HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENTS ON INDULGENCE

Philippines: Typhoon Haiyan

SPEECH

Tuesday, 12 November 2013

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (18:03): I too rise to speak of the immense devastation as a result of Typhoon Haiyan and to offer the opposition’s thoughts both to the people of the Philippines and to their families and communities in Australia. What Filipinos have endured in the past few days and what they will endure for months and years through the recovery is truly challenging to comprehend. The scale of this natural disaster has been likened to the tsunami in terms of the loss of life. Some 10,000 are feared perished and millions have been affected. But perhaps the deepest sadness also comes with the knowledge that entire areas have not yet been contacted and cannot be accessed since the typhoon hit the shores of the Philippines. I wish to offer my and the opposition’s condolences to the family of the Australian man who was killed and pray for the safe return of those who are still missing. I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary and immediate donations provided by individuals, communities and organisations in Australia and around the world.

I am immensely proud of the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre, which will send 36 medical professionals and mobile medical units to the affected areas. These extraordinary individuals from Australia’s north are sadly all too familiar with the devastating events and effects of natural disasters.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude and sympathy to the Australian Filipino community, who have united to offer their help to their loved ones. Their contribution does not commence in response to this disaster alone; I know that their generosity provides a continuous stream of support and comfort to family in the Philippines. As indicated by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition directly to the Foreign Minister, the opposition are ready to support the government in any way we can to help facilitate Australia’s contributions to relief efforts. On behalf of the opposition I offer our thoughts and prayers to the people of the Philippines as they deal with this traumatic event and commence the immensely difficult task of cleaning up and eventually rebuilding their devastated communities and, in many cases, broken lives.