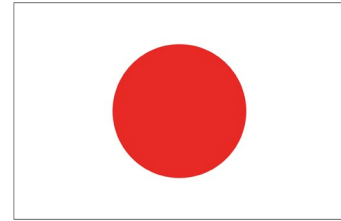




PRESS RELEASE



من الشعب الياباني
From the People of Japan

UN-Habitat equips Beirut Fire Brigade operations room through funding from the Government of Japan

Beirut, 24 February 2022. Today, UN-Habitat and the Japanese Ambassador to Lebanon, H.E. Takeshi Okubo, handed over supplies and equipment to the Beirut Fire Brigade centre to enhance their crisis response and communications means. This intervention is part of UN-Habitat's ongoing recovery efforts, following the Beirut Port explosion, to support and improve the operations and functions of the Fire Brigade – a critical municipal infrastructure component – affiliated to the Municipality of Beirut (MoB) which was heavily affected by the Beirut Port explosion.

“We highly value the support of the Japanese Embassy and UN-Habitat in addressing some of the devastating effects of the Beirut Port explosion. Today we are celebrating together the restoration of hope to the Beirut Fire Brigade Centre. With this intervention, not only will rescue works of our fire fighters be facilitated, but thousands of residents in the city will be better protected from fires and other emergencies.” said Marwan Abboud, Governor of Beirut.

“We will never forget the courage and fortitude those firefighters demonstrated in defiance of risking their lives for the sake of public security. For this, they will be remembered forever as sacred saviors of the country facing the Beirut harbor explosion. I strongly hope that the project will support the center's recovery from the devastating incident and will help it maintain high level of performance.” said H.E. Takeshi Okubo, Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon.

The donation consists of equipping the operations room and lecture hall with ICT and IT equipment's including servers, CCTV cameras, landlines phones, a smart board and TV as well as desks and furniture for the bedrooms and a skid loader to support in heavy lifting rescue missions. The fire brigade also received handwashing stations, as part of UN-Habitat's efforts to raise awareness on COVID-19.

“This donation comes at a time when rescuers from the Beirut Fire Brigade are working in challenging situations with basic operations means and equipment. We are very grateful for this timely and most needed contribution from the Government of Japan and UN-Habitat, allowing for better communication across our different centres throughout the city especially in rescue missions to protect the Lebanese people.” said colonel Maher El Ajouz, Chief of the Beirut Fire Brigade.

“As we mark a key accomplishment of UN-Habitat's ongoing support to Beirut's continued recovery from the Port explosions, we re-affirm our commitment to reviving the essence of Beirut

while ensuring that municipal and key city institutions, such as the Beirut Fire Brigade are able to respond and prevent emergencies effectively,” said Taina Christiansen, Head of the UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme.

This intervention is part of UN-Habitat’s wider project entitled “Support for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of most vulnerable urban areas in Beirut impacted by the Port explosion” funded by the Government of Japan. It has multiple interventions, including the rehabilitation of 11 heritage buildings of heritage value and key public facilities in Rmeil Cluster; COVID-19 awareness-raising and installation of handwashing stations; improved livelihood through cash-for-work activities; support under municipal services – provided to the Beirut Fire Brigade Centre in Karantina; and, upgrading of Laziza and William Hawi Parks.

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About the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

UN-Habitat works in over 90 countries supporting people in cities and human settlements for a better urban future. Working with governments and local partners, its high impact projects combine world-class expertise and local knowledge to deliver timely and targeted solutions. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes a dedicated Goal on cities, SDG 11 – to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

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