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**Media release of the  
Association of Filipino Communities in Switzerland and the  
Philippine Catholic Mission-Switzerland and the  
Philippine Nurses Association of Switzerland**

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**Natural Calamities in the Philippines**

The floods brought on by Typhoon Ketsana (Ondoy) and Typhoon Parma (Pepeng) left behind their wake such severe devastation and extensive destruction that the Filipinos and Filipino-Swiss in Switzerland were overwhelmed. People from Manila and suburbs and 22 provinces of the Archipelago were affected. The torrential rain which drenched the city caused the rivers to overflow thus carrying with them debris, trees, cars, houses and people.

The outcome of the disaster was present and could be seen everywhere: Filipinos carrying their children on rooftops for safety; people swept off by strong current while fording streets which suddenly turned into rivers; people stranded on rooftops for days without food and water; houses being swept away by torrents of water; relief centers crowded with evacuees; churches opening their doors and distributing food and clothing; the whole rice harvest being destroyed; and the worst part were the pictures of people trying their best to salvage their few belongings and had just given up because there was never a chance of fighting the course of nature.

Although the Filipinos have been in such dire positions, their will to survive is very strong, and their inherent character to help came out. Stories of heroism abound--from the young soldier who rescued so many people that he drowned of exhaustion, or the judge who was using his mobile boat to get people from rooftops, and the ones whose houses were not destroyed, took in relatives, friends and even strangers and gave them food and shelter. These are just but a few examples of the Filipino Brotherhood.

To alleviate the enormous tasks of helping the needy in the Philippines, some Filipino Organizations in Switzerland collected money from their members and sent them directly to the needy. Private persons wired money to their families, relatives and friends who were affected. However, who will help those Filipinos who have no sons, daughters, cousins or relatives abroad? Who can alleviate their needs?

We, the Filipinos and Filipino-Swiss here in this country are hard-working people and have been supporting our relatives in the Philippines for years, but the destruction of this magnitude is so colossal that we are not in the position to mobilize such enormous relief effort. We do not have the resources and the means to airlift food, medicines, tents, clean water and clothes. We are therefore appealing to your goodwill to provide aid to the Philippines. We are all brothers and sisters and need one another to survive regardless of race, origin or nationality.

Your help and support will make a very big difference. It will lessen the pains and sufferings of those affected and most of all, they will be given a chance to restart and rebuild their lives once again.

We are very grateful for, and support the efforts of Swiss Solidarity/Glueckskette, Caritas and so many other organizations calling for help.