

2nd PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE ON POST-DISASTER ASSISTANCE

2 December 2009

Honorable Secretary of Finance, Honorable Secretary Chairman of the Special National Public Reconstruction Commission, Honorable Chairman of the Post Disaster Recovery Foundation, Mr. Bert Hofman, Ambassadors and other officials,

Good morning,

I would like to thank the Philippine Government and the Department of Finance in particular, for organizing this Public-Private Sector Dialogue on post-disaster assistance and for inviting the Spanish Government to take part in this process.

Let me also express my gratitude and congratulations to the World Bank and other collaborating agencies for the fast and hard work done for conducting the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment. The resulting reports will be a very good basis for the planning of our cooperation programs next year, including the new bilateral Joint Commission that will set the priorities for the following four years.

The Spanish Government has been shocked by the deaths and devastation caused by the recent typhoons. Immediately after typhoon Ondoy, we started our emergency response mechanism. In this regard, I am proud to say that we were one of the first countries in coming to the aid of the victims of typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, chartering two airplanes with assorted supplies such as water purifiers, hygienic materials, tents, medicines, blankets, etc., which were distributed through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and several NGOs like the Red Cross. Canned food items were also purchased and handed out through the DSWD. This aid amounted to 1.25 million euro (85 million pesos).

Subsequently a contribution of 615,000 euro (42 million pesos) was approved for the flash appeal to be channeled through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Lastly, we have just approved a 2 million euro (136 million pesos) project as an early recovery project, through the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) for the rebuilding of agricultural infrastructure at a municipal level in region III.

In total, the Spanish Cooperation has allocated 3.86 million euro (more than 263 million pesos) in grants for the assistance to victims of the recent natural disasters and the reconstruction of the devastating effects caused by these disasters.

Our Government has also approved this year a very concessional loan for a bridges project worth 30 million euro. Construction will start early next year and I can announce that after the

disasters, adjustments are being made so that more bridges can be built in the affected areas of Luzon.

Finally, we are ready to consider some technical assistance or feasibility studies in sectors where special needs have been identified, such as infrastructure, water and waste management, for possible grants under our Feasibility Studies Facility.

Thank you very much.