

**MISSION PERMANENTE DU JAPON**

AUPRÈS DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES  
GENÈVE-SUISSE

TK/UN/283

The Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and, with reference to the Note Verbal ref: AL JPN 2/2018, dated 22 May 2018, has the honour to transmit herewith the reply of the Government of Japan to the Joint Communication sent by Ms. Anita RAMASASTRY, Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, Mr. Baskut TUNCAK, Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, Mr. Dainius PURAS, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Ms. Hilal ELVER, Special Rapporteur on the right to food and Ms. Urmila BHOOLA, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences.

The Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 20 July 2018

Enclosure mentioned



## **Reply of the Government of Japan to the Joint Communication from Special Procedures (AL JPN 2/2018)**

In reference to the joint communication dated on 22 May 2018, sent to the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Geneva, the Government of Japan provides the following response.

1. The Government of Japan has received information from Japan Tobacco Inc. (JT) regarding the JT Group<sup>1</sup>'s procurement of leaf tobacco produced in Zimbabwe and their efforts to respect human rights.
  - (1) As of this writing, the JT Group procures all leaf tobacco produced in Zimbabwe from third party suppliers with 95 percent coming from three major third party suppliers (Universal Leaf Tobacco Company, Inc.(Universal), Alliance One International, Inc. (AOI), and Premium Tobacco International DMCC (Premium)). Furthermore, prior to 2016, the JT Group purchased leaf tobacco through Tribac (Private) Limited (Tribac). However, the JT Group has no human capital relationship with Tribac.
  - (2) In September 2016, the JT Group launched the JT Group Human Rights Policy,<sup>2</sup> which stipulates the following commitment:
    - The JT Group commits to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
    - The JT Group will make human rights due diligence an essential and integrated part of our business processes to identify and assess actual and potential human rights risks. The JT Group will act upon the findings of this due diligence to seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts, and deliver appropriate and effective remedy.
  - (3) Moreover, the JT Group requests all contracted tobacco growers and/or third party suppliers to comply with their Agricultural Labor Practices (ALP) standards which include rights of workers, workplace health & safety, and child labor. In the case of Zimbabwe, all the third party suppliers of leaf tobacco produced in Zimbabwe have introduced the ALP standards, including Tribac which had a tobacco supply agreement with the JT Group until 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> References to the 'JT Group' in this response are Japan Tobacco Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries.

<sup>2</sup> JT Group Human Rights Policy:

[https://www.jt.com/sustainability/people\\_planet\\_society/human\\_rights/pdf/JT\\_Group\\_Human\\_Rights\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.jt.com/sustainability/people_planet_society/human_rights/pdf/JT_Group_Human_Rights_Policy.pdf)

2.

- (1) The Government of Japan is committed to the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
  
- (2) The Government of Japan has initiated its process to formulate a National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights. The NAP formulation process is viewed as one of the important measures in the “Expanded Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Action Plan 2018” collecting major efforts and initiatives by relevant Ministries and Agencies to achieve the SDGs, which was decided at the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters in the middle of June 2018, led by Prime Minister Abe. In light of this, the Government of Japan formed the inter-ministry/agency group on business and human rights, and has been working on a baseline study to assess to what extent the current legislation and initiatives provide for the protection of human rights in the course of business activities<sup>3</sup>.

July 2018

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<sup>3</sup> Further information is available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000357074.pdf>