



# PHILIPPINES

*Maximum time of delivery: 5 minutes*

57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development

## PHILIPPINE COUNTRY STATEMENT

For Agenda No. 3: General Debate (a) Actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development at the global, regional, and national levels; (b) Assessing the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the decade of action and delivery

Delivered by

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Excellencies,

The Philippines reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action as it contributes to the fulfillment of our collective long-term vision, embodied in our Ambisyon Natin 2040, for each Filipino to enjoy a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life. This commitment is demonstrated by the Philippine Chairship of the CPD55 in 2022 and our Vice-Chairship of this year's 7<sup>th</sup> Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok, Thailand.

Anchored on this vision, the Philippines, through our own Commission on Population and Development, has laid out our overall goal of optimizing demographic opportunity and addressing emerging population issues to accelerate sustainable and inclusive development in our Philippine Population and Development Plan of Action for 2023 to 2028. This strategic plan is aligned with the ICPD Programme of Action, CEDAW, the Madrid International Plan of Action on

PHILIPPINE MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Ageing, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, and our UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

Excellencies,

The Philippines is now undergoing a strategic demographic shift. While we remain one of the countries with the highest populations in the Asia Pacific, our population growth has declined from 2.3% in 1994 to 1.5% in 2022. This is driven by the progressive decline in the total fertility rate, which was at 1.9% in 2022, already below the replacement fertility level. This is impacting our country's age structure, marked by a declining young population and an increase in working-age and older individuals.

Moreover, we continue to face critical population concerns tied to socioeconomic factors such as women in lower income brackets facing challenges in attaining their reproductive rights and uneven income levels impacting population spatial distribution. Women's lower labor force participation also remains a challenge as studies reveal that this disparity can be associated with marriage and childbearing duties.

Despite these challenges, we continue our efforts to accelerate actions to reap demographic dividends in line with the ICPD PoA.

The Philippine government implements wide-ranging and data-informed development, health, gender equality, labor, and social protection policies and programs to sustain our ongoing demographic transition and improve the capacity of our people as the main resource of the country.

Our collaborative efforts have resulted in the decline of pregnancy among teens aged 15-19 years old. The integration of sexual and reproductive health and education through Comprehensive Sexuality Education modules in schools and the

establishment of teen centers have been effective in addressing the high teenage pregnancy in the country.

We are also proud to share that our initiatives to promote gender equality and eradicate gender-based violence have continually placed the country in the Top 20 of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. Our commitment to women's empowerment is further reflected in our Chairship of CSW68 just last month in March.

The Philippine government has formulated the Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens 2023-2028, which serves as the overall framework for creating an inclusive society that empowers older persons and allows them to live healthy and productive lives. Our National Commission on Senior Citizens ensures the active participation of older persons in nation-building by utilizing their talents and expertise through volunteer work, mentoring programs, and other initiatives.

Our unemployment rate is falling as a result of our efforts to empower the labor force, especially women, through employment facilitation programs. We have also established the Department of Migrant Workers, which is dedicated to managing and streamlining all international migration labor processes.

The strategies proposed in the ICPD PoA are further concretized at the sub-national level. A case in point, the City of Bago in Negros Occidental, the birthplace of Rafael Salas, the first Executive Director of the UNFPA, is leading in the implementation of programs that promote reproductive health rights among women and girls through consistent information drives and other services. They have been awarded for their outstanding implementing approach that integrates population, health, and environment initiatives.

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

The Philippines remains, more than ever, committed to the implementation of the ICPD PoA and the realization of the SDG promise of leaving no one behind. Our efforts center on the quality of growth more than growth itself. We are driven and inspired by our collective ambitions not just for the Philippines and our own people but for current and future generations.

Thank you.