

November 14, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

**Handing-Over Ceremony for Japan's Development Assistance to Antigua and Barbuda**

The handing-over ceremony for the Japanese Grant Aid under the Economic and Social Development Programme, which was signed in June 2015, took place on October 31, 2018 in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda received a grant of approximately eight hundred thousand US dollars (US\$800,000) from the Government of Japan in order to procure disaster preparedness and mitigation equipment, such as a land search and rescue vehicle, storage for disaster response equipment, multi-sensor weather stations, megaphones, and personal protective equipment. The grant is intended to positively contribute to the economic and social development of Antigua and Barbuda by enhancing the command and logistical capability of the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS).

The ceremony was attended by His Excellency Mitsuhiro Okada, Ambassador of Japan to Antigua and Barbuda, and Ms. Sandra Joseph, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Social Transformation of Antigua and Barbuda. Also in attendance was Mr. Philmore Mullin, Director of the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS).

In his speech, Ambassador Okada stated that Japan "fully recognizes the vulnerability of small island nations in the Caribbean, and the importance of strengthening disaster preparedness and mitigation capacities." He also noted that the Government of Japan provided emergency supplies to Antigua and Barbuda following Hurricane Irma in 2017, and also provided further aid in March 2018 to support the country's recovery from the Hurricane, under the Economic and Social Development Programme, valued at approximately two million US Dollars (US\$2,000,000),

The Government of Japan is committed to advancing the sustainable development of Antigua and Barbuda through continued cooperation.

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**From left to right: Ms. Sandra Joseph, Ambassador Okada, and Mr. Philmore Mullin**



**Search and Rescue Vehicle**



**Weather Station**