



PHILIPPINES

Check against delivery

STATEMENT

of

Hon. Ms. Margarita R. Songco
Deputy Director General
National Economic and Development Authority

at the

General Debate
High-Level Segment of the 19th Session of the
Commission on Sustainable Development
11-13 May 2011

United Nations, New York

Check against delivery

Statement delivered by the Honorable Margarita Songco, Deputy Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority, Republic of the Philippines

High-Level Segment of the 19th Session of the UN CSD
11-13 May 2011
United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA

At the outset, the Philippines aligns itself with the Statement of the distinguished representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I wish to commend His Excellency, Minister László Borbély for his competent headship, together with other members of the bureau for efficiently conducting the activities of this year's CSD Session.

The world's pressing challenges today, such as the continuing disparities among and within nations, increasing prices of fuel and commodities, aggravated by disasters and the deteriorating state of our environment, underscore the importance of strengthening global partnership. This 19th Session should be a take off point for the most ambitious degree of political commitment and international cooperation to pursue an enabling environment, both at national and international levels, that will address head on these challenges that threaten progress in sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines continues to develop and implement mechanisms that will effectively operationalize sustainable development in the country in response to the Agenda 21. Our plans and programs are anchored on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in which sustainable development remains the bedrock.

The thematic areas of the work of the Commission - chemicals, waste management, transport, mining and sustainable consumption and production- demonstrate the practical barometers of how we're faring in our quest for sustainable development. Since these thematic areas are interlinked, they demand a holistic and integrated menu of policy options and practical measures.

Mr. Chairman,

The chemical sector plays a vital role in carrying out various social and economic activities worldwide. However, with irresponsible use and management, chemicals can also pose unreasonable threats to human health and the environment.

In the Philippines, we believe in the importance of establishing a new national infrastructure for chemicals regulation and management that will strengthen chemicals

information system, capacity building, including training and education, and enhance the monitoring of chemicals to ensure good risk management decisions. We believe that such plan should place a high consideration to public health the environment, particularly for vulnerable populations.

We support countries' adoption and implementation of the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) to complement the objectives of the multilateral environmental agreements on chemicals such as the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes. Moreover, the Strategic Approach for International Chemicals Management (SAICM) remains our guide for national policies on chemicals that will conform to global standards. The effective management of toxic and hazardous chemicals will only be realized with concerted actions of relevant stakeholders on chemical management, including in the implementation of single window mechanisms for the import and export of chemicals. Such cooperation is also necessary for strengthening the country's chemical emergency preparedness, risk prevention and response mechanisms. In this endeavor, international cooperation to improve R&D initiatives, capacity building and technology transfer and ensure adequate financing will be critical to ensure that effective implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

The rapid increase in volume and types of wastes as well as new waste streams as a result of unsustainable economic growth has become a major issue for national and local governments, particularly in developing countries. This is because conventional waste management systems are not designed to address these.

Our country highly supports policy options that will regulate the trans-boundary movement of waste particularly those entering the ASEAN region, highlighting the need for a more transparent and strengthened information system.

The Philippines will keep on pursuing Zero Waste and ecological waste management focusing on life cycle, the 3R concept and extended producer responsibility, taking into consideration political and socio-cultural issues. We recognize the need to institutionalize mechanisms for polluter registry and polluter-pay principle. Further, we will strongly pursue the necessary infrastructure and environmentally-sound technologies and continue to mainstream the informal waste sector in the programs of both the national and local governments to further improve waste management systems in the country.

Mr. Chairman,

For the Philippines, it is imperative that mining abides by the principles of sustainable development and must be in harmony with policies on conservation, protection and rehabilitation of environment and natural resources. Our country recognizes the need for an effective implementation of rehabilitation and decommissioning plans, promotion of sound transfer of technology, and capacity building among local government units to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts of mining activities. The Philippines also recognizes the Free

Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as a requirement prior to mining operations in ancestral domains.

Institutional and legal frameworks of the industry for the governance, as well as investment in mineral resources and the extractive sectors in the country should be enhanced. The Philippines supports the development of cost-benefit and risk analysis framework for mining projects, inventory of small-scale mining industry and the development of downstream industries. Assessment on the industry's contribution to climate change should also be pursued complemented with effective adaptation and mitigation measures.

Mr. Chairman,

Adequate and efficient transport systems are important to reducing poverty. For the next six years, the Philippines is envisioning an integrated transport system that is people-oriented and environmentally sustainable, espousing a shift from the use of fossil fuel to renewable energy sources and the provision of non-motorized transport facilities taking into consideration the vulnerable groups in the transport designs and systems.

Infrastructure development, funding, partnerships and capacity building of national and local institutions and stakeholders are important to improve the multimodal transport system in the country.

On SCP, the Philippines supports the creation of a global 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP. This framework would provide guidance on the development of a National SCP Programme and corresponding indicators. The SCP programmes shall be geared towards improving efficiency and sustainability in the use of resources and production processes as well as reducing resource degradation, pollution and waste.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

No country will be able to achieve any thematic goals alone. Developing countries, such as the Philippines, will need a supportive international environment that will promote capacity building, partnerships, technology transfer, access and sharing of knowledge, innovative financing mechanisms, public-private partnerships for financing infrastructure and technology and an equitable multilateral trading system. It is clear that sustainable development will require no less than enhanced, and even innovative partnerships and collaborations that truly respond to the needs of developing countries.

We look forward to Rio + 20 next year. For us, it is not a one-shot event which will bring promises we have heard before. The commitment to Rio must be shown in the present, and this juncture presents this critical opportunity to assess the kind, quality and breadth of the international cooperation that we are utilizing and, which we have yet to explore, to make the goals of the Earth Summit a reality.

Thank you.

