

## **OBI LAUNCHES EMERGENCY DISASTER RELIEF IN MANILA TO AID FROM "HURRICANE KATRINA OF THE PHILIPPINES"**

MANILA, PHILIPPINES (September 28, 2009) – Disaster relief specialists Operation Blessing International (OBI) are responding to Typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana), which dumped 13.5 inches of rainfall --an entire month's worth-- in just six hours, leaving the city 80 percent flooded. News reports confirm over 100 deaths so far and many people are stranded on rooftops throughout Manila as roadways are submerged. An estimated 300,000 residents are displaced.

OBI has an office in Manila and has worked extensively in the Philippines for over a decade. Under the direction of Dr. Kim April C. Pascual, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Operation Blessing International Philippines, the charity has earned the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) of the Year by the Philippines government for 4 out of the last 6 years.

Dr. Kim, whose own home is underwater, is on the ground directing the relief and recovery operations. Currently, OBI teams are moving quickly to:

- Mobilize food and water distributions
- Deploy medical teams to hardest-hit areas
- Partner with local groups to begin flood clean-up and recovery efforts

Already, OBI teams have been able to feed more than 5,000 affected residents and will continue to expand relief efforts to reach more victims.

Dr. Kim said, "This is Hurricane Katrina of the Philippines. Almost a month's worth of rainfall has submerged riverbank cities like Marikina and Pasig, and buried neighboring cities and provinces under ravaging floodwaters, putting the whole region under a state of calamity."

### **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.

###

FOR INTERVIEWS WITH DR. KIM:

Chris Roslan

DRC Inc. Public Relations

(212) 966-4600

[chris@drcpublicrelations.com](mailto:chris@drcpublicrelations.com)