adherence to QMS. Both UNMAS-DRC and the different UNMAS sections’ performance are reviewed quarterly, and root-cause analysis is conducted to identify necessary corrective actions that will improve performance or the QMS itself.

Thanks to the contribution from the EOD Centre of the Swiss Armed Forces, the end result of the development of a QM policy is a commitment of all stakeholders (CCLAM, EOD Centre of the Swiss Armed Forces, UNMAS and national and international mine action partners in the DRC) to the continuous improvement concept, making the QMS in mine action an asset rather than a burden. ☞

See endnotes page 66

The content and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

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On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan, a category 5 super typhoon, landed in the Philippines causing widespread destruction. According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, 16 million people have been affected, with 6,155 confirmed deaths and 4.1 million people displaced.1

During the typhoon, a military armory was destroyed near Tacloban, one of the cities most affected by Typhoon Haiyan. With 273.6-kmh (170-mph) winds and 4.572-m (15-foot) wave surges, Typhoon Haiyan scattered explosive remnants of war (ERW) throughout the surrounding area.2,3

The Philippines does not have an official ERW clearance program, and various government agencies, including the Armed Forces of the Philippines and local police, handle clearance operations.4

Natural disasters can spread ERW and landmine contamination while exacerbating the difficulties of current humanitarian clearance efforts. Mines relocated by floodwaters are particularly dangerous. Deminers are trained to clear landmines placed upright; however, floodwaters can cause landmines to sink into the mud in any position.5

The Philippine army is attempting to keep people away from contaminated areas, but locating the ordnance is difficult because many of the explosives, ordnance and grenades are covered by mud.6 ☞

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— Brenna Feigleson, CISR Staff

See endnotes page 67

Typhoon Haiyan Leaves Ordnance Contamination in its Wake

A young resident of Tacloban City walks through debris left behind by Typhoon Haiyan.

Photo courtesy of U.N./Evan Schneider.

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