

## The first meeting of the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD)

Tokyo, February 13-14, 2013

### Joint Statement

#### Look East, developing a new partnership

The first meeting of "Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD)" was held in Tokyo on February 13-14, 2013. The participants including ministers of East Asian countries as well as international organizations have discussed support for the state-building efforts of Palestine.

In the meeting, the delegation of the State of Palestine explained its current political and economic situation as well as its needs for assistance. The representatives of East Asian countries briefed their experience of economic development and their foreign assistance policy toward Palestinians, while those of international organizations explained their analyses on the Palestinian economy as well as possibilities of their cooperation with East Asian countries in assisting Palestinians including Palestinian refugees.

As a result of the meeting, the participants shared the following points:

- 1 The participants affirm that the stability of the Middle East and North African region is critically important for international peace and stability, including in the Asian region, and that the resolution of the Arab-Israel conflict, in particular, is of paramount importance for regional stability.
- 2 The participants emphasize the necessity for the international community, including Asian countries, to build up the support for Palestinian state-building efforts, as a major step to create a favorable environment for achieving peace through the realization of the "two-state solution" based on the relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. The participants also strongly call for the early resumption of direct negotiations, and for refraining from any acts which might negatively affect or hinder the direct negotiations.
- 3 The participants express concern on the current serious economic and financial situation of Palestine, and recognize that this situation forms an obstacle to the state-building efforts of Palestine as well as peace through the "two-state solution".
- 4 The participants express their grave concern over the humanitarian situation in Palestine, and they will explore the possibility of further cooperation for its improvement. The participants also underscore the importance of implementation of the Palestinian reconciliation.
- 5 The participants recognize the fact that, bearing in mind East Asian countries' political and economic standing and potential, these countries can further contribute to the international endeavors toward Middle East peace. Therefore, the participants stress that East Asian countries can strengthen their constructive role, and consider having regular consultations among them including their aid agencies to mobilize more effective assistance to Palestinians including Palestinian refugees.
- 6 The participants express their intention to share, with Palestine and even Arab countries in the near future, the knowledge and experience of East Asian countries in economic development and regional integration, to help guide the state-building effort of Palestine. The participants view the importance of developing a harmonious and effective delivery mechanism to ensure sustainability of the CEAPAD partnership, and encourage putting forward specific arrangements to that effect in full consultation with the Palestinian government.
- 7 The participants underline the importance of human resource development for the inclusive and sustainable economic growth of Palestine. Furthermore, the participants highly appreciate the existing trilateral cooperation extended by Japan and Indonesia, as well as by Japan and Malaysia, for Palestine, in various fields, particularly in the areas of agriculture, SMEs, finance, etc., and encourage future cooperation of this kind by Asian countries to implement further multi-faceted human resource development in Palestine.
- 8 The participants share the view that CEAPAD can provide added value to the existing initiatives and processes in the development of Palestine. In this connection, participants highlighted some measures that can be carried out, namely: to ensure Palestinian national ownership of all capacity building programs undertaken, to identify capacities and experiences that East Asian countries can feasibly offer, to ensure coordination between the Palestinian government and international actors in assisting Palestinian development, and to ensure sustainability of the impacts of the programs.
- 9 The participants put emphasis on the role of the private sector in the Palestinian economic development, and will consider holding an international conference attended by business leaders from East Asian countries, Palestine and Arab countries under the framework of the CEAPAD in the near future, with a view to increasing investment and trade, and developing small and medium enterprises.
- 10 Participants express their intention to consider possible cooperation with Japan in implementing its initiative of "the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity", a project aiming at promoting industrial development in Jericho and the Jordan Valley area, so as to support Palestine's sustainable development in the private sector.
- 11 The participants confirm that the CEAPAD is open for the participation of other Asian countries committed to support Palestine, and encourage other Asian countries including all ASEAN member states to consider participating in the CEAPAD.
- 12 The participants look at the possibility of coordination with other existing frameworks such as AHLC (Ad Hoc Liaison Committee) etc., in order to raise global awareness of the importance of Palestine's state-building and to broaden the basis of international efforts for assisting Palestinians.
- 13 The participants highly appreciate the CEAPAD as an important contribution of East Asian countries to realize Middle East peace, and express gratitude to Japan for taking the initiative to organize this meeting. The participants welcome Indonesia's offer to host the second meeting of the CEAPAD in 2014.

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[http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle\\_e/palestine/ceapad\\_20130214.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/palestine/ceapad_20130214.html)