

FINAL MISSION STATEMENT
GPH-OCHA-OIC Organized Partnership Mission to the Philippines
16-20 June 2013

The Government of the Philippines (GPH), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) organised a high-level visit to the Philippines between 16 to 20 June 2013 with the active support of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) for the Philippines.

The mission, which was jointly led by Undersecretary Eduardo del Rosario, Executive Director of the Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Mr. Atta El Manan Bakhit, Assistant Secretary-General of OIC for Humanitarian Affairs, and Mr. Rashid Khalikov, Director, OCHA, with the active support of Ms. Luiza Carvalho, RC/HC, included participants from the following Member States and organizations: Alliance of Civilizations, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO), Kuwait, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

The objectives of the mission were to gather first-hand information and witness the value of multilateral humanitarian activities; to raise international awareness of the humanitarian requirements in the Philippines, in particular in Mindanao; to explore the role of the humanitarian multilateral system in supporting national and local efforts to respond to humanitarian needs; and demonstrate the importance of humanitarian preparedness to recurring natural disasters.

In the course of the visit, the delegation met representatives of the government at ministerial and local levels, affected communities (including women and children), civil societies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donor representatives and United Nations (UN) officials. They received comprehensive briefings at capital and field-level on the current humanitarian context in the Philippines and Mindanao. During their field visits, they witnessed the impact of and response to Typhoon Bopha in Compostela Valley Province as well as the humanitarian consequences of the multifaceted nature of the humanitarian situation in Central Mindanao. The collaboration at the community-level among the national and local authorities, UN, NGOs and local community groups on strengthening preparedness and resilience was evident in both locations. This provided the mission with a better picture of real humanitarian needs and challenges facing the people of these affected areas.

Throughout the course of the mission, the value of collaboration and coordination between the Government of the Philippines with the UN and its partners, particularly through the cluster approach, was evident. The importance of rolling out disaster risk reduction and management plans at national, regional and community levels was recognized. Preparedness is essential to help people in disaster-prone areas. The mission witnessed first-hand the perseverance of affected communities and their willingness to help each other in times of disasters in keeping with the Filipino '*bayanihan*' or self-help spirit.

In Eastern Mindanao, the field visit was an opportunity to witness how theory is implemented in practice. The mission had the chance to see with their own eyes the devastation of Typhoon Bopha which was the deadliest typhoon of 2012 globally. It was encouraging to see that many of the immediate needs have been addressed, however, a more durable and sustainable solution is needed for the affected communities. It was clear from speaking to beneficiaries that regaining their livelihoods is a priority, particularly with support to agriculture (which was 80 per cent of the community's income prior to the typhoon). Further, over 900,000 people need durable shelter that withstand recurrent natural disasters. Community-based resilience measures, including early

warning systems, and the link between meeting the life-saving needs to early recovery and development require additional support. Cash-for-work programmes to clear the debris are activities used to create flood barriers and at the same time provide income for the local people.

In Central Mindanao, the mission met with people who feel in their daily lives the humanitarian impact of disasters and the need for international support and assistance to get back to normal life. The importance of collaborative efforts with national and local authorities, and local NGOs to better reach people in need was underscored. Particular attention was drawn to the displacement of people and the strain this also places on receiving communities and local structures. Furthermore, concerns were voiced with respect to human rights violations, particularly in relation to women and children. In the meeting with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the importance of building on the momentum since the signature of the Bangsamoro Framework Agreement in October 2012 to ensure a durable solution to the needs of the people in the area was underscored. During the mission's meeting with the Autonomous Regional Government of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, it recognized that the complexity of the needs in this region means that they need consolidated efforts by all partners involved in humanitarian action according to international humanitarian law.

The mission recognized the importance of a unified effort by partners, at national, regional and international levels, to address immediate humanitarian needs through South-South and Triangular Cooperation. The findings of the mission reinforced the need to implement approaches that build the resilience of the population to overcome recurrent shocks and the need to ensure stronger linkages between humanitarian programming, early recovery initiatives and sustainable development efforts.

The mission was particularly timely as the need for preparedness becomes more acute at the start of the tropical cyclone season in the Philippines, where leadership by the national and local governments and international communities are converging around a shared agenda to enhance preparedness to natural disasters and resilience of affected communities to external shocks. Coordination and coherence is needed and joint efforts are crucial.

In this context, OCHA, OIC, participating Member States and organizations were of the view that there is a need to:

1. Continue to strengthen partnership for greater collaboration between the Government of the Philippines, UN, OIC, Member States and NGOs for response, early recovery efforts and disaster risk reduction at all levels.
2. Engage with a wider range of national, international, governmental and non-governmental organizations and civil societies, including from OIC Member States, to ensure their inclusion in all relevant community-level coordination structures.
3. Continue and increase concrete ways in which humanitarian, early recovery and sustainable development programming can be better linked.
4. Identify and implement activities which support resilience approaches for vulnerable communities and households.
5. Explore practical ways to support response to, preparedness for and resilience to recurring natural disasters, including through technical or financial support to meet the needs of the affected people.

Manila, 20 June 2013