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The Food Aid Organization of the United Nations

WFP News Release

October 9, 2009

LOGISTICS GIANTS JOIN FORCES WITH WFP TO RESPOND TO ASIAN CRISES

BANGKOK – Three of the biggest corporate names in global logistics - Agility, TNT and UPS - have joined international efforts to expedite food supplies to hundreds of thousands of people affected by natural disasters in Asia, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) announced Friday.

The three logistics giants are collaborating with WFP to move food assistance to those worst affected by flooding in the Philippines and an earthquake in Padang, Indonesia. WFP plans to provide assistance to about one million people in the Philippines affected by extensive flooding caused by cyclone Ketsana, which severed roads, bridges and closed airports.

In Padang, Indonesia, WFP is working to assist Government following the devastating earthquake last week which severed roads and bridges, making emergency response to remote areas a major logistics challenge. This initial work was facilitated by the immediate response of Agility.

“By helping WFP ensure food supplies reach people affected by these natural disasters as quickly as possible, these companies are playing a lead role in helping save lives,” said Peter French, WFP Deputy Regional Director for Asia. “The expertise and resources they are providing come at a critical time and are invaluable.”

Agility, UPS, and TNT, work together in an initiative called the Logistics Emergency Teams, or LETs. The initiative capitalises on each company’s ongoing operations nearest to the site where humanitarian response is needed. By using these local resources during times of crises, such as warehouse management and transport capabilities, WFP’s response is quicker and more effective.

On this occasion, the LETs companies donated trucks and warehousing resources as well as logistics staff and coordination services. All staff deployed by the companies have augmented WFP’s response and are provided free of charge.

Under the United Nations coordination mechanism for crisis response, WFP is the lead agency for logistics coordination for all humanitarian agencies, including interfacing with



governments and military to maximise the effectiveness of assets during disaster response.

“The LETs initiative is an important component of our overall emergency response strategy and its generous contribution to these two natural disasters has been a significant boost to our response,” French said. “The three companies involved in this initiative are proving that the private sector really can make a significant contribution during a crisis. It’s heartening to see them so readily involved and compassionate in their response.”

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency; this year, WFP plans to feed more than 90 million people in 80 countries.

WFP now provides RSS feeds to help journalists keep up with the latest press releases, videos and photos as they are published on WFP.org. For more details see: <http://www.wfp.org/english/?n=999>.

WFP now has a dedicated ISDN line in Italy for quality two-way interviews with WFP officials.

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