

PRESS RELEASE

Philippine Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

14-16 Allée David-Morse, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland • Telephone No. +41 22 716 1930 • <http://www.genevapm.dfa.gov.ph>
E-mail: geneva_pm@dfa.gov.ph • Facebook: Philippine Consulate General, Geneva URL: <https://www.facebook.com/genevapcg/>



PHILIPPINES CITES SIGNIFICANT GAINS AND INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AT DIALOGUE WITH THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN GENEVA



Atty. Kristine Rosary Yuzon-Chaves, Executive Director and Officer-in-Charge of the Philippine Commission on Women and head of the Philippine delegation, delivers her opening statement at the Constructive Dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the country's 9th periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), held on 11 October 2023, in Geneva.

GENEVA – The Philippines highlighted gains and international leadership in advancing gender equality and women empowerment at the Constructive Dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the country's 9th periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women or CEDAW, held on 11 October 2023, in Geneva.

The Philippine delegation was headed by Atty. Kristine Rosary Yuzon-Chaves, Executive Director and Officer-in-Charge of the Philippine Commission on Women, and co-headed by Amb. Carlos D. Sorreta, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva, and Undersecretary Severo S. Catura, Executive Director of the Presidential Human Rights Committee Secretariat.

With gender mainstreaming as a strategy, the delegation informed the Committee that the Philippines has made significant strides in reducing the gender gap, ranking 16th

globally in the 2023 Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum. During the review period from 2016 to 2019, normative frameworks were strengthened with the enactment of landmark laws addressing critical issues such as rape and sexual exploitation, child marriage, online sexual abuse of children, human trafficking, and the promotion of the rights and welfare of solo parents.

The government likewise adopted and implemented practical programs and initiatives to increase women's participation in government service, politics and the economy; promote sexual and reproductive health; improve access to justice for victims of gender-based violence, including trafficking in persons; and combat gender stereotypes and sexism.

The Philippines, the first country in Asia to adopt a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, is currently crafting its fourth-generation plan, through a consultative process involving civil society, particularly groups advocating for the rights of indigenous women, women with disabilities, and the youth.

In the international arena, the Philippines is a recognized champion of gender issues and will chair the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women next year. The Philippines is one of the main sponsors of the Human Rights Council resolution on combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and spearheads the biennial United Nations General Assembly Resolutions on "Violence against Women Migrant Workers" and "Trafficking in Women and Girls".

"The Philippines is the vision lead for gender mainstreaming in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) Philippines, together with ACW Malaysia, led the formulation of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework 2021–2025", Usec. Yuzon-Chaves informed the Committee.

The 23-member Committee chaired by Ms. Ana Peláez Narváez of Spain offered observations and asked questions on the Philippines' compliance with obligations under CEDAW, particularly on the elimination of traditional stereotypes and gender-based violence; women's participation in political and public life; elimination of discrimination against women, including rural women, in education, employment, and health services (including the decriminalization of abortion), access to financial credit and economic and social life; and equality of women and men before the law; and equal rights in marriage and family relations (including the legalization of divorce and prohibition of child marriage).



“This is the fifth treaty body report by the Philippines since 2022 following its constructive dialogue on the rights of the child, civil and political rights, migrant workers’ rights, and the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. The Philippines’ active engagement with the UN treaty body system reflects its strong commitment to its human rights obligations and the high importance it attaches to international norms-building and standard-setting”, PR Sorreta stated.

Joining the delegation were Undersecretary Raul T. Vasquez and Undersecretary Jose R. Cadiz from DOJ, Justice Maria Theresa V. Mendoza-Arcega, Sandigan Bayan, Justice Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino, Office of the Court Administrator, and other officials from the Departments of Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Health, Justice, Trade and Industry, and Social Welfare and Development; the Philippine National Police; Philippine Statistics Authority; Bangsamoro Women Commission; and the Presidential Human Rights Committee Secretariat.

The Philippines signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women on 15 July 1980 and ratified it on 5 August 1981. Under Art. 18 of the Convention, States Parties undertake to submit, at least every four years, a national report on measures adopted to implement the provisions of the Convention.

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