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Fast Retailing contributes US\$ 1 million for emergency situation in South Sudan

UNHCR today announced a contribution of US\$ 1 million from Fast Retailing Co., Ltd. to the UN Refugee Agency for its emergency assistance programme for internally displaced people in South Sudan. The donation is based on Fast Retailing's long term commitment to support UNHCR's global refugee and IDP operations. In November 2015 the Japanese group company had pledged USD\$ 10 million over three years starting in 2016, covering the needs of displaced people in Asia in becoming self-reliant and to respond to acute emergencies around the world. The disbursement of US\$ 1 million is in response to the on-going humanitarian crisis in South Sudan.

"This announcement is very timely and will greatly help UNHCR in addressing the needs of displaced South Sudanese. The UNHCR South Sudan operation has been suffering from a serious funding shortage particularly for the IDP operation, despite the growing needs and deteriorating conditions in the country", Dirk Hebecker, UNHCR Representative in Japan says.

UNHCR coordinates the provision of emergency protection services and assistance in South Sudan through a network of some 30 partners and provides direct support and assistance to the most vulnerable groups and individuals. The contribution from Fast Retailing will allow UNHCR to target women, children and the elderly with badly needed basic items such as solar lanterns, cooking utensils and sleeping mats, while also enhancing displaced people's access to services.

Fast Retailing started its collaboration with the UN Refugee Agency in 2006 and entered into a global partnership in 2011 – a first for a company headquartered in Asia. The new support being pledged today is part of their global partnership aimed at assisting forcibly displaced people around the world, in recognition of the need for international organizations and private enterprises to collaborate more closely in responding to humanitarian crises worldwide.

In South Sudan, despite the signing of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan in August 2015, violence continues to affect civilians across the country. The situation has been further exacerbated by the eruption of fighting in the capital Juba in July 2016, which triggered fresh displacements within and outside South Sudan. While relative stability has been restored to Juba as of September 2016, the situation remains unpredictable and volatile across large parts of the country, with over 1.6 million IDPs and more than 1 million refugees in neighbouring countries.