



From
the People of Japan

PRESS RELEASE

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Inauguration Ceremony for the Project for Expansion of Betio Port in the Republic of Kiribati

The Government of Japan is pleased to announce the completion of "The Project for Expansion of Betio Port" funded through its grant assistance in the Republic of Kiribati. The people of Kiribati will witness the official inauguration of the Project by the Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Kiribati, H.E. Mr. Takuji Hanatani on Tuesday, 1 July 2014, at 3:00 pm, at Betio Port in Tarawa, Kiribati. The new facilities include the expansion of the port by extending the pier further offshore that has a depth of 9.0 metres in comparison to the 6.0 metre depth of the existing wharf. Such an upgrade has increased Betio Port's capacity to better accommodate and cater for bigger and heavier ocean liners. In addition, the project also includes supply of new cargo handling equipment and construction of a bridge that links the new pier with the existing wharf which was similarly built under "The Project for Improvement of Betio Port" through Japanese grant assistance in 2000.

In June 2011, the Government of Kiribati had received a grant assistance in the sum of approximately AUD 39 million at year 2011 exchange rates (approx. JP¥ 3 billion) from the Government of Japan through its General Grant Aid Scheme. While the initially upgraded port in 2000 was able to accommodate medium-sized container ships, there were berthing difficulties for bigger and heavier ocean liners given that the maximum wharf depth at that time was only 6.0 metres and the hulls of cargo ships calling at Betio Port averaged between 8.0 to 9.0 metres.

This project will enable Betio Port to efficiently handle international shipping and become more harmonized with international shipping standards.

Japan is confident that this project will further strengthen the friendship between the people and Governments of Japan and Kiribati.

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