

SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA
Closing Remarks
*High Level Forum on Strengthening Disaster Risk
Insurance in the Philippines*
21 January 2014, Senate of the Philippines

As we conclude this forum, I would like to thank everyone gathered here today. Your presence gives us the assurance of your commitment towards building a resilient nation.

Typhoons Ondoy, Pepeng, Pablo, Sendong and Yolanda all tell us that we were did not prepare enough.

We need to put a stop to the onerous and exorbitant cycle of rescue, relief and rehabilitation only to wait for the next disaster and await for more foreign aid. We are extremely grateful for the support we continue to receive, but it should certainly not be a way of life. Instead, we must build

resilience so that there will be lesser need for rescue, relief and rehabilitation. We should also strengthen our capability to get back on our feet on our own immediately.

Resilience is the name of the game. For communities affected by disasters, we must work towards a resilient recovery.

Let us make good use of the lessons we have learned from past disasters.

Our forum today highlights the fact that, while our foremost concern in times of disasters is to secure lives, we cannot overlook the need to protect as well the things that would sustain life such as the sources of livelihood and employment.

Thus, we must build back better by building a resilient economy. It is great to hear the proposal by the Department of Finance on a guarantee fund for lending institutions and an insurance mechanism for local government units to facilitate speedy recovery and rebuilding of communities and industries affected by disasters. It would be a great component of our disaster risk management strategies.

Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation must be closely linked to development—the kind of development that does not create new risks and promotes resilient investments.

Poverty breeds disaster vulnerability, where those who have least in life risk life most. Thus, as disasters become more prevalent, the higher is the right of the poor to social

protection, and the higher is the duty of government to reduce disaster risk in pursuit of resilient development. Disaster risk reduction is social justice in action.

Let us work together towards development that is founded on sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, ecosystems protection, cultural resilience, and good governance.

Thank you.***