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PRESS RELEASE

***Embassy of Japan Confirms the Successful Execution and Completion of Kwatta
Agricultural Market Project in Suriname***

The Embassy of Japan wishes to provide clarification on misrepresentations which were recently made and widely publicized in the Surinamese media regarding a completed project supported under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects scheme titled “The Renovation of the Fish and Meat Hall of the Kwatta Agricultural Market.”

Under this scheme, the S. Kisoensingh Kwatta Agricultural Market Foundation received a grant of US \$115,218 from the Government of Japan for the project. The grant signing ceremony was held on January 15, 2021. The purpose of this project was to renovate and expand the existing area for the fish and meat stalls thereby turning it into an enclosed space. The expected outcome of this project was to meet the increase in demand by vendors and consumers, as well as to keep pace with international food safety and sanitary developments through improvement of the facilities.

Throughout the duration of this project, representatives from the Embassy of Japan received frequent updates on both the progress and the associated expenditure. The expenditure was strictly managed whereby any use of the grant funding had to be first requested and approved by the Embassy. Upon successful completion, an external audit report and a completion report were submitted and accepted by the Embassy without issue. A completion ceremony to commemorate the opening of this newly renovated area at the market was held on October 20, 2021, and was attended by representatives from the Embassy of Japan, members of the S. Kisoensingh Kwatta Agricultural Market Foundation, officials from the Government of Suriname, and other stakeholders.

The Embassy of Japan wishes to further clarify that the grant funding was provided to carry out the specific purpose of the project, renovation and expansion of the market, and not the long-term maintenance of the market. Consequently, the sustainability of the market is not covered under the project contract, but it is understood that the responsibility to maintain the facility lies with the authorities in charge of managing the said facility.

The Government of Japan welcomes further opportunities to work with the Government and the People of Suriname, with a view to strengthening the bonds of friendship and mutual understanding which exist between the two countries.

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