

STATEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES
1ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
26, JUNE 2014, NAIROBI, KENYA

THANK YOU, YOUR EXCELLENCY MR. CHAIR. YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES, GOOD MORNING.

(INTRODUCTION)

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, WE WISH TO CONGRATULATE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA FOR THE EXCELLENT PREPARATIONS IN HOSTING THE FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY (UNEA) OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP). IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT WE MEET TO UPDATE OURSELVES ON THE VARIOUS GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ON THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT, INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE, GREEN ECONOMY, SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION AND ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE AND TO COME UP WITH A CONCERTED ACTION ON THESE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES ARE FACING. WE ALSO THANK UNEP FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENT IN ORGANIZING THIS HISTORICAL EVENT TO ENABLE POLICY MAKERS GUIDE FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND EFFORTS, INCLUDING ACTIVITIES IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

(COUNTRY STATEMENT)

ALLOW ME YOUR EXCELLENCIES TO SHARE WITH YOU THE PHILIPPINES EFFORTS IN SUPPORT OF ITS COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

IN 2012 ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX (EPI), DEVELOPED BY THE YALE UNIVERSITY AND COLOMBIA UNIVERSITY, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, CATEGORIZED

THE PHILIPPINES AS A GLOBAL **"STRONG PERFORMER"** IN ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE.

THIS AFFIRMS, IN THE GLOBAL STANDARD, THE CORRECTNESS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND REFORMS BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT.

ALSO RECENTLY, THE PHILIPPINES WELCOME THE LATEST PULSE ASIA SURVEY SHOWING AN INCREASE IN THE LEVEL OF APPRECIATION BY THE PUBLIC OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT. THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S APPROVAL SCORE IN THE ISSUE OF "STOPPING THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND ABUSE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT" IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY FROM 41 TO 48 PERCENT.

THE PULSE ASIA SURVEY RATED RESPONSES ON 11 NATIONAL ISSUES COVERING LAW AND ORDER, GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, ENVIRONMENT, JOB GENERATION, POPULATION GROWTH, WAGES, POVERTY AND INFLATION.

THE PHILIPPINES ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THE NEED TO PROMOTE GREEN ECONOMY AND HAS EQUIPPED THE COUNTRY WITH A VERY COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORK. AS AN EXAMPLE, OUR 1987 CONSTITUTION UPHOLDS THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO HAVE HEALTHY AND BALANCED ECOLOGY AND IMPROVED LIVING STANDARDS, WHICH CAN BE CONSIDERED RELEVANT TO A GREEN ECONOMY. THE PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PCSD), A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER BODY, WAS CREATED TO PROVIDE POLICY ADVICE ON ISSUES OF NATIONAL INTEREST AND TASKED TO THE COUNTRY'S AGENDA 21. SEVERAL LAWS AND POLICY INSTRUMENTS HAVE ALSO BEEN ADOPTED SINCE THEN TO PROMOTE SCP IN THE COUNTRY SUCH AS:

- PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SYSTEM (PEIS)
- TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND HAZARDOUS AND NUCLEAR WASTE CONTROL ACT
- PHILIPPINE CLEAN AIR ACT
- ECOLOGICAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT
- CLEAN WATER ACT BIO-FUELS ACT

- RENEWABLE ENERGY ACT
- CLIMATE CHANGE ACT

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UNEP, THE PHILIPPINES LIKEWISE ORGANIZED INFORMAL WORKSHOPS TO DISCUSS TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO IMPLEMENT SCP IN THE COUNTRY.

THE PHILIPPINES HAS ALSO BEEN INTENSIFYING EFFORTS TO CURB ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE. NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEASURES ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE PHILIPPINES AS PART OF ITS COMMITMENT TO RAISE AWARENESS ON THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF REGULATING THE TRADE, WHETHER LOCALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY OF WILDLIFE SPECIES AND ENSURING THAT THEIR SURVIVAL IS NOT THREATENED.

BEING A PARTY TO CITES SINCE 1981 AND IN PURSUIT OF OUR COMMITMENT UNDER THE CITES, THE PHILIPPINES THRU THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR) DESTROYED ITS STOCKPILE OF ABOUT FIVE TONS OF ILLEGAL IVORY ON 21 JUNE 2013. THE DESTRUCTION WAS DONE BY CRUSHING USING HEAVY EQUIPMENT, FOLLOWED BY INCINERATION OF THE CRUSHED IVORIES AT THE ANIMAL CREMATORIUM. THE IVORIES WERE PART OF THE MORE THAN 5.7 TONS OF THE CONFISCATED IVORY CONTRABANDS FROM 1996-2009. THE EVENT MARKED THE PHILIPPINES AS THE FIRST COUNTRY IN ASIA TO CONDUCT SUCH STRONG STATEMENT AGAINST ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE.

AS MEMBER OF THE ASEAN, THE PHILIPPINES SUBMITS REPORT TO ASEAN-WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORK (ASEAN-WEN) THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, THE PROGRAM COORDINATION UNIT OF THE NETWORK

OUR NATIONAL LAW, WHICH IS THE WILDLIFE RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION ACT, ARE STRICTLY IMPLEMENTED. WILDLIFE TRAFFIC AND MONITORING UNITS (WTMU) WERE CREATED AND MOBILIZED TO MAN OUR 15 MAJOR SEAPORTS AND NINE AIRPORTS TO ENSURE STRICT COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL EXISTING LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS INCLUDING PERTINENT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.

WE HAVE CREATED AND MOBILIZED WILDLIFE TRAFFIC MONITORING UNITS (WTMU) TO MAN MAJOR SEAPORTS (15) AND AIRPORTS (9) TO ENSURE STRICT COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL EXISTING LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS INCLUDING PERTINENT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. IN 1997, THE PHILIPPINES WAS INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF NINE COUNTRIES SEEN TO BE PRIORITIES OF CONCERN AS TRADE ROUTES AND TRANSIT SITES OF THE ILLEGAL IVORY TRADE ALONG WITH HONG KONG, MALAYSIA AND VIETNAM.

WE HAVE A STRONG LINKAGE WITH OTHER NATIONAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND AS A RESULT THE PHILIPPINE OPERATIONS GROUP ON IVORY (POGI) AND ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE WAS CREATED TO INVESTIGATE REPORTS OF IVORY SMUGGLING, AS WELL AS OTHER CROSS BORDER ILLEGAL COLLECTION OF TRADE AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES IN THE PHILIPPINES.

(CONCLUDING REMARKS)

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, PLEASE BE ASSURED OF OUR OUTMOST COOPERATION THAT WE ARE ONE WITH YOU WORKING TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

THANK YOU AND MABUHAY.