UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF URGES STRONGEST POSSIBLE AID RESPONSE FOR PEOPLE OF TYPHOON-RAVAGED PHILIPPINES

(New York, 15 November 2013)  It’s been a week since Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines and I remain concerned about the health and well-being of the millions of men, women and children who are still in desperate need and are struggling to cope with the impact of one of the worst storms since records began.

A massive aid effort is underway, led by the Government and supported by the Red Cross, local and international NGOs, and UN agencies, with the generous help of other countries. More ships, planes and trucks of aid have arrived and much more is on its way. As our teams reach new areas we can see the widespread devastation that has been caused. This is an aid effort which will need to be sustained as people seek to rebuild their lives.

The United Nations and humanitarian partners have distributed food rations in Tacloban and Guian, and delivered emergency medical and hospital supplies, tarpaulins and shelter materials as well as clean water and hygiene kits to badly affected areas.

While the situation in the three Visayas regions remains very challenging, I welcome the progress that is being made on clearing roads of debris and restoring water and power systems, so that aid workers and local authorities can establish a pipeline of relief supplies to the people most in need. More fuel and transport is needed to do this at the huge scale and pace required.

There has been an outpouring of assistance from individuals, Governments and companies around the world showing solidarity with the people of the Philippines. We are in a race against time to save lives, get services up and running and lessen the suffering of the Philippines people. I hope that people and Governments will continue to give generously to the humanitarian appeal.

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