

OBI LAUNCHES EMERGENCY DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS IN PADANG, INDONESIA

“Devastation is much worse than what has been reported,” says OBI director

PADANG, INDONESIA (October 2, 2009) – Disaster relief specialist Operation Blessing International (OBI) is responding to a 7.6 magnitude earthquake here which has left over 1,100 dead and many thousands more seriously injured.

OBI, which has a major presence in the country through its regional headquarters in Jakarta, has four medical teams on the ground in the hard hit city of Padang, with 25 doctors and nurses providing emergency medical relief. OBI loaded an Indonesian Navy vessel in Jakarta yesterday with two ambulances, electrical generators drums of fuel and thousands of emergency kits. The ship will arrive in Padang on Saturday. In addition, four OBI trucks loaded with relief supplies arrived in Padang today, with additional non-medical OBI team members distributing shelter kits and other critical relief supplies.

OBI is also setting up two logistics bases, one in Pekanbaru and the other in Jakarta.

OBI has joined with longtime partner, the airborne charity Mission Aviation Fellowship, who is flying in the medical teams and supplies. Additionally, OBI has teamed up with another longtime partner, the German charity Humedica, who is sending a medical team that will operate from OBI’s base in Padang.

Says Mark McClendon, Operation Blessing International’s director on the ground, “The situation here is very urgent, with many areas still completely unreachable and no way to help the victims there. The devastation is much worse than what the media has reported so far.”

OBI has worked in Indonesia since opening the Jakarta regional headquarters in 1998, helping over 850,000 people to date. The charity was a first responder to the 2004 tsunami, where it operated and built numerous medical clinics, treated over 180,000 patients and gave away over \$27 million dollars worth of medicine. OBI also distributed over 136,000 care packages and more than 52 tons of food. Since the tsunami, OBI Indonesia has built or refurbished hundreds of boats, with each boat supporting the economic needs of three families. OBI affiliates have also provided over 306 boats and have created 208 other livelihood projects including brick factories in Rigah and Lhok Kruet, where over 100,000 bricks were produced and used to build new homes.

ABOUT OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL:

Operation Blessing International (OBI) is one of the largest charities in America, providing strategic disaster relief, medical aid, hunger relief, clean water and community development in 22 countries around the world on a daily basis. In 2009, OBI was awarded Charity Navigator’s coveted 4 star rating for sound fiscal management for the fifth year in a row, a feat that only 4% of rated charities have ever achieved. Forbes, which currently ranks OBI as one of "America's 200 Largest Charities" as well as one of "America’s Most Efficient Charities," awarded OBI a perfect 100% rating in fundraising efficiency and 99% efficiency in charitable commitment. Additionally, the Chronicle of Philanthropy recently ranked OBI as the 58th largest non-governmental organization and 9th largest international charity.

In 2008, OBI responded to 33 disasters in 16 foreign countries as well as 7 major domestic disasters. Most recently, OBI mobilized teams and funded major relief and recovery efforts in Italy, Myanmar, the Sichuan Province of China, Rift Valley in Kenya, Bangladesh, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, the Darfur region of Sudan, Pakistan, Somalia, India, Indonesia, Mozambique and the Philippines. OBI has also made headlines as a first responder to U.S. hurricanes, floods and tornadoes as well as the tsunami disaster in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. In addition to directing major disaster relief efforts, OBI has often filled the role of logistical arm to organizations including the International Red Cross, the Salvation Army, UNICEF and the United Nations World Food Program.

Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the lives of more than 209.3 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$1.7 billion to date.

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FOR INTERVIEWS WITH MARK McCLENDON ON THE GROUND:

Chris Roslan

DRC Inc. Public Relations

(212) 966-4600

chris@drcpublicrelations.com