

From  
the People of Japan



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

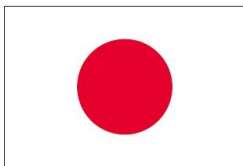
### JAPAN AMBASSADOR AND UN WOMEN REPRESENTATIVE HANDOVER WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CENTRE TO THE MINGKAMAN WOMEN AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

**Mingkaman, Awerial County, September 14th, 2017**, UN Women South Sudan Country Representative Ms. Funmi Balogun led a high-level delegation to Eastern Lakes State (former Lakes State) for the handover of a UN Women Empowerment Center in Mingkaman, Awerial County, Eastern Lakes State. The delegation comprised of The Japan Ambassador to South Sudan H.E. Kiya Masahiko, the Governor of Eastern Lakes State, Hon. Bor Wutchok Bor Acuil, the Under Secretary in the Ministry of Gender, Child



L-R: Hon Esther Ikeere, Ms. Lily Akol Akol, Ms. Atong Amos Agook, H.E Kiya Masahiko, Hon. Bor Wutchok Bor Acuil, Ms. Funmi Balogun, and Hon. Kuoi Ayang

and Social Welfare Hon. Esther Ekere Eluzai, Hon. Marian Paul, Minister of Health, Eastern Lakes State, Hon Deng Tong, Representative from the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Ms. Lily Akol Akol, former Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Board Member, South Sudan Women Empowerment Network, Ms Atong Amons Agook, Executive Director, Aruda (Aliab Rural Development Agency) and the UN Women Deputy Country Representative Mr. Lansana Wonneh. The delegation was received by the County Commissioner Hon. Kuoi Ayang, heads of government institutions and different women groups. Traditional dances and exhibition of agriculture and skills training products were some of the activities marking the occasion.



**From  
the People of Japan**



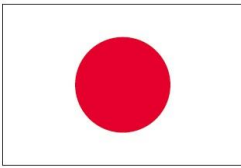
The establishment of Women Development Centers is one of the strategies put in place by UN Women, in partnership with states' and county governments, to provide safe spaces for women in conflict situations to meet, discuss conflict mitigation issues in their communities, act as referral pathways for sexual and gender based violence, and provide an opportunity for women to earn additional income for their Cooperative Groups. This is part of a bigger strategy of support for women's resilience in humanitarian action – advocacy for land for women to increase their productivity, provision of skills, technology and facilitating women's establishment of savings and loans cooperatives, and ensuring women can speak on matters that affect them in their communities.

In welcoming guests to the occasion, the Honorable County Commissioner Hon. Kuoi Ayang, expressed his gratitude for the support from all the stakeholders for making the occasion a success. In her welcome remarks, Ms. Funmi Balogun in particular thanked H.E. Ambassador Kiya Masahiko, the Ambassador of Japan to South Sudan, the government and people of Japan for the support to the vision of UN Women and women in South Sudan, and emphasized how this support has enabled opportunities to bring women together to build their resilience and participation in development activities in conflict and post conflict South Sudan. Ms. Funmi Balogun highlighted the fact that resources devoted for women to enhance their productivity, even in conflict, can make a difference by contributing to sustainable peace and development, and assistance should not just be in viewing women as victims.

Ms. Rhoda Abuk, the chairperson of the women committee appreciated the efforts of all the partners that worked hard to support and build the women's centre. She added that, "the centre has brought peaceful co-existence between the displaced and host communities population in Mingkaman". Ms. Roda made it clear that "The women are not rich or educated but they are leading in Agriculture, health care at the family and community levels and such challenges as illiteracy cannot deter women from achieving their personal, family and community development dreams".

Hon. Esther Ikere, representing the Honorable Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Honorable Awut Deng, stressed the importance of the Women Empowerment Center as an asset that will benefit the population of Awerial County. She appreciated the effective role played by the women led by Mama Roda who is an icon of women leadership in the County. Hon. Ikere also recognized the role of the governor and the county authorities in advancing women empowerment and termed it as paramount. "A governor who puts women at the heart of his development programme will work closely and be supported by the Ministry of Gender" Concluded the under Secretary.

**The Japan Ambassador** to South Sudan H.E. Kiya Masahiko acknowledged the complex context and the huge developmental needs of South Sudan, and commended the relationship of Japan with UN agencies, and UN Women in particular, to support women's resilience and empowering women, not only to deal with the challenges of conflict, but also improving their ability to bounce back quickly, post conflict. He stated that, "this is the fourth time I am visiting Awerial County (Mingkaman) at different times for projects funded by the Government of Japan and implemented by various UN agencies" He stressed that



**From  
the People of Japan**



he was encouraged by the projects and pledged to do his best to deepen cooperation between the two countries and extend further support for sustainable development in South Sudan.

The Governor of Eastern Lakes State Hon. Bor Wutchop Bor Acuil, appreciated UN Women for initiating the project, the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and other implementing partners for the effective coordination and support leading to a successful implementation of the project and above all the Japan Government for the funding. H.E the Governor recalled “that Japan has been supporting Awerial County in various projects for advancing development in general and women’s empowerment and gender equality”.

The governor recognized and appreciated the support of the Japanese Ambassador, the government of Japan and the people of Japan in promoting sustainable development projects in South Sudan in general and Awerial County. He appealed to the general-public to make effective and efficient use of the facility for the benefit of all and the generations to come. “Given the huge needs, I would like to request for more collaboration and support from the Government of Japan for development initiatives in the country” the Governor concluded.

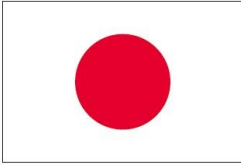
A symbolic ceremony of handover was undertaken, where UN Women presented the keys of the Women Empowerment Centre to the Ambassador of Japan to South Sudan, who in turn presented to the Governor of Eastern Lakes State, who then presented to the County Commissioner, who finally presented to the Chairperson of the Women Committee, Ms. Rhoda Abuk, with an admonition to ensure the Centre was well managed and serve as a centre for promoting peace and co-existence between host communities and IDPs. The Ambassador, the Governor and members of the delegation then went around the centre, met all the women and viewed the different products produced by the women.

For further information, please contact

Takanobu Nakahara, First Secretary, Embassy of Japan in South Sudan: [Takanobu.nakahara@mofa.go.jp](mailto:Takanobu.nakahara@mofa.go.jp)

Rogers Musyoki, UN Women, ICT/Communications Officer, UN Women South Sudan:

[Rogers.musyoki@unwomen.org](mailto:Rogers.musyoki@unwomen.org),



**From  
the People of Japan**



Japan Ambassador H.E Kiya Masahiko handing over the Women's center to Eastern Lakes State Governer Hon. Bor Wutchok Bor Acuil