



PHILIPPINES

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement delivered by
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During the General Discussion on
**Agenda Item 4: Existing international framework on the human rights of
older persons and identification of existing gaps at the international level**
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Mr. Chair,

The Philippines joins other delegations in congratulating you and the other officers of the Bureau on your election and gives you the assurance of its full cooperation and support during the deliberations of this session.

The Philippines welcomes the appointment of the first independent expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, Ms. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte, and assures her of its full cooperation as she carries out her mandate.

Mr. Chair,

Older persons in the Philippines have traditionally received due care and concern from the family and the state. To stress this national attitude towards older persons, the Philippine Constitution states that, "It is the duty of the family to take care of its older person members while the State may design program of social security for them."¹

The Philippines has several initiatives on ageing, including Republic Act No. 9257², which granted additional benefits and privileges to senior citizens. It also provided a comprehensive health care and rehabilitation system for disabled senior citizens to

¹ Article 15, Section 4.

² *An Act Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Senior Citizens, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act 7432, otherwise known as "An Act to Maximize the Contribution of Senior Citizens to Nation Building, Grant Benefits and Special Privileges and for Other Purposes"*

foster their capacity to attain a more meaningful and productive life while ageing.

Republic Act No. 7876³ mandated the establishment of a senior citizens center in all cities and municipalities under the direct supervision of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in coordination with the local government units (LGUs) to respond to older persons' socialization and interaction needs.

Republic Act No. 7432⁴ recognizes the contributions of older persons in nation building as active participants. It mobilizes their families and the communities they live in to reaffirm the valued Filipino tradition of caring for older persons.

The Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens 2012-2016 builds on the enhancement of strategies and programs and on strengthening collaboration among various stakeholders towards more effective and efficient service delivery for senior citizens. It continues to focus on three major areas of concern, namely: (1) senior citizens and development, (2) advancing health and wellbeing into old age, and (3) ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

Mr. Chair,

The Philippine government is committed to improving the lives of older persons and has continually taken steps to ensure that their needs are taken into consideration and that mechanisms are in place to ensure the full enjoyment of their civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. National efforts, however, to be truly effective, must be complemented by regional and international efforts. Hence, we underscore the importance of inclusive cooperation within the framework of bilateral, regional, and multilateral initiatives.

Many international treaties and conventions offer generic human rights protection that implicitly include older persons, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). In addition, there are soft law provisions such as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) that guide the application of law and add to the overall protection of older persons. However, normative and implementation gaps continue to exist in the international protection system for older persons.

In this regard, the Philippines would like to convey its support for the possible elaboration of a legally binding instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons. Such a convention would frame older persons' rights as an integral part of the broader international human rights agenda and establish legally effective international standards to assure their rights and prohibit all forms of discrimination against them.

³ *An Act Establishing a Senior Citizens Center in All Cities and Municipalities of the Philippines, and Appropriating Funds Therefore*

⁴ *An Act to Maximize Contribution of Senior Citizens to Nation Building, Grant Benefits and Special Privileges and for Other Purposes*

The Philippines remains committed to pursuing active measures to deal with the challenges of ageing populations and to creating a “society for all ages.”

Thank you, Mr. Chair.