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Headline: 'Imperative we take climate road to Paris'

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Two years ago, Supertyphoon “Yolanda” (international name: Haiyan), the strongest typhoon ever recorded in history, furiously hammered through my country. Yolanda brought about more than 8,000 deaths.

Over a year after Yolanda, in December 2014, Typhoon “Ruby” (international name: Hagupit ), swept the country for seven days before heading for Vietnam. Ruby must have been the 22nd typhoon for that year. We are host to an average 20 typhoons a year and their enduring damage.

In the Conference of Parties (COP 20) in Lima, Peru, the Germanwatch Climate Risk Index indicated the Philippines is the most vulnerable to climate change.

But the whole world is not spared the typhoons, cyclones, flooding, sea level rise and droughts of intensifying destruction.

The oceans absorb 24 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions—30 percent of man-made heat—and this level is increasing each day, degrading our marine ecosystem.

Biodiversity loss is rapidly increasing. We are losing a thousand species each year. By mid-century, as many as 30 percent, even 50 percent, of all species will likely be heading towards extinction.

Climate change impacts are significantly undermining agricultural production and food supply. As arable lands diminish, as soil degradation spreads and as extreme weather becomes more recurrent, food security diminishes. Many regions are regularly troubled by food shortages and, in some cases, even famine.

The wholesale destruction of our natural habitats, on land and water has gone on daily through the decades, with the inexorable, almost invisible, rapid process of ecological decay with our excessive carbon accumulation.

Man-made pollution has essentially degraded the self-governing mechanisms of nature. And nature is responding with fury in ways that our human ingenuity cannot anticipate or control.

The coming 15 years are crucial. From that well-studied date, the periodic IPCC report—if we should go on with “business as usual”—by 2050 global temperatures will reach the 2-degrees Celsius and we will be on our passage to irreversible catastrophe.

It is imperative that we act “ambitiously,” urgently, to reduce CO2 emissions. We must build a clear road towards low carbon community and develop our clean energy sources—before we reach that point of no return.

At the end of this year, in Paris, 192 nations will decide the fate of all life forms which took five million years to evolve into its prescient form. All 192 nations will negotiate a final global treaty that will seek to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius and hopefully hold back

life-devastating climate change.

It was not only the death of 8,000 Filipinos that we have put at stake, but the survival of the entire human species and all life forms. The gaps are widening and the stakes are getting higher each day.

In Paris we will negotiate for the survival of global biodiversity. We will be negotiating to keep the life-support system that has for millions of years evolved our human community. It is imperative that this current human society reverses this human-made disaster.

We are at the very edge of our capacity for sustainable development, in this, our finite world.

It is imperative that we take that road to Paris.

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And our passage is urgent.