

PRESS RELEASE

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Handover of Vehicle to Tonga's Ministry of Finance and National Planning 2nd Patch of Japan's Non-Project Grant Aid This Year

The Government of Japan through the Non-Project Grant Aid, NPGA handed over one Toyota Hiace van to Tonga's Ministry of Finance and National Planning on Wednesday, 27 June 2018. H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Tonga handed over the vehicle to Hon. Pohiva Tu'ionetoa, Minister for Finance and National Planning. Present at the ceremony were Mrs. Balwyn Fa'otusia, Chief Executive Officer and officials of the Ministry.

His Excellency Mr. Tetsuya Ishii, stated that the handover is another symbol of Japan and Tonga's cordial relations and close friendship which is continued to be strengthened through the NPGA. "This is also a reflection of our bond being reinforced through the fulfillment of commitments, such as we had recently witnessed during PALM8 in May of this year."

H.E. Mr. Ishii underscored to sincerely request the Ministry to use the vehicle effectively and efficiently on a daily basis. He emphasized the importance of regular maintenance in order to be kept it in a good condition for a long time, and during emergencies. He also pointed that in these days the numbers of traffic accidents have been increasing, "I would like to caution all of you to drive safely," he stated.

The handover is the second patch of Japan's NPGA for Economic and Social Development Program following the first patch in March this year, of sports equipment handed over to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The second patch consisting of three Toyota Hiace vans; two of them will be handed over to the Ministry of Health together with medical equipment. The total cost of the three vans is over 9.8 million Japanese Yen, approximately \$190 thousand pa'anga.

Mrs. Fa'otusia thanked the Government of Japan for their generous assistance which will make an immediate difference for the Ministry to mobilize their responsibilities, especially for monitoring and visiting various projects' sites and receiving missions. She also highlighted, "we will make sure to maintain and utilize the vehicle for the public purposes in order to achieve the Grant's super goals, supporting economic and social development efforts including poverty reductions," said Mrs. Fa'otusia.

The Honorable Minister also acknowledged the assistance and emphasized that to come up to the Ministry every day from the Eastern side of Tongatapu "safe driving," is vital.

Japan's NPGA was introduced as a form of commodity aid to promote economic and social development of recipient countries. The NPGA handover hopes to also contribute to Tonga's efforts to meet its Strategic Development Framework and the nation's steadfast collaboration for sustainable development.

END.

Attached; photos



H.E Tetsuya Ishii, Ambassador of Japan handover the key of the NPGA assistance of a Toyota Hiace Van to Hon. Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa, Minister of Finance on Wednesday 27 June 2018.



The handover ceremony of the NPGA assistance at the Minister's Office on June 27.



Japan's NPGA assistance of a new Toyota Hiace Van, to Tonga's Ministry of Finance, handover on Wednesday 27 June, 2018.



NPGA handover on Wednesday, 27 June 2018



Hon. Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa started up the new 16 seater Toyota Hiace van, funded through Japan's NPGA assistance for his Ministry.