

**Second Session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UNHA-2)**

**NATIONAL STATEMENT – PHILIPPINES**

*Tuesday, 6 June 2023, UNON*

**to be delivered by the**

**Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD)**

**Undersecretary/Deputy Minister Henry L. Yap**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Republic of the Philippines, our delegation is delighted to participate in the Second Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly. We express our gratitude to Your Excellency for your exceptional leadership. We would also like to extend our appreciation to the Government of Kenya for graciously hosting the UN-Habitat and this Assembly, as well as to the UN-Habitat led by Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif and its Secretariat for their dedicated work and unwavering support.

The Philippines wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the development of affordable and adequate housing within inclusive, resilient, and livable cities. As urbanization continues to rise, with over 60 percent of Filipinos projected to reside in urban areas by 2050, we recognize the transformative impact of cities in driving economic growth, and improving the quality of life. However, we are also acutely aware of the challenges brought about by rapid and sometimes unplanned urbanization, such as inadequate housing, insufficient infrastructure, and environmental degradation, disproportionately affecting that adversely affect the poor and vulnerable populations.

As a country vulnerable to natural hazards intensified by climate change, the Philippines consistently experiences some of the most extreme climate events, indicated by the Long-term Climate Risk Index. In recent years, we have witnessed the devastating effects of climate change, ranging from the frequent and catastrophic typhoons that have ravaged our communities to rising sea levels that pose a threat to more than 50% of our cities and municipalities. In response to these challenges, the Philippines has undertaken efforts to promote resilient and sustainable urban

development through policy reforms, institutional capacity-building, and community engagement:

1. Our national development plans, including *Ambisyon Natin 2040*, Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, Resilient and Green Human Settlements Framework, and the National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan 2040, prioritize the establishment of livable cities and resilient communities as fundamental pillars for inclusive growth.
2. Furthermore, we have recently launched the *Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino Program* (National Housing Program for Filipinos) aimed at significantly reducing our housing deficit, addressing housing affordability, and providing access to housing finance through empowering our local government units and partnering with the private sector.
3. In line with our whole-of-society and multi-level approach to inclusive transformation, the Philippines will be hosting its first national conference on sustainable urbanization, the Philippine Urban Forum (PhUF), this October. With the theme “*Transforming our Cities & Building Resilient Communities*,” the forum seeks to encourage and enhance the participation and support of various urban actors and stakeholders in the Philippine New Urban Agenda.

Mr. President,

The Philippines reiterates its unwavering commitment to the goals and objectives of the United Nations Habitat Assembly. We call upon Member States to fully support its work. We highly appreciate UN-Habitat’s programs in the country, particularly in building climate and disaster-risk resilience and sustainable urbanization. The Philippines welcomes more projects aimed at enhancing the capacity of local governments, as it plays a crucial role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We urge all Member States to strengthen international cooperation, exchange best practices, share capacity-building programs and mobilize resources to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We firmly believe that by working together, we can address the

complex challenges of urbanization and build cities that are inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

The Philippines stands ready to collaborate with UN-Habitat and partners in creating a better future for urban areas, where no one is left behind, and cities become hubs of innovation, inclusive development and shared prosperity.

Thank you, Mr. President.

*Maraming salamat po at Mabuhay!*