



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PARTNERS INTERNATIONAL RESPONDS TO CYCLONE NARGIS
THROUGH BURMESE PARTNERS**

SPOKANE, WA—Spokane-based Partners International is responding with immediate relief to survivors of Cyclone Nargis, a disaster that struck the Southeast Asian country of Myanmar on May 3.

Jon Lewis, president of Partners International stated: “It is hard to comprehend this type of suffering and inhumanity. Yet, I know that God is sovereign and His purposes are not derailed by the acts of man. I am also reminded of the privilege it is to work alongside our indigenous ministry partners who are already there, meeting the needs of their neighbors in Christ’s name. Partners International is sending funds to help our affiliate ministry partner, Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission (CNEC), distribute relief. In addition, we will also send our crisis relief specialist, Eng Hoe, to Yangon to help coordinate our relief efforts. Eng Hoe has been on site for nearly every major international disaster in the last decade and has trained hundreds of our partner ministry staff in crisis response, including the many who responded to the 2004 Tsunami. Partners International is doing all it can to help and these early efforts are just the beginning. Our indigenous ministry partners have been working in Myanmar for years; it is their homeland, so we are committed to help with long term solutions, not just short-term relief.”

Rev. Paul Chang, Partners International/CNEC associate, arrived in Myanmar on May 7 and is assessing the needs. Rev. Chang visited a slum area of Insein and reported that 443 homes in the area have been destroyed. “The military has refused to allow entry into the worst areas, and they seem indifferent to the suffering of the people,” said Rev. James Lai, CNEC Director, as related by Rev. Chang, “It is either that there is not much they can do or they just refuse to do more. The locals believe that it is their way of trying to control the people; that is, to have the people pleading to them for help. Even if one wants to go into these areas, the only possible way is to charter a boat or helicopter.” Rev. Chang also reported that young couples with babies and the elderly have taken shelter in a school; however, the authorities have given them six days to vacate. The local relief team is working to help resettle these people by setting up tents and alternative housing. Rev. Chang met with the Insein village leader who pled with him to help them rebuild their huts.

The price of food has soared and water is scarce. Locals fear the price of raw materials will increase as well, making home reconstruction beyond the reach of many families.

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Partners International is a global ministry that works to create and grow communities of Christian witness in partnership with God's people in the least Christian regions of the world.