STATEMENT BY UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, VALERIE AMOS

(New York, 9 November 2013) I am extremely saddened by the reports of loss of life and terrible scenes of devastation caused by Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda in the Philippines.

There are varying estimates of the number of people killed, including at least 1,200 according to the Philippines Red Cross. Sadly, it is likely that this figure will rise. The Government estimates that some 4.3 million people are affected, across 36 provinces, and initial assessments show that thousands of homes have been destroyed, roads are impassable and people need food, water, shelter and power. As more areas are reached, we expect to get a more detailed picture of the scale of destruction and the impact on families.

The Government has already set up temporary shelters, has flown in and distributed basic supplies and has scaled up search and rescue operations. The United Nations agencies in the Philippines, with their humanitarian partners, are supporting the Government and other responders in their efforts to assess the situation and respond rapidly with vital supplies, through the coordination system led by the local authorities.

I have deployed a large UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, some of whom arrived today in Tacloban, one of the worst affected areas in Leyte province, where they are coordinating closely with the authorities.

The United Nations remains on standby to mobilize any support that the people of the Philippines require from the international community.

For further information, please call:
Amanda Pitt, OCHA New York, pitta@un.org, Cell +1 917 442 1810, +1 646 467 2031
Vanessa Huguenin, OCHA Geneva, huguenin@un.org, Cell +41 79 444 4065
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