

## PRESS RELEASE

### Successful Conclusion of the 45<sup>th</sup> Typhoon Committee Session



At the 45th Session of the Typhoon Committee attended by 12 of its 14 Members, participants completed their 4-day deliberation on 1 February 2013 at the YMCA Salisbury in Hong Kong, China.

Succeeding Ms. Jiao Meiyuan, Deputy Administrator of the China Meteorological Administration, as Chairperson of the Typhoon Committee, Mr. Shun Chi-ming, Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, presided over the Session. Ms. Jiao and Mr. Shun were both instrumental in the drive for reform in the effective governance of the Committee in the past couple of years, with fruitful results already evident at the Hong Kong Session. The prudent stewardship of the Typhoon Committee Trust Fund was also recognized and highly commended by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). To raise the Committee's profile further, effort would be expended to communicate to Members' governments, collaborating partners, donor agencies



Ms Jiao Meiyan (left) and Mr Shun Chi-ming welcoming the participants to the 45th Session of the UNESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee

and the media the current status, key outcomes and plans of the Committee through an Executive Summary of the Session Report, as well as an Overview Summary of Members' Reports.

The Dr Roman L. Kintanar Award, presented every year to institutes and organizations in recognition of their dedicated effort in mitigating the impact and risks of disasters caused by tropical cyclones, was awarded to the Government Flying Service of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Government. This is to recognize their commitment and outstanding work in collecting crucial meteorological data in the vicinity of tropical cyclones over the South China Sea. Considering the operational and research values in the pursuit of this initiative led by the Hong Kong Observatory, the Committee will cooperate with the WMO World Weather Research Programme (WWRP) to explore the feasibility of organizing a purposely planned field experiment over the region in the next couple of years, in conjunction with the WWRP Southern China Monsoon Rainfall Experiment.

In the annual review of tropical cyclone names, "Washi" was retired and replaced by the new name "Hato", a Japanese name meaning "pigeon".

Conventionally, the use of names of tropical cyclones that had brought catastrophic losses and damages would be discontinued



Mr. Olavo Rasquinho (Secretary of the Typhoon Committee), Mr. Nokeo Ratanavong (UNESCAP), Mr. Shun Chi-ming (Chair of the Typhoon Committee) and Mr. Koji Kuroiwa (WMO) leading the discussion at the 45th Session of the UNESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee

upon the request of Members. Mindanao Island, an area in the Philippines rarely hit by tropical cyclones, was devastated by the passage of Severe Tropical Storm Washi in mid-December 2011. With hours of torrential rain causing extensive flooding and landslides, thousands of people were killed, roads and bridges were destroyed, and overall damage was estimated at nearly USD 50 million.

With a concentration of rapid economic and population growth in coastal areas, vulnerability to tropical cyclone related hazards such as extreme winds, torrential rain, flash flooding and storm surge had substantially increased. The Committee noted with appreciation the timely completion of a best-practice guideline in the mitigation of urban flood risks under the Urban Flood Risk Management Project, and publication of “The Second Assessment Report on the Influence of Climate Change on Tropical Cyclones in the Typhoon Committee Region”, summarizing the results and findings from research conducted by Members on the long-term trends of tropical cyclone activity in the region.

Looking forward, the Committee will focus on the implementation plan of the Synergized Standard Operating Procedures for Coastal Multi-Hazards Early Warning System, a major undertaking with funding support from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The Committee will also encourage Members from the Southeast Asia region to take part and support the WMO Severe Weather Forecast Demonstration Project for Southeast Asia. Effort will also be stepped up to enhance the Typhoon Committee Disaster Information System, a database of tropical cyclone related damage data and statistics from Members.

More information about the UNESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee and associated activities can be found online at: [www.typhooncommittee.org](http://www.typhooncommittee.org)

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