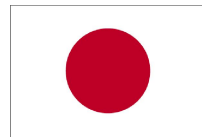




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## PRESS RELEASE

### *Arming the Afghan Police with Literacy*

**14 June 2011, Kabul--** UNESCO and the Japanese Government agreed on commencing “Literacy for Empowering Afghan Police (LEAP)” programme worth about USD 3 million. The programme aims to provide literacy opportunity to 3,000 Afghan National Police (ANP) officers in Kabul and seven provinces across the country in next 20 months.

The agreement was signed on 14 June 2011 between His Excellency Mr. Reiichiro Takahashi Japan’s Ambassador to Afghanistan and Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, UNESCO Representative to Afghanistan in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Bismillah Khan Mohammadai, Minister of Interior and Mr. Sarwar Hussaini, Deputy Minister of Education.

“Building human resource capacity is a major issue which the Government of Japan believes is the foundation of any development” said Mr. Takahashi, “This new programme is a major step toward sustainable and effective development in Afghan Police human resource.”

With UNESCO’s technical support on ensuring high quality literacy provision, the programme will be jointly implemented by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the Ministry of Education (MoE)’s Department of Literacy in close collaboration with literacy stakeholders such as NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A).

The Minister of Interior stressed that illiteracy is the biggest challenge on the way of having effective police force in Afghanistan. “70% of the ANP suffer from illiteracy or low literacy and tackling this problem is our first priority in the Ministry” said Mr Mohammadi.

The programme aims to develop better literacy skills among police officers and further improve their peace-building skills, thereby contributing to peaceful and sustainable nation-building in Afghanistan. As part of the programme a comprehensive national literacy curriculum for ANP will be developed.

“I believe, through LEAP, UNESCO with Ministry of Interior as well as Ministry of Education and the Government of Japan will greatly contribute to building peace in Afghanistan and ensuring security and stability throughout the country.” said Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, UNESCO Kabul Director.

In conflict-affected countries such as Afghanistan, a literate mass play a key role in establishing the foundations for a peaceful society. UNESCO has placed high priority for providing literacy opportunities for Afghan illiterates who make over 70% of the adult population.



Mr. Reiichiro Takahashi Japanese Ambassador to Afghanistan (L) and Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, UNESCO Kabul Director (R) signing the agreement in the presence of Mr. Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, Minister of Interior (Back, L) and Mr. Sarwar Hussaini Deputy Minister of Education (Back, R).

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