

**THE PHILIPPINES COUNTRY STATEMENT
SIXTH MEETING
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE
PACIFIC (UNESCAP)
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT**

**BANGKOK, THAILAND
12-13 NOVEMBER 2020**

To the honorable Chair, the Ministers, Country Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Philippines is pleased to participate in the Sixth Meeting of the UNESCAP Committee on Transport.

We highly commend the committee on its exemplary efforts in bringing together the honorable representatives of its member countries towards one unified goal.

It is our honor to share our insights and updates as our contribution to the Review of the Implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, Phase I (2017-2021).

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

We support the Committee of Transport in its objective to initiate and implement innovative policies and frameworks to assess, plan, develop, improve, and maintain sustainable urban transport systems and services.

For the past decades, the Philippines has been facing the challenge of traffic congestion in the highly urbanized and the urbanizing areas. Being stuck in traffic became a normal day to day experience for commuter and motorist in the country's metropolis. It became a norm when most of the people regarded traffic congestion as one of the indicators of progress – the heavier the traffic the more active the economy. The government of the Philippines, in order to improve the traffic condition and break its negative effect in the country's economy continued to look for better ways to address the issue. The country's metropolitan region is eagerly expecting the upcoming construction and completion of new rail projects including the Metro Manila Subway Project and other passenger lines that would extend up to the neighboring provinces outside Metro Manila. These initiatives are targeted to 1) reduce traffic congestion due to the expected passenger modal shift from private cars to mass transit; and 2) to provide more convenient access from the neighboring provinces to Metro Manila, and vice versa. The government started to implement its carefully laid out plan to improve the country's mass transportation system in order to have a reliable and efficient movement of people and goods instead of cars.

Item 3b_Philippines

The country's efforts are also directed towards intensive road network development in the countryside. These efforts are likewise intended to solve the problem of traffic congestion. At the same time, transport costs, energy consumption, and carbon dioxide emissions are being reduced with these initiatives in place.

While it is known that construction activities are among those that cause detrimental impacts to the environment, the Philippines considers the importance of applying stringent measures to minimize these effects. Specific policies to safeguard the environment are created and imposed at the national and ministerial levels.

Moreover, the Philippines is fully supportive of the concepts of environmentally friendly mobility and sustainable urban transport. These are currently gaining ground with the improved infrastructure support to other modes of mobility such as walking and cycling.

In this year, 2020, while most of our government's efforts are devoted to our fight against the COVID-19 crisis, the infrastructure sector did not lose its focus and has even become more vigorous in promoting better mobility towards an overall improvement in the quality of life. In addition to our "Build, Build, Build" strategy, we are now also committed to "Build Back Better" in light of these challenging times.

We are delighted to be part of this meaningful collaboration and we look forward to contributing to another productive meeting of the UNESCAP Committee on Transport. The Philippines continuously aspires for inclusive and sustainable transport and connectivity and we have always been glad to be working on this with you all.

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