

# Guidance on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA)

Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), Philippines



Following the request by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for international assistance, a number of Member States are deploying military assets. With Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) provided on a bilateral basis, it remains important to utilise military assets in support of humanitarian operations, based on identified needs and gaps and in accordance with the fully cooperative humanitarian civil-military coordination strategy set out in the Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief (*Oslo Guidelines*). Specifically:

- MCDA must complement civilian capabilities;
- MCDA must be used to meet a very specific requirement;
- MCDA must be used for limited duration only;
- MCDA must provide unique advantages in terms of capability and timeliness;
- MCDA should be provided at no cost to the affected State.

Any bi-lateral deployment of foreign MCDA to support humanitarian operations in the context of the current crisis should be undertaken in consultation with the sovereign nation, through the offices of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

In order to ensure coherence and consistency in the relief effort, lines of communication between humanitarian actors and Member States and their military actors, must be maintained. OCHA is tasked by the humanitarian community to fulfill this responsibility in order to facilitate required information flow, and to establish appropriate liaison, where and when necessary, between humanitarian and military actors. In this regard, the establishment of the OCHA humanitarian civil-military coordination capability and function is currently confirmed for the locations of Manila, Cebu and Tacloban.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been tasked by the NDRRMC to conduct Maritime and Airborne Search and Rescue operations and the transport/delivery of relief goods to affected communities in the Visayas Regions and Southwestern Luzon of the Philippines. The AFP have, through the UN, requested urgent support assets and equipment as follows:

- Emergency runway lights for Tacloban and Roxas City airports;
- Fuel bladders for emergency storage (Jet A1);
- Communication support equipment;
- Power generators.

UN Member States considering deploying these capabilities should either contact the NDRRMC and/or AFP directly, or notify through OCHA their availability. In the interest of full coordination, deployment of foreign MCDA deployed bi-laterally should be notified to the OCHA Civil-Military Coordination Section at: [cmcs@un.org](mailto:cmcs@un.org).

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