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PRESS RELEASE

UN-Habitat Welcomes Generous Contribution from the Government of Japan to Continue Provision of Shelter and Urban Recovery to Support Vulnerable IDPs and Returnees



Erbil, 7 May 2017: The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) welcomes a contribution of USD 9.7 million from the Government of Japan to address the shelter needs for those affected by the ongoing crisis in Iraq. The contribution allows UN-Habitat to continue the rehabilitation of damaged houses in areas liberated from the 'Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL),' and to establish temporary shelters for vulnerable displaced persons whose houses are being reconstructed.

By the end of April 2017, 3 million people were still displaced in Iraq, approximately 1.7 million people have already returned to liberated areas. However, in many of these areas, a significant part of the building stock is damaged or destroyed. For that reason, the provision of shelter for the displaced and rehabilitation of housing continues to be a pressing need.

To date, the Government of Japan has provided generous contributions to UN-Habitat, which allowed the organisation to realise five durable shelter sites for internally displaced persons across the country. In total, these shelter sites can accommodate more than 8,000 displaced persons. In addition, two new shelter sites that can accommodate 5,000 displaced persons are currently under construction.

In addition to shelter construction, the contributions made an extensive housing rehabilitation programme possible that benefited over 5,170 returnees. Mustafa, a 28-year old breadwinner from Ramadi, a city in Anbar Governorate, is one of the beneficiaries of this programme. Having lost his father to the war, he and his family

were forced to flee the city in 2015. When Ramadi was liberated later that year, Mustafa and his family returned to find their house burned and uninhabitable. They had no choice but to return to the IDP camp.

It was only in 2017 that Mustafa and his family was able to return to Ramadi, after UN-Habitat rehabilitated their house under the project titled “*Promoting Urban Recovery in Newly Liberated Areas in Iraq*”, funded by the Government of Japan. Mustafa also participated in a technical training programme to develop skills to repair and maintain the house and its surrounding infrastructure. Now, Mustafa and his family are happy to be home in Ramadi and rebuild their lives.

H.E. Mr. Fumio Iwai, Ambassador of Japan to Iraq, stated: “Japan has been in close coordination with UN-Habitat supporting both IDPs and returnees. I expect that our new contribution will help Iraqi people to reconstruct and rehabilitate their livelihood and to relieve their sufferings. We spare no effort to support Iraqi people for their better future.”

Dr. Erfan Ali, Head of UN-Habitat Iraq, expressed sincere appreciation for the continued support from the Government and people of Japan, and stressed that UN-Habitat remains committed to work directly with crisis-affected communities.

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