United Nations

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and
Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos

Statement on the Philippines: Two months on

(New York, 16 January 2014) Two months after Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines, good progress has been made in many areas but people are still dependent on humanitarian support, particularly to rebuild their homes.

Over 14 million people felt the storm’s force, including 4.1 million people who were displaced at the height of the emergency.

In mid-December, I launched a response plan asking for US$788 million to provide targeted assistance to three million people, further benefitting another estimated seven million. The plan complements the Government’s own recovery efforts.

Two months after the storm, the scale and spread of humanitarian needs is still daunting. I am particularly concerned that just 20 per cent of funding has been secured to provide tools and materials so that people can rebuild their homes. The rainy season is approaching fast and early rains have already led to further displacement. Urgent funding is also needed for tools and seeds so that farmers are ready for the next planting season.

Donors, humanitarian agencies, and most of all, the people of the Philippines have achieved a huge amount in the past two months, but the delivery and reach of aid remains uneven. Electricity supplies are unreliable in vast parts of the areas affected by the typhoon, hampering recovery efforts and business activities in urban areas including Tacloban. Many schools reopened on 6 January but there are shortages of learning spaces and school materials.

During the next few months, the humanitarian community will focus on ensuring a smooth transition from urgent assistance to long term recovery and rehabilitation efforts. We count on the continued support of donors for this work.

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