

Japan Contributes Assistance of USD 3 Million to the AU



29 January, 2015: His Excellency Mr. Takashi Uto, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Head of the Japanese Delegation to the 24th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 and 31 January, 2015, participated in a United Nations-African Union Commission Stakeholders Working Session on Ebola on 29 January at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. After the Session, he was interviewed by the Media at the AU Headquarters, and in the presence of representatives from west African countries, the UN and the AUC, he announced that the Government of Japan will provide assistance amounting to USD 3 million to the AU for the activities of ASEOWA (African Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa), subject to approval by the Diet. The affected countries and the AUC renewed their appreciation for Japan's cooperation calling Japan a true friend of West Africa.

H.E. Mr. Uto pledged to continue working to support the countries most affected by Ebola and said that it is important to work not only in the short term to combat this disease, but also in the medium to long term to ensure that any future cases of Ebola do not turn into widespread outbreaks. Furthermore, he expressed Japan's intention to assist with efforts to rebuild those countries' economies and health care systems. H.E. Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, Commissioner for Social Affairs of the AUC, declared that

although the number of new cases is decreasing, hard work remains to be done in order to put an end to this outbreak. Foreign Minister Kamara from Sierra Leone added that the most difficult task is to get the number of cases down to zero. Foreign Minister Ngafuan from Liberia expressed his gratitude for Japan's genuine Assistance in various fields to combat Ebola.

Minister Uto also explained that, in cooperation with the AUC, there would be a booth set up in the AUC's New Conference Centre during the AU Summit, for the purpose of presenting Japan's activities in fighting the Ebola Virus Disease, which the UN special Envoy on Ebola, Dr. David Naborro praised as exactly what is needed at his time.

The Japanese Minister also stated that Japan and the AU have to prepare for the sixth round of TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development), which will be held in Africa for the first time. Though there is already a great deal of interest in TICAD, he said that he would make the utmost effort to cooperate with the African Union in order to make the Conference a remarkable success.

Note: Japan's response to the Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries has been to provide assistance of USD 100 Million. The Government of Japan pledged additional assistance amounting to up to USD 100 million in November, 2014 and will specify the contents of that assistance. Approximately USD 55 million will be provided to relevant UN organizations. Also, about USD 3 million will be provided to the AU for their ASEOWA program. The Government of Japan continues to provide seamless support to combat Ebola.