



PRESS RELEASE

**United Nations Mine Action Service
Juba, South Sudan
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Japan Contributes USD 5 million to Mine Action in South Sudan

The Government of Japan has announced a contribution of USD 5 million for the “Creation of Emergency Rapid Response Multi-Tasking Teams in South Sudan,” an UNMAS project that will set up quick-reaction teams to clear mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the war-torn country.

Landmines and other munitions were an integral part of the Sudanese Civil War, with all parties to the conflict using significant quantities of mines and other types of munitions to defend their positions and to disrupt the movement and operations of their enemies. As a result, more than 4,700 people have been killed or injured in South Sudan, with landmines, cluster munitions and other ERW continuing to hamper socio-economic development in a nation that is one of the least developed in the world.

The contribution from the Government of Japan will enable UNMAS South Sudan to establish up to six Multi-Tasking Teams in the country. The teams will provide emergency rapid response capacity to protect communities, refugees and internally displaced people against the threat of ERW and landmines and enable humanitarian access to affected areas. The teams will also conduct survey and clearance of areas, which will free up swaths of land for productive use and enable the implementation of development projects and infrastructure reconstruction, complementing the work of the Japanese Engineering Contingent.

In addition, the teams will conduct needs surveys, assist with impact monitoring and provide advice on ammunition inventories and storage methodologies across South Sudan. It is expected that, through the Japanese funded project, at least 360 suspected dangerous areas will be cleared or verified to be free of hazards and released to the population for productive use. The project will assist over 4.9 million South Sudanese people.

The Special Representative and Head of the Liaison Office of the Government of Japan in Juba, Mr Takeshi Akamatsu, stated: “Japan is committed to supporting the consolidation of peace in South Sudan, which is of great importance to the wider development of the region. This commitment is the backbone of our government policy toward this country. The fact that the amount of Japan’s supplementary budget in the Japanese Fiscal Year 2012 to the UN and other international organizations [in South Sudan] is 53.3 USD million further confirms our strong commitment. Japan is very concerned about the serious threat posed by landmines and ERW in the country and we hope that our support will contribute to establishing a safe and secure living environment for the people in South Sudan, by opening roads and freeing land, enabling farmers to cultivate their land and allowing their children to safely go to school without the fear of stepping on a landmine.”

Mr Lance Malin, the UNMAS South Sudan Programme Manager, said: “We are extremely grateful to the Government of Japan for their generous contribution to the mine clearance efforts in South Sudan. This funding will be used to clear mines and other ERW in critical areas. These activities will not only directly save lives; they will also clear land for agriculture, infrastructure and other development. This contribution will also improve food security and assist our humanitarian partners in safely delivering critical aid such as food, healthcare and education to those most in need. These activities would not be possible without the kind contribution from the people of Japan.”

For further information:

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The Special Representative and Head of the Liaison Office of the Government of Japan in Juba, Mr Takeshi Akamatsu (Left) and Mr Lance Malin, the UNMAS South Sudan Programme Manager (Right), in front of the Liaison Office of the Government of Japan in Juba.

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