

[Check Against Delivery]

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Ryoichi Horie,
Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of the Sudan,
on the Occasion of the Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for

“The Project for Improvement of Al-Mutomar Village Primary School in Ed-Damar Locality, River Nile State”,

“The Project for Construction of Al-Mansoura Village Primary School in Um Dam Locality, North Kordofan State”

“The Project for Construction of Umrwaba Primary Health Care Unit in Umrwaba Locality, North Kordofan State”

And

“The Project for Reconstruction of Hamadab Village Primary School in Hasaheisa Locality, Al-Jazeera State”

At 13:00 on 28th of February 2013, Khartoum, Sudan

H.E. Dr. Suliman Abd Elrahman Suliman, Commissioner General of Ministry of Interior,
Humanitarian Aid Commission,

H.E. Mr. Hamd Abraida, Minister of Education in North Kordofan State,

H.E. Dr. Ismaiel Bshara, Minister of Health in North Kordofan State,

Director of Primary Education in Ministry of Education in Al-Jazeera State,

Representatives from the concerned NGOs,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon and Assalaam Alaikum,

I would like to welcome you all to my residence this afternoon and express my sincere appreciation to you, for attending the Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for four new projects, which formalizes Japan's assistance of approximately 700,000 U.S. Dollars for education and health sectors in Sudan through the scheme of "Grant Assistance for Grassroots and Human Security Projects". I would also like to extend my appreciation for the extraordinary works of Mr. Abdelgadir Awadelkareem, Mr. Sirajaldin Abdelbari, Mr. Osman Abdalla, Mr. Osama Nowrani, and their colleagues who have been making tireless efforts in order to bring positive changes to the lives of the Sudanese people in various rural communities.

As reflected in the projects we are about to inaugurate, the Embassy of Japan places great importance in supporting the primary education in Sudan. Primary education supports children's personal development at their critical time in their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth, through transmitting qualities and values such as critical thinking, healthy living, resilience, and self-confidence. Moreover, I believe that the education sector for any nation is critical in generating human resources required for development. Education equips people with knowledge and skills, which allow them to grow into resourceful and socially active adults. It is also an invaluable means to address the issues such as structural inequalities and disadvantages. However, even the most educated and skilled person cannot make their contribution to the society if his or her health is at risk. Health and education are both fundamental to the development of a country as a whole, and work complementary to produce and sustain the people who make the development possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a friend and an equal partner of Sudan, Japan made a firm commitment to support development of this country, and will continue its efforts to assist the people who devote themselves to tackling various challenges Sudan faces. This is because we believe that the peace, stability, and development of Sudan will contribute to the achievement of peace and stability in Africa and the world. Our commitment to Sudan's development is highlighted by a number of development projects through both bilateral and multilateral channels including the four projects we inaugurate today.

These four projects will be funded through the scheme of "Grant Assistance for Grassroots and Human Security Projects", also known as "GGP". Every year, the Embassy of Japan receives more than 100 applications to this GGP for projects including construction of schools and health centers to this GGP from local and international NGOs, as well as other civil society organizations in Sudan.

Japan's assistance to Sudan is not a charity. We regard Japan's assistance to Sudan as our part of contribution for the common goal of Japan and Sudan, that is, peace, stability, and development of Sudan and Africa. This is why the Japanese taxpayers support the assistance to Sudan. Therefore, the NGOs and civil society organizations that request the Japanese Government's assistance must ensure their strong commitments to the country's development and responsibility for the successful execution of projects. This is the underlying basis us to approve the proposed projects. This year, after long and careful screening of your organization's capacity and past performance, as well as the proposed projects' feasibility and sustainability, we are finally able to sign the Grant Contracts.

This signing ceremony is just the beginning. I strongly expect that the four present NGOs and the recipient communities will cooperate closely to complete the schools and health facilities successfully and to maintain them in order to avail the best of this grant for the communities for the decades to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since I assumed my post as the Japanese Ambassador to Sudan last May, I have visited eleven different states for the purpose of understanding Sudan and its people. During my visits, I was embraced with the warm hospitality of the Sudanese people, and was enlightened by the unique, diverse culture and tradition in each and every state, locality, and village I visited. What touched me the most was the dedicated and hard-working people I met, who strove to overcome the various development challenges for their children, families, and their neighbors. They have shown me the way to move forward with this country politically, economically and socially, through their own hard work and perseverance. As the Ambassador of Japan to Sudan, I promise you all that we continue to provide our full support for your effort for the development of Sudan, and to strengthen our friendship with the people and Government of Sudan.

Finally, with these few words, I wish to congratulate your organizations for being the successful recipients this year, and I remain hopeful that these four projects will be completed successfully and become good models of cooperation between the people and governments of Japan and Sudan.

Thank you very much.

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