

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE

P. S. R. No. 965

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTS THAT THE TACLOBAN CITY
GOVERNMENT HAS ONLY RECEIVED ₱251.5 MILLION OUT OF THE ₱20 BILLION
THE CITY NEEDS FOR THE REHABILITATION FROM THE DESTRUCTION CAUSED
BY SUPERTYPHOON YOLANDA IN NOVEMBER 2013

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 27 provides: "The State shall maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption";

WHEREAS, supertyphoon Yolanda (international codename: Haiyan) devastated parts of the country in November 2014, and is reportedly the strongest storm to hit landfall in the country's recent history;

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, in its 20 September 2014 issue, reported that Tacloban City, considered as ground zero of supertyphoon "Yolanda", has only received ₱251.5 million out of the ₱20 billion the city needs for rehabilitation from the destruction caused by supertyphoon Yolanda;

WHEREAS, Tacloban city treasurer Zosima Cordano claimed that the money came from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG); she also said that the city also received ₱34 million in financial assistance from other local government units, private institutions and individuals, and three senators;

WHEREAS, Cordano reportedly said that the city government records show the following:

- the DSWD provided ₱34.5 million in funds to finance a cash-for-work program for Yolanda survivors, who were paid ₱260 per day for 15 days of work;
- the BFAR spent ₱32.5 million to repair fish cages destroyed by the storm;
- the DILG released ₱184.5 million, which was said to be part of the ₱230 million in financial assistance it gave to all local government units hit by the storm under the department's Reconstruction Assistance on Yolanda, and were used to repair city or municipal buildings, public markets and civic centers;

WHEREAS, it was reported that not a single centavo had been downloaded to the Tacloban city government despite Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery Panfilo Lacson telling city government officials that their request for more than ₱20 billion for post-disaster needs was approved;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that Foreign Aid Transparency Hub, a government website that tracks down pledges and donations from foreign governments, claimed the government received more than ₱71 billion in foreign aid pledges and more than ₱44 billion in

cash donations; the news report added that the website, however, didn't say how the donations were spent;

WHEREAS, the city government reportedly had to use part of the ₱34 million in cash donations from nongovernment groups in the meantime; at least ₱10 million of the amount was used to purchase a 1-hectare lot in the northern part of Tacloban City to be used as a permanent housing site for Yolanda survivors and to repair the offices of City Hall, while the rest of the donations were deposited in a trust fund at Land Bank of the Philippines and Postal Bank, and would be used for the city's rehabilitation program;

WHEREAS, Congress, through relevant legislation, should streamline the bureaucracy to make government disaster response and rehabilitation more efficient in terms of the timely and appropriate allocation funds, whether coming from the government or donated by charitable parties and institutions, to places affected by the disaster;

WHEREAS, Congress, in advocating transparency in its use of government funds, should also formulate policy to ensure that allegations of politicking, favouritism, and partisanship in the government's handling of supertyphoon Yolanda disaster response and rehabilitation would not be replicated in the future.

WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reports that the Tacloban City government has only received ₱251.5 million out of the ₱20 billion the city needs for the rehabilitation from the destruction caused by supertyphoon Yolanda in November 2013.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/tt