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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Letter dated 1 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of  
Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Under instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the following statement:

1. The Government of Japan notes with profound concern the reports that the oil spill in the Persian Gulf, unprecedented in scale, is already having truly dire consequences, causing the destruction of the environment of the region and posing an extremely grave threat to the lives of the people who live there.
2. It is feared that its impact on the entire ecosystem will be enormous and it will be a very long time before recovery is possible.
3. The Government of Japan must express grave regret over this ecological disaster, which has occurred at a time when the international community is intensifying extensive co-operative efforts to solve the wide range of problems facing the global environment, efforts to which the Government of Japan has committed itself to making a positive contribution.
4. The Government of Japan intends to extend all possible assistance to the countries concerned to offset the damage done by this disaster, making use of its own experience with oil spills. Responding to a request from the country concerned, the Government of Japan has almost completed preparations to provide 30 kilometres of oil booms, which it will very shortly transport to the Persian Gulf.
5. The Government of Japan is also prepared to co-operate positively with the United Nations and other international organizations in any measures they may adopt to respond to this catastrophe.

6. The Government of Japan believes that, since the United Nations has a very important role to play, particularly in co-ordinating the international efforts of Member States and international organizations in field of the environment, it is of great importance that the organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system respond positively to this disaster.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as an official document of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly under the item entitled "Development and international economic co-operation".

(Signed) Yoshio HATANO  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Japan to the  
United Nations

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