

**OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL DEPLOYING U.S. DISASTER RELIEF TEAM
TO TORNADO AREA**

--Relief Organization Mobilized--

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (March 1, 2012) – Operation Blessing International (OBI) is dispatching equipment, supplies and personnel to Illinois to provide relief to those impacted by the recent tornadoes.

According to reports, a severe storm system moved across the Midwest and Western/Central plains on Wednesday, February 29, bringing tornado & severe weather damage to several states. Officials have confirmed several fatalities and more than 100 injuries with homes and businesses either damaged or destroyed.

Under the direction of Jody Herrington-Gettys, OBI dispatched personnel to the disaster area by Wednesday evening with additional staff, equipment and supplies to arrive later today. The equipment arriving today includes a construction trailer packed with tools and volunteer supplies, the OBI Mobile Command Center, a skid steer to remove debris, and a mobile kitchen that is capable of serving thousands of hot meals per day.

In addition, OBI has other heavy equipment on standby including a CAT924 front-end loader and a 20-ton crane, as well as a box truck full of cots and volunteer housing supplies. The equipment will be deployed as needed for the relief effort.

OBI will meet with local emergency management officials and will set up a base of operations. Once established, the organization will begin accepting work requests from local residents needing help and will also put out a call for volunteers wishing to help the cleanup efforts under the coordination and management of OBI team leaders.

Stay tuned to www.ob.org for more information.

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 23 countries around the world on a daily basis. OBI was awarded Charity Navigator's coveted 4 star rating for sound fiscal management for the 7th year in a row (2011), a feat that only 2% of rated charities have ever achieved. In November 2010, Forbes named OBI as the 6th most efficient charity in America. Additionally, the Chronicle of Philanthropy currently ranks OBI as the 23rd largest charity and the 6th largest international charity. Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the lives of more than 235 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$2.7 billion to date.

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