

MISYON NG PILIPINAS SA MGA
NACKAKAISANG BANSA



PHILIPPINE MISSION TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

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No. **434**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and with reference to its note no. 254 dated 3 April 2006, informing of the candidature of the Philippines to the Human Rights Council, has the honor to enclose herewith the Philippines' Commitments in the Human Rights Council in accordance with General Assembly resolution A/RES/60/251.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the President of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly the assurances of its highest consideration.



New York, 19 April 2006

THE PHILIPPINES' COMMITMENTS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council at elections to be held by the UN General Assembly on 9 May 2006.

In this regard, the Government of the Philippines pledges to undertake the following:

1. The Philippines believes that the complementarity of domestic and international human rights protection and promotion is a key factor for the advancement of global human rights. If elected into the Council, the Philippines will focus on the importance of bridging national and international human rights goals, standards and strategies.
2. The Philippines has a long tradition of promoting and protecting human rights in Asia and throughout the world. As a founding member of the United Nations, it worked for the inclusion of "*self-determination of peoples*" as one of the purposes of the Organization and the addition of the words "*or independence*" as a basic objective of the trusteeship system which enabled countries under colonial rule to become independent and achieve membership in the United Nations. The Philippines will continue to play an active role in upholding the rights and welfare of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including women, children, migrants and persons with disabilities. The Philippines will also continue to be a voice for vulnerable groups and will support human rights-based approaches that address their concerns in a comprehensive, positive and practical way.
3. The Philippines will continue to be sensitive to current and emerging human rights challenges, particularly those associated with modern-day dynamics and phenomena, such as globalization, anti-terrorism and security efforts. In this regard, the Philippines will contribute to ensuring that the Council is able to effectively address human rights crises, including gross and systematic violations of human rights worldwide.
4. The Philippines will continue to promote constructive discussion and cooperation in the Council, with a view to enhancing capacities of States in effectively addressing human rights challenges. The Philippines will contribute to ensuring that the Human Rights Council is seen as a partner, and not an opponent of states in question, particularly those in need of international assistance in the field of human rights.
5. The Philippines will contribute to promoting constructive engagement of the Council with civil society, ensuring opportunities to gainfully contribute to the work of the Council.
6. The Philippines will contribute to improving and strengthening the mechanisms and systems of special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights in order that they effectively serve the goals of the Council.
7. To effectively complement its work in the Council, the Philippines will continue its leadership role in the treaty monitoring bodies, such as the Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights (CESCR) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which the Philippines has both chaired.

REGIONAL LEVEL

- The Philippines will continue its role as initiator in building the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN's) capacity to strengthen human rights by being in the forefront

of organizing ASEAN human rights meetings such as the recently-concluded Manila conference of national human rights institutions, with the end goal of establishing an ASEAN human rights mechanism;

- The Philippines shall actively pursue its task as ASEAN's focal point in efforts to fight human trafficking and in promoting women's and children's rights, while simultaneously contributing in addressing the four other common human rights-related issues agreed at the Manila meeting, namely, international terrorism, migrant workers, sharing of best practices on the realization of the right to development and of economic, social and cultural rights, and the sharing of best practices in human rights education by building of the Philippines' strengths as UNESCO prize awardee on human rights education;

NATIONAL LEVEL

- Having ratified all of the seven core international human rights treaties and a number of their protocols, the Government of the Philippines shall seek to strengthen domestic support for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Continue its engagement to encourage civil society and other relevant parties to actively utilize the various UN human rights complaints mechanisms; the Philippines shall endeavor to submit timely replies to communications filed under these mechanisms;
- Improve its reporting system and submit more timely reports to the relevant treaty monitoring bodies. The Philippines shall likewise be more active in implementing the concluding observations and recommendations of these bodies;
- Strengthen the independent national Human Rights Commission, which is a Constitutional body, and the Presidential Human Rights Committee;
- Continue the Philippine Government's pioneering efforts in instilling a human rights-based approach in the realization of the UN Millennium Development Goals, the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights, as embodied in national development policies, plans and programs;
- Continue to strengthen the capacity of national judicial system in applying international human rights norms and standards;
- Improve access to justice of the poor and other vulnerable sectors of society by, among others, enhancing existing human rights education and training programs, particularly on children's rights, for judges, prosecutors, public defenders and military and police personnel;
- Enhance the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act, including taking a leadership role in developing systems for monitoring, measurement and obtaining statistics, specifically on ancestral lands and ancestral domains;
- Campaign for the passing in Congress of an Anti-Terrorism Law which shall put in place measures to combat international terrorism in the perspective of respect for and protection of human rights;