

PHILIPPINE COUNTRY STATEMENT
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Madam Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon!

The Philippines played a vital role in crafting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995. Nearly 25 years since its adoption, the Philippine government remains dedicated to developing and implementing policies and programs to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, consistent with its vision of a strong, just, peaceful and equal society.

We would like to share with you our achievements, challenges and recommendations in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in conjunction with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Philippines has maintained its global standing in bridging gender inequalities. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report ranked the Philippines as the 8th most gender-equal country in the world and the only Asian country in the top 10 in 2018.

The Philippines made critical interventions in upholding the rights of women on sexual and reproductive health services, universal health care, support programs for maternal, neonatal and child health and nutrition in the first 1000 days, the increase in maternity leave from 60 to 105 days, the expanded sexual harassment law called the Safe Spaces Act, and the meaningful participation of women in conflict resolutions, peace building consistent with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 on Women Peace and Security. In education, the Philippine government implemented the free college education in state universities and colleges. Our conditional cash transfer program has been expanded. To end VAW, the Philippines passed and implemented anti-VAW laws including anti-trafficking, anti-SH, women

migrant workers and domestic workers act. We have strengthened mechanisms for VAW victim survivors through effective implementation of protection programs, strengthened campaign against VAW through multi-media. In the ASEAN region, the Philippines helped in the capacity building on gender mainstreaming for 300 Senior Officials across the 3 pillars of ASEAN.

Noting that there are remaining challenges in achieving GEWE in the region, the Philippine government proposes the following recommendations:

1. To pursue our vision for inclusive development, we need to eradicate poverty and uplift the condition of marginalized women especially IPs, PWDs, and those in rural areas.
2. We need to develop a harmonized definition of the informal economy and come up with appropriate policies, programs and services on unpaid work, and ensure women's access to decent work, improved wages and social protection.
3. We need to identify and remove barriers that constrain women's and girls' access to public services in order to guarantee their access to these services on a regular basis and especially during situations of conflict and emergency.
4. We need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against all women and girls in public and private spheres, offline and online. The elimination of harmful stereotypes and negative social norms is critical if we are to achieve gender equality. Schools, the media, business enterprises, police, judiciary, parliaments and other institutions need to be informed about the negative consequences of stereotyping women. Educational and other instructional materials to eliminate sexist language and terms to become gender-sensitive.
5. Migrant women workers and trafficking victims, women with disabilities experience some of the most severe human rights violation and we need to promote bilateral and multilateral strategies to protect them.
6. To achieve gender balance, we need to (a) broaden the political participation of women and provide a gender-responsive electoral process that is inclusive, participatory and non-discriminatory; and (b) increase national investments in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls through gender-responsive budgeting.

7. We need to accelerate the implementation of women, peace and security agenda embodied in CEDAW General Recommendation 30 on ensuring women's human rights "before, during and after various conflict contexts and to the expansion of women's role in the peace process and conflict transformation.
8. We need to adopt and implement gender-responsive strategies on climate change adaptation and mitigation to support the resilience and to build the adaptive capacities of women and girls in responding to and recovering from adverse impacts of climate change. There is also a need to promote equal access to essential infrastructure and climate-smart agriculture technology, clean energy, appropriate financing and technology and other relevant interventions that seek to empower all women and girls to become resilient.

In closing, the Philippines looks forward to our collective action in the furtherance of BPfA implementation and the realization of our 2030 Sustainable Development Goals for gender equality and women empowerment.