

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

delivered by

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AMBASSADOR OF THE PHILIPPINES TO INDONESIA

for the

HABITAT III 3rd PREPARATORY COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

SURABAYA, INDONESIA (25-27 JULY 2016)

THANK YOU, MADAME CHAIR.

THE PHILIPPINES ALIGNS ITSELF WITH THE STATEMENT MADE BY THAILAND ON BEHALF OF G77 AND CHINA.

WE ALSO THANK INDONESIA AND THE CITY OF SURABAYA FOR THEIR WARM WELCOME AND GRACIOUS HOSTING.

EXCELLENCIES AND DEAR COLLEAGUES,

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE COMPLETION OF OUR NATIONAL REPORT, "BETTER, GREENER, SMARTER CITIES IN AN INCLUSIVE PHILIPPINES."

THIS REPORT IS THE RESULT OF A 2-YEAR EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION PROCESS WHICH BROUGHT TOGETHER STAKEHOLDERS FROM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, THE ACADEME, PRIVATE SECTOR, CIVIL SOCIETY AND PEOPLES' ORGANIZATIONS.

WHILE WE SAW SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR COMMITMENTS UNDER HABITAT II, MANY CHALLENGES REMAIN.

FIRST, WE NEED TO HARNESS OUR DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND. WHILE ALMOST 50% OF OUR POPULATION IS BELOW 25 YEARS OLD, THEY ALSO CONSTITUTE 50% OF OUR UNEMPLOYED. WE NEED TO INVEST IN THEIR EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, SO THAT THEY CAN BECOME THE DRIVING FORCE OF OUR FAST MODERNIZING URBAN ECONOMY.

SECOND, OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MUST BE ENABLED TO PLAN AND DELIVER SERVICES TO A RAPIDLY GROWING URBAN POPULATION. BY 2050, OUR POPULATION WILL REACH 148 MILLION, WITH MOST OF THEM CONCENTRATED IN CITIES. BUILDING THE CAPACITIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING THROUGH STRENGTHENING OF URBAN INFORMATION DATABASES AND SYSTEMS WILL ENSURE EVIDENCE-BASED PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING, AND ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF URBAN ECOSYSTEMS.

THIRD, WE NEED TO INCORPORATE CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT IN OUR LAND USE AND URBAN PLANNING. THIS IS VITAL, GIVEN THAT THE PHILIPPINES IS ONE OF THE MOST DISASTER PRONE COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, AND METRO MANILA IS THE LARGEST URBAN

AGGLOMERATION THAT IS AT HIGH RISK FROM [CYCLONESTYPHOONS](#), FLOODS AND EARTHQUAKES.

FOURTH, THE ARCHIPELAGIC NATURE OF THE PHILIPPINES REQUIRES A MULTIMODAL APPROACH TO ADDRESSING THE MOBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF ITS VAST URBAN POPULATION. STRENGTHENING OUR NETWORKS OF URBAN CENTERS AND IMPROVING THE CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WILL ENHANCE ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS, IMPROVE URBAN MOBILITY, AND PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION.

FIFTH, OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES MUST BE ABLE TO ADDRESS URBANIZATION CHALLENGES THAT CROSS TERRITORIAL AND POLITICAL BOUNDARIES. THESE INCLUDE DISASTER RISKS, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND POLLUTION. METROPOLITANIZATION AND CLUSTERING OF URBAN CENTERS AND CORRIDORS, AND STRENGTHENING OF MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE IS NEEDED.

SIXTH, WE MUST ENABLE OUR INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES (ISFs) TO LIVE IN RESILIENT, VIBRANT AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES, SINCE ISFS BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE ADVERSE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AS MOST OF THEM RESIDE ALONG WATERWAYS AND OTHER DANGER AREAS.

MADAME CHAIR,

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE POSSIBLE AND MEANINGFUL IF ITS GAINS ARE FELT BY THE MOST VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED. HENCE, THEY HAVE TO BE EMPOWERED AS PARTNERS AND ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN AN ALL-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

WITH THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SDGS, WE VOWED TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND AND TO INTEGRATE PEOPLE, PLANET AND ~~AND~~ PROSPERITY INTO OUR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING. IN THIS LIGHT, WE WELCOME THE “NEW URBAN AGENDA” AND LOOK FORWARD TO ITS FINALIZATION DURING THIS PREPCOM SESSION.

THANK YOU.