



Egypt: The oasis city of Faiyum, which is 30km south of Cairo, has been an agricultural center since ancient times due to an ample supply of water from the Nile. [Photo by Shinichi Kuno]



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Director General's Message

Middle East and Europe

From Contribution to Peace and Stability to Supporting Middle-Income Countries

The Middle East, where Japan relies 90% of its oil imports, and Eastern Europe, which consists a part of Europe, are both important business partners for Japan. The peace and stability in these regions, therefore, has a great significance. These regions are potential markets where Japanese ODA could lead to business opportunities for Japanese private companies. In fiscal 2012, JICA was involved in diverse activities in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and North Africa, which ranged from supports for nation-building (i.e. fostering industries and human resources, promoting democracy and peace-building) to supports for business start-up of Japanese companies.

The political unrest in the Middle East from 2011 was caused by city-rural disparities, youth unemployment and other issues, for which solutions are yet to be found. The situation in the Middle East has become even worse due to ongoing civil war in Syria and continuous outflow of refugees to the neighboring countries. JICA is contributing to stability of the region from the standpoint of peace-building. On the other hand, JICA is also willing to provide support to countries with massive infrastructure construction needs in line with Japan's growth strategy. These are the two main pillars of supports provided by the Middle East and Europe Department.

In fiscal 2012, JICA sent experts to Egypt to support the establishment of a ten-year national development master plan. In addition, under the framework of a joint research project with the Brookings Institution (USA) entitled "Inclusive Growth Following the Arab Spring in the Middle East and Northern Africa", a co-hosted a seminar with participation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund was organized. These activities aim at enhancing better governance of the Middle East and Northern African countries.

In Iraq, which is in transitional phase from post-war reconstruction to economic growth, JICA is providing ODA loans to finance infrastructure development with an additional view to help start-up operations of Japanese private companies.

In Eastern Europe, Japan's advanced environmental

technologies are helping their endeavor to tackle with their environmental issues as they seek to join the EU. At the same time, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, we continue to provide support for the consolidation of peace and nation-building. In Moldova, JICA provided the first ODA loan applying Special Terms for Economic Partnership (STEP) to import medical equipment, so as to open up a new opportunity for Japanese companies to enter the market in the movement of universal health care.

In fiscal 2013, we will continue to focus on activities using Japanese technologies. Especially in the Middle East, Japanese working ethics are highly valued and there are expectations to learn Japanese technologies and know-hows. To meet these expectations, JICA will continue to provide support on human resource development to Gulf countries with relatively high income levels. In collaboration with Morocco, JICA will provide effective support to Sub-Saharan African countries through South-South cooperation focusing on the water resource management and the use of renewable energy.

In spring of 2013, the construction of the Jericho Agro Industrial Park in Palestine was completed. This symbolic project for peace and prosperity is expected to lead economic growth of the region. Besides, in fall, the Bosphorus Strait metro tunnel in Turkey will open to traffic. The fiscal 2013 will also be a year of major accomplishments.