



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

STATEMENT

Undersecretary Rosemarie G. Edillon

10th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)

28 March 2023 | Bangkok, Thailand

Agenda item 4: Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through voluntary national reviews, Ministerial Segment

Madam UN Undersecretary General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Alisjahbana,

Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, and Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

The Philippines has recently submitted its third Voluntary National Review for 2022, which serves as a valuable tool in garnering support towards the attainment of 2030 Agenda, particularly in the pursuit of the country's long-term vision, AmBisyonNatin 2040. The process of the Voluntary National Review involves integration, implementation, and learning within the country and beyond. During our third VNR last year, we had the privilege of being paired with Tuvalu under UN ESCAP's twinning program to assist in assembling their first VNR.

As the chair of the Group of Friends for the VNR, we have gained valuable insight from numerous member states on the challenges and best practices in SDG implementation. During our initial VNR in 2016, we identified key factors that could enhance the likelihood of achieving the SDGs, drawing on our experience from the Millennium Development

Agenda 4: Accelerating the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda through VNRs

Goals. These key factors included a financing plan, multi-stakeholder engagement, resiliency-building initiatives, clear allocation of responsibilities, and effective monitoring. Subsequently, we focused our efforts on these aspects, utilizing the VNR process to galvanize action for the SDGs, resulting in notable progress.

In 2017, we established an enabling environment for the SDGs in our policy and planning structure by incorporating them into the strategic framework of the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022. Since then, the SDGs have been integrated into national sectoral plans and programs, and have been extended to the sub-national level through their inclusion in Regional Development Plans.

During our 2019 VNR, we reported on our achievements in transforming these key factors into mechanisms by creating a whole-of-government, whole-of-society, and whole-of-nation approach. In 2020, we mobilized the government through the formal organization of the Subcommittee on SDGs and its five Technical Working Groups, as well as the establishment of a Stakeholders' Chamber composed of civil society, the private sector, and academia. Regional sub-committees on SDGs were also established at the sub-national level. We also advocated for necessary legislation, such as the Sin Tax Law, to support SDG implementation. Through a deliberate monitoring system, the SDG Watch, we regularly monitor and measure our progress towards the Goals.

Our third VNR, presented in 2022, was notably different and challenging, as we were preoccupied with responding to COVID-19. Redirecting attention from the unprecedented health crisis to a potential future threat was particularly difficult. While our report focused on our progress in incorporating the SDGs into our national frameworks and using the 2030 Agenda as a policy and planning tool, the more significant outcome was that we utilized the VNR process to renew the commitment of various stakeholders to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. We achieved this by demonstrating the usefulness of the Agenda 2030 as a framework to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic evolved into a syndemic in the Philippines.

Ultimately, the VNR is a process that requires the use of data collected from official sources, but validated on the ground. The VNR community is fast becoming a repository of knowledge and camaraderie in a global endeavor to ensure that no one is left behind. Our experiences demonstrate that evidence and key findings generated by VNRs can be utilized to support and accelerate actions and national plans for post-COVID recovery efforts.

Continuing to conduct these reviews can help rebuild momentum, regenerate political will, and revitalize a shared sense of responsibility that benefits all.

Thank you very much.