



## Press Release

### **Government of Japan Steadfast in Support of United Nations Mine Action Work**

#### **Multi-million dollar contribution will aid mine action in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan**

*NEW YORK, New York, 18 March 2013* — Japan donated 18 million US dollars to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, continuing its strong commitment to UN Mine Action work. The Government of Japan is committed to improving the lives of communities in today's most effected countries.

The contribution from Japan will be used in five UNMAS programmes Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan.

“The support from Japan will save lives, increase stability and most importantly bring hope to populations that have lived with fear for too many years,” stated Paul Heslop, the Chief of UNMAS Operations.

The contribution will support the work of some 13,000 deminers working in Afghanistan. It will help the United Nations survey and secure huge swaths of territory in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to provide risk education to people exposed to explosive hazards. In Libya and Somalia, it will provide support for operations and training for explosive ordnance disposal and clearance. In South Sudan it will allow on-going work, surveying and securing at risk areas, to continue and will expedite clearance of the most contaminated areas.

“The 2011 conflict in Libya exacerbated the explosive remnants of war threat to local communities. Thanks to the generous support of the Government of Japan, the UN Mine Action Service will be able to continue facilitating clearance operations for a safer Libya,” explained Diek Engelbrecht, the Head of the UNMAS Programme in Libya.

Over the last five years Japan has been the largest contributor to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Mine Action.

UNMAS supports programmes in Afghanistan, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Western Sahara (MINURSO).