

PHILIPPINE COUNTRY STATEMENT

Commission on Sustainable Development 19th Session Thematic Discussion on Interlinkages & Cross-cutting Issues 3 March 2011, UN Headquarters, New York

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary General's report on "Policy options and actions for expediting progress in implementation: interlinkages and cross-cutting issues" clearly states that if we are to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, the thematic issues discussed over the past few days, and indeed, all the thematic issues discussed over the years in this Commission, are tied together by the need to consume and produce sustainably. The entire Report may be encapsulated by the call for a paradigm shift from the prevailing economic model that is 'consumption-led, production-driven and GDP-measured' to one that is characterized by 'substantially increased investments in economic sectors that build on and enhance the earth's natural capital or reduce economic scarcity and environmental risks.'

The Philippines, as a middle income developing country recognizes the need to move away from 'business as usual' because we increasingly suffer from the negative environmental effects of unsustainable human activity. President Benigno S. Aquino III has committed, through his Social Contract with the Filipino people, to develop a country with an organized and inclusive rapid expansion of the economy through a government dedicated to honing and mobilizing the people's skills and energies, as well as the responsible harnessing of natural resources.

This commitment is seen through the sustainable development lens in the form of government policy enunciated in the Enhanced Philippine Agenda 21 and the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016, which are in turn supplemented by matching objectives under the UN Development Assistance Framework.

At the national level, all these policies provide a cross-cutting and interlinked approach to sustainable national development, and are designed to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, among other internationally agreed development goals.

Mr. Chairman,

At the regional and global levels, the Philippines shares these objectives through ASEAN environmental cooperation for sustainable development and regional integration. Under this institutional framework, 10 priority areas have been identified for common initiatives. Furthermore, as a member of ESCAP, the Philippines also subscribes to the concept of green growth as appropriately adapted to country-specific circumstances and understood in the context of sustainable development, as one of the approaches supporting rapid economic growth, achievement of the MDGs and environmental sustainability.

A major part of this approach involves strongly advocating a sustainable production programme through green industry. The Manila Declaration on Green Industry in Asia issued in September 2009, is a step in the right direction of low-carbon and resource efficient industrial production. Finally, it must be emphasized that the involvement, coordination and cooperation with business and industry, as well as all other major groups, is essential if we are to succeed in our sustainable development objectives.

Thank you.