sector in the Gaza Strip is an important source of food security and caters to over 15% of Gaza's labor force. The total losses to the agricultural sector in the Gaza strip since 2001 are estimated at US\$400 million. This has caused deterioration in the economic situation and contributed to the increasing poverty and unemployment rates in the area.

Noting the long-standing relationship between UNDP/PAPP and the Japanese Government, the Special Representative of UNDP/PAPP, Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen stated: "In times of emergency and peace, the Government of Japan has shown an unwavering commitment to the development of the Palestinian people. UNDP very much values this close partnership with Japan." "This grant seeks to create job opportunities in the Gaza strip, where unemployment rates are increasing drastically." He added.

Since 1993 Japan's financial assistance to the Palestinian People, through UNDP/PAPP, has exceeded \$US270 million. Japan's continuous support to the development process in the oPt targeted a number of sectors including health, water and environment, infrastructure and education.

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