



Miyagi University of Education

President Mikami's Statement on the Typhoon Disaster in the Central Philippines

A devastating Typhoon *Yolanda* (No. 30: Asian Name: Haiyan) swept through the central Philippines wreaking havoc, causing casualties, and forcing evacuations following a series of flash floods and landslides, particularly on the island of Leyte and surrounding islands.

On behalf of the campus community of Miyagi University of Education, I would like to express my deepest condolences and sympathy for the tragic loss of lives and extensive property damage. I would like to add that Miyagi University of Education is ready to provide any assistance necessary to aid in the recovery from this historic disaster.

I have instructed the Director of the Center for Disaster Education & Recovery Assistance, M.U.E., to gather information on the situation and assess the needs for the relief efforts. We will materialize our assistance through our partner agencies such as UNESCO, United Nations University's Greater Sendai RCE/ESD networks, and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO).

Already on our campus, a group of volunteer students who are actively engaged in assisting schools affected by the *2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami* here in northeastern Japan, have begun donations and outreach activities and have discussed what they can do to give back to our friends in the Philippines who have been so generous since the 2011 disaster.

To respond to and assist children of the affected communities in Tohoku, Miyagi University of Education established the Center for Disaster Education & Recovery Assistance immediately after the 2011 disaster. On the path toward recovery from the devastation, we have sought to overcome the reality of the force of nature and consequent destruction and loss while, at the same time, we remain hopeful for a brighter tomorrow. As educators, we are reassured that for the affected children, schools are a haven where they meet, learn, support, and encourage each other alongside their friends in the process of recovery.

Recently, we have begun to establish a global common network among our Asia-Pacific friends, sharing knowledge and good practices of school education in disaster risk reduction, recovery, and shelter management, taken from our experiences during the Great East Japan Earthquake.

We should strive to secure a stable and appropriate learning environment for the affected children in accordance with guidelines such as the INEE (Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies) Minimum Standards. In the meantime, we will participate in international assistance for the recovery of schools and securing of educational opportunities for the survivors based on the lessons learned and knowledge gained from our own disaster almost three years ago. Hence, together, we move forward and away from the natural calamities that have disrupted our lives.

Dr. Kazuyuki Mikami

President, Miyagi University of Education

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