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Visit by Mr. Nobuhide Minorikawa, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs,
to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Nobuhide Minorikawa, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the DRC) on December 2 and had a meeting with Mr. Alexis Thambwe Mwamba, Minister for Foreign Affairs and with Mr. Alan Doss, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The outlines of the meetings are as follows.

1. Meeting with Mr. Mwamba, Foreign Minister of the DRC

(1) Mr. Minorikawa made the following remarks:

- (a) The DRC's President Joseph Kabila is the first democratically-elected president in the country's history, and Japan is willing to support the Government of the DRC.
- (b) Japan is deeply concerned about the situation in the eastern part of the DRC and strongly supports the Nairobi communiqué and the Goma Agreement calling for a political settlement by all parties concerned. Japan hopes for the Government of the DRC to exercise leadership for that purpose.
- (c) Japan has decided to provide emergency humanitarian assistance of seven million US dollars to improve the serious humanitarian situation in the eastern part of the DRC. Japan hopes that this assistance will be effectively used to save people's lives in the region.

(2) Mr. Mwamba in response stated:

- (a) We greatly appreciate Japan's assistance and will inform President Kabila and Prime Minister Adolphe Muzito of the assistance as soon as possible. We also strongly expect Japan, as a next non-permanent member of the UN Security



Council, to contribute to the stabilization of the eastern DRC.

- (b) The problems in the eastern region are attributed to the economic factor of natural resources there. Without the mineral resources in Kive, the present problems would not have arisen. The Government of the DRC recognizes that proper management of mineral resources including coltan (Tantalum one) is important and believes that a temporary embargo on the export of such mineral resources needs to be considered.
- (c) The Government of the DRC is ready to have dialogues with General Laurent Nkunda within the framework of the Goma Agreement. The Government of the DRC also intends to implement the Goma Agreement and the Nairobi Communiqué after the resolution of the problem of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR).
- (d) The Government of the DRC expects that the UN Security Council will further strengthen the presence of MONUC in Goma and that MONUC will be able to take more positive actions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.
- (e) We welcome the mediation by UN Special Envoy Olusegun Obasanjo. We hope that his mediation will produce results soon.
- (f) As to the emergency grant aid, it is helpful that Japan provided 7 million US dollars in a lump sum, while other major countries limit one installment to up to 2 million US dollars. I will report it to the president and the prime minister immediately.

2. Meeting with Mr. Alan Doss, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations (SRSG)

- (1) Mr. Minorikawa made the following remarks:
 - (a) Japan hopes to play a more active role for peace and security in Africa. Japan will also become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council next year. Therefore, Japan hopes to actively participate in discussions concerning the situation in the eastern part of the DRC.
 - (b) The Government of Japan decided on November 28 to provide emergency humanitarian assistance of seven million US dollars to address the serious



humanitarian situation in the eastern part of the DRC. Japan hopes that this assistance will be effectively used to save people's lives in the region.

(2) The SRSG Alan Doss in response stated:

- (a) The situation in the eastern part of the DRC, especially in North Kivu, is still very severe, as serious humanitarian crises continue. We request the international community including Japan to extend assistance.
- (b) While there are different opinions about the future role of MONUC, I (the SRSG Alan Doss) suggest that its mandates should be clarified first.
- (c) The UN Security Council recently decided to increase the MONUC personnel by 3,000, but it will take time to deploy the additional personnel.
- (d) Those in conflict should go back to the principle of the Nairobi Communiqué and the Goma Agreement. Their will to implement these agreements is required.
- (e) The problems in the eastern region are partly attributed to natural resources, and a system to control the demand for resources is needed.
- (f) To strengthen the Armed Forces of the DRC, trained troops should be created within the Force.
- (g) I highly appreciate the roles of former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and former Tanzanian President Benjamin William Mkapa and fully support them. They have already achieved results in the relations with the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP).
- (h) I welcome the news that Japan will join next year in the Contact Group for the DRC, which consists of permanent and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, countries in the Great Lakes region, and UN organizations.

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*The original press release was issued on December 3.

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