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Statement by the Press Secretary/ Director-General for Press and Public Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the Issuance of an Arrest Warrant for the President of the Republic of the Sudan by the International Criminal Court (ICC)

March 4, 2009

1. On March 4, the Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court (ICC) decided to issue an arrest warrant for Mr. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan. As a State Party to the ICC, Japan respects its independence and decisions.
2. Japan hopes this decision will not affect the peace process in Darfur. It urges the Government of Sudan, regardless of the decision, to fulfill its responsibility to ensure the safety and security of civilians and personnel of the peacekeeping missions on the ground. It also urges both the Sudanese Government and anti-governmental movements in Sudan to refrain from any actions that would have negative effects on the cooperation with the AU and the UN, the North-South peace process, the peace process in Darfur, and the humanitarian and security situation.
3. Japan believes the international community should be united to continue to resolutely seek a solution which reconciles "peace" with "justice."
4. Japan will continue to support the peace process in Sudan, and to encourage the Government of Sudan to take responsible actions towards the resolution of the Darfur conflict.

(END)

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