Statement at the Joint Press Conference by Government of Uganda, Embassy of Japan and United Nations

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Hon. Hillary Onek, Minister of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees;
Your Excellency, Mr. Kazuaki Kameda, Ambassador of Japan to the
Republic of Uganda;
Representatives of UNHCR, WFP and FAO.
Members of the Press

I am delighted to be here today with Ambassador Kameda and
Honourable Onek to thank the Government and people of Japan for
their generous support to Uganda.

Over the past sixty years, Japan has been a leading actor in
international development co-operation through its advocacy, its
strong commitment to global partnerships, and as one of the world’s
major providers of Official Development Assistance.

Japan’s sustain investment in Uganda’s future generations speaks to
its global leadership on sustainable development and its long-
standing partnership with Uganda, and indeed the Continent.
I would like to thank Government of Japan for the funding of $6.3 million provided for refugees and host communities in Uganda last year.

With the US$ 2,584,000 received from Japan last year UNHCR provided services in public health; water, sanitation and hygiene; and livelihoods, to refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, in Nakivale, Adjumani, Arua and Oruchinga districts. These projects benefited at least 279,797 refugees and 83,939 members of the host communities.

With the US$2,932,000 received from Japan last year WFP assisted refugees in Uganda with food and livelihood support. WFP provided life-saving food assistance to approximately 509,000 refugees in the settlements of West Nile to guarantee minimum food consumption and prevented deterioration of their nutrition status. In addition, WFP provided tailored livelihood support to some 12,000 households in refugee hosting districts, targeting both refugees and host communities. This project reduced post-harvest losses and improved food security by providing farmers with food storage equipment and related training.
With the US$ 741,000 received from Japan last year UNDP created emergency employment for refugees and host communities through cash for work activities, which included road rehabilitation and maintenance (29 km), tree planting, digging of 45 rubbish pits and garbage clearance; it provided business skills training and start up grants for micro-enterprise development; and refurbished vocational training institutes. The project benefited over 5,000 refugees and Ugandan youth and women in Yumbe District. It built on UNDP’s preceding partnership with the Government of Japan in 2016 that supported border stabilization, livelihoods and skills development for refugees and host communities in West Nile.

With the assistance provided this year, Japan has again shown unique commitment to the humanitarian and development nexus approach in Uganda by being the first country to fund two UN humanitarian agencies, UNHCR and WFP; and two UN development agencies, UNDP and FAO.

Through this contribution Japan is demonstrating its support to greater coherence between humanitarian and development interventions through the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) framework, the main vehicle in realising the Government’s Settlement Transformation Agenda for refugee hosting districts. ReHOPE contributes to the fulfilment of the SDGs as
well as to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) where Uganda has been chosen as one of the countries to inform the blueprint of the Global compact on refugees.

The UN System in Uganda is in discussion with other development partners, notably China, India, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, who have expressed interest in investing in the humanitarian-development nexus approach to support refugees and host communities. We are optimistic that they will join Japan in supporting Uganda and we call on other countries to support. We are also working with the Private Sector and business leaders to invest in the refugee hosting districts- Adjumani, Lamwo, Koboko, Yumbe, Arua, Moyo, Hoima, Kiryandongo, Isingiro, Kamwenge, Kyegegwa and Kampala.

The ongoing influx of refugees is undoubtedly placing an enormous strain on host communities. Uganda’s hospitality, its willingness to give refuge to over 1,400,000 - more than any other country - deserves more than platitudes. On behalf of the UN, I would also like to thank the people of Uganda for your solidarity with your African brothers and sisters, particularly in the refugee hosting districts for their hospitality towards the refugees. I would like to thank MTN for the UGX 1 Billion contribution they made towards the comprehensive response during the Uganda Solidarity Summit last
year and Star Times Uganda for contributing in kind. I call on the private sector to invest in the refugee hosting districts in the areas such as agriculture, tourism and mineral development.

Let me share with you how today’s contribution by Japan will be used by UN agencies.

For UNHCR, Japan’s support of $ 3,000,000 to provide services in public health; protection from crime (including support to community policing in the settlements); child protection (including case management of children at risk, and appropriate care arrangements for separated children/unaccompanied minors); prevention and response to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV); improvement of refugee reception conditions; and self-reliance and livelihood opportunities. These projects are expected to directly and indirectly benefit up to 2,115,146 people both from the refugee and host communities in the South West and West Nile regions of Uganda.

For UNDP Japan’s support of $ 1,500,000 to create emergency employment for refugees and hosting communities, through cash for work interventions; provide business skills training and start up grants for microenterprise development; and support access to markets for small enterprises, focusing on women and youth. To
support an enabling environment, the project will also contribute to
capacity building efforts of district local governments through
strengthening the district disaster management committees and
building an evidence base for integrated planning and budgeting. The
project is expected to benefit over 6,000 refugees and host
communities, besides local government structures, in Arua, Yumbe
and Moyo districts. Building on UNDP’s preceding partnership with
the Government of Japan in 2016 and 2017, it aims at further
strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus in responding to
the refugee crisis in West Nile

For WFP Japan’s support of US$1,000,000 to assist refugees in
Uganda with food and livelihood support. WFP will provide life-
saving food assistance to more than 1 million refugees in the
settlements of Uganda to guarantee minimum food consumption
and prevent deterioration of their nutrition status. While
unconditional food assistance and enhanced nutritional support will
remain necessary in the short and medium term, WFP also
participates in joint activities with UNHCR and OPM to increase
refugee self-reliance through support to agricultural livelihoods, to
provide more sustainable solutions. WFP will use some of this
contribution to provide tailored livelihood support to some 25,000
households in select refugee hosting districts, targeting both
refugees and host communities. This project aims to reduce post-
harvest losses and improve food security by providing farmers with food storage equipment and related training. Government of Japan’s support will enable WFP to continue this activity for a more holistic approach to refugee livelihoods to improve refugee food security and access to basic needs.

For FAO, Japan’s support of $ 500,000 to support livelihood systems for South Sudanese refugees in Yumbe and Moyo districts. FAO will contribute to increasing household income, creating more on-farm employment opportunities and introducing climate-smart agricultural practices in host communities and refugee settlements. The project is expected to directly benefit 290 host community households and 590 refugee households in these districts. Host communities will benefit from the introduction of fast-maturing, high value crops (such as fortified beans, sweet potatoes and maize), improved irrigation systems and diversified farming practices for effective use of land. FAO will support South Sudanese refugees to establish small vegetable gardens and poultry units to increase income and nutritional outcomes from the consumption of animal protein and fresh vegetables. These interventions aim to enhance the resilience of host community and refugees as well as improve household food security and nutrition.
Allow me to conclude by thanking the government and people of Japan for their strong and enduring partnership with the United Nations, as we jointly support Uganda’s commitment to leaving no one behind.

Thank you.