

TYPHOON HAIYAN (YOLANDA): U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO PHILIPPINES DISASTER^{*}

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SUMMARY

This report examines the impact of Typhoon Haiyan (*Yolanda*), which struck the central Philippines on November 8, 2013, and the U.S. and international response. Haiyan was one of the strongest typhoons to strike land on record. Over a 16 hour period, the “super typhoon,” with a force equivalent to a Category 5 hurricane and sustained winds of up to 195 mph, directly swept through six provinces in the central Philippines. The disaster quickly created a humanitarian crisis. In some of the hardest hit areas, particularly in coastal communities in Leyte province and the southern tip of Eastern Samar, the storm knocked out power, telecommunications, and water supplies. The humanitarian relief operation was initially hampered by a number of significant obstacles, including a general lack of transportation, extremely limited communications systems, damaged infrastructure, and seriously disrupted government services. Despite the physical and logistical challenges, regular relief activities reportedly reached most of the worst-stricken areas within two weeks of the storm. Two and a half months after the typhoon struck, United Nations (U.N.) agencies reported that 14.1 million people had been affected, with more than 4.1 million displaced. Estimates of the number killed had risen to 6,201 with more than 1,785 missing. The number of injured was unknown. In addition, assessments revealed that an estimated 1.1 million houses had been damaged or destroyed and nearly 5.6 million people required food assistance.

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