

## **Philippine Intervention**

### **Agenda Item 4. Follow-up to the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing**

Madame Chair, Excellencies,

More than ever, our resolve to improve the enabling policy and program environment for the empowerment of our older persons, their families, and their communities has never been more determined given the steadily growing population of our older persons. Based on our 2020 census, our senior citizens or those aged 60 years and above have now reached around 9.22 million or 8.5% of the total population. While we have yet to approach an ageing population, this demographic structure calls for the institution of relevant policies and programs to ensure the wellbeing, capacities and continued productivity of our older persons now and in the future.

Our thrust and commitment of empowering our older persons is aligned with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) which is nationally translated into our version of the Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens (PPASC). Our main policy framework for senior citizens is embodied in Republic Act No. 9994 (Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010) provides various privileges and services for older persons; Republic Act No. 11223 (Universal Health Care Act) which gives preferential treatment to older persons in the provision and access to necessary and timely health care; Republic Act No. 11350 which created the National Commission on Senior Citizens to ensure the full implementation of laws, policies, and programs of the government pertaining to senior citizens; Republic Act No. 7432 which mandates the establishment of the Offices of Senior Citizens Affairs in cities and municipalities to ensure the implementation of local-level policies and programs for older persons; and the

Bayanihan We Heal as One Act or Republic Act No. 11649 which allowed the local government units to facilitate the distribution of the Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens.

The country is also promoting the continued productivity of our older persons through their participation in income-generating work by institutionalizing support mechanisms and policies such as the Anti-Age Discrimination in Employment Law (Republic Act No. 10911), among others. Continuing policy discussions are underway to rationalize the retirement age in the country to balance opportunities to earn income and the wellbeing of older persons.

Filipino older persons continue to experience functional difficulties and socioeconomic challenges. Almost half of older Filipinos find it most difficult to walk around and leave the house and stand up or sit down; most of them suffer from diagnosed illnesses and are also incapacitated from accessing timely healthcare services. Many older persons rely on their family and the government for their economic needs.

We are pursuing the finalization of the Social Protection Floor, which includes programs that guarantee the income security of senior citizens, among others. Within the full-devolution policy being implemented in the country, local government units (LGUs) are mandated to develop and implement interventions to promote and protect the rights and wellbeing of senior citizens. Through this, their Office of Senior Citizens Affairs are leading initiatives for the wellbeing of older persons in their localities.

Together with the rest of the countries in the Asia and the Pacific and in the entire world, we remain committed to promote the objectives of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing within the Philippines. We shall proactively pursue international collaboration such as South-South Cooperation schemes to

work with other countries in creating societies that uphold the rights of older persons and empower them to live an independent, healthy, long, and active lives.

Thank you for the opportunity.