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**Embassy of Japan
Juba, South Sudan**

**United Nations Mine Action Service
Juba, South Sudan**

Japan donates US \$2.3 million to Mine Action in South Sudan

Juba, 18 March 2016 – The People of Japan contributed USD 2.3 million to a project deploying Quick Response Teams in South Sudan, with the specific task of conducting humanitarian mine action activities. Over the past four years, Japan’s contribution to mine action operations in South Sudan amounted to USD 12.5 million, enabling the clearance of 3,972,675 sqm of land, including boreholes and food drop sites, and allowing for the delivery of risk education to 54,358 civilians, most of them children.

After decades of civil war and a six-year Comprehensive Peace Agreement period, South Sudan became the world’s newest country on 9 July 2011. Following two years of independence and relative peace, heavy fighting erupted in the capital Juba on 15 December 2013, marking the beginning of a new multi-dimensional conflict across the country. Nearly eight million people in South Sudan now live in counties where their very safety is threatened by the presence of landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). Apart from the physical threat they pose, explosive hazards preclude the delivery of vital humanitarian aid, prevent socio-economic development and inhibit freedom of movement.

Continued funding from the People of Japan will support Quick Response Teams in conducting surveys and clearance of explosive hazards and providing risk education to enable people to stay safe and report explosive risks in their vicinity. In South Sudan, where 110,180,994 sqm of land is known to be contaminated and hundreds of new hazards discovered every month, mine action is a critical enabler of humanitarian aid and a key driver of socio-economic development. The teams will work with critical partners, including the Japanese Engineering Contingent, who require survey and clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance prior to undertaking their important construction and rehabilitation work.

“Last year, I visited a village to see the clearance operation funded by the Government of Japan, and I was very impressed with the dedication of the South Sudanese people working with UNMAS there under the scorching sun every day for the benefit of local community”, Mr. Kiya Masahiko, the Ambassador of Japan to South Sudan, said. “Japan is committed to supporting Mine Action activities which are essential for peacebuilding and development in post-conflict countries. We hope that the support from the Japanese people will contribute to creating a safer environment, free from explosive threats for the people in South Sudan.”

For his part, Mr. Tim Lardner, UNMAS South Sudan Programme Manager, stressed the importance of Japan’s support. “We appreciate the continuous and generous support from the people of Japan to our activities in South Sudan. Japan is an important partner to UNMAS programmes in many countries, not just South Sudan”, he stated. Last year for example, the people of Japan’s USD 15,088,127 donations to UNMAS benefited five of its mine action programmes, namely those in Afghanistan, DRC, Palestine, Somalia, as well as South Sudan.

“The critical financial support from the people of Japan will enable us to protect civilians and facilitate the conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance throughout the country”, Mr. Tim Lardner continued. “Japan recently announced their donation of USD 30.9 million through international organizations in South

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From
the People of Japan

Sudan, including UNMAS, and we admire their commitment to supporting South Sudan. Japan and UNMAS will continue working to deliver an explosive-free safe environment to the people in South Sudan.”



UNMAS South Sudan Chief of Operations, Mr. Robert Thompson (left), the Director of the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), Mr. Jurkuch Barach (second left), the Ambassador of Japan to South Sudan, Mr. Masahiko Kiya (centre), Chief of Operations of NMAA, Mr. Mike Rasheed, UNMAS Programme Officer, Ms. Kelly McAulay (right), in front of the NMAA Headquarters in Juba, South Sudan. Photo: Embassy of Japan in South Sudan

UNMAS currently supports mine action programmes in Abyei (Sudan/South Sudan), Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur (Sudan), Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, State of Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and the territory of Western Sahara (MINURSO). Visit UNMAS.org for more information.

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