



PHILIPPINES

Please check against delivery

INTERVENTION

delivered by

H.E. TEODORO L. LOCSIN JR.
Secretary of Foreign Affairs

Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) PLEDGING EVENT
8 December 2021, 10 am – 1:00 pm; New York

Thank you, Chair.

Excellencies,

For the last twenty months, the world has been facing, and continues to face, a human crisis of a scale we have never before seen in our lifetime. The COVID-19 pandemic claimed more than 5 million lives around the world, and the reaping continues. It adversely impacted the global economy, bringing markets on the precipice of a crash and many economies to its knees. It has shaken our health systems to breaking point and robbed our people of their mental and social well-being.

Amidst this bleak pandemic scenario, armed conflict continues in parts of the world; displacement continues. The COVID-19 situation is so much worse in refugee and evacuation camps. Hunger and malnutrition persist. Natural disasters, caused or exacerbated by an escalating climate crisis, didn't take a pause. Millions of people, already vulnerable even without the pandemic, are pounded by challenges from all sides that only a lifeline determines whether they survive or not.

CERF is such lifeline. It has served as a lifeline to my people devastated by Typhoon Haiyan a few years back. It has helped tide over thousands of my countrymen after terrorists seized Marawi in southern Philippines. It is the speediest and most flexible funding mechanism in the UN and has aided millions of people devastated by the pandemic. UN OCHA needs our support of CERF.

Despite its domestic financial challenges, the Philippines will contribute the humble amount of 50,000 dollars to CERF. We encourage others, including the Fund's beneficiaries, to also contribute. Let us make CERF truly a fund for all, by all.

Thank you.