



# PHILIPPINES

*Check against delivery*

Madame Chairperson and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Philippine Government, I wish to thank the Committee for

reviewing our Fifth and Sixth Country Reports, and our responses to the pre-session questions, on the implementation of the Women's Convention or CEDAW.

Let me now introduce the members of the Philippine Delegation.



offenses and sentenced four to life imprisonment. Sixty-seven offenders have been charged and 31 prosecuted for violations of the law.

In compliance with Article 1 of the Convention, the *Magna Carta for Women* is in the final stages of review in the House of Representatives. Its provisions are in keeping with those of CEDAW, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Bill...

State to recognize, affirm and intensify its efforts to guarantee the rights and fundamental freedoms of women, especially those in the marginalized sectors. A similar bill is to be filed in the Philippine Senate, and the two will eventually become our Gender Equality Law.

Knowing from our earlier experience that the process of enacting laws that address women's rights entails several years of unrelenting lobbying and advocacy, the national machinery and members of civil society will continue to engage legislators until the enactment of...

places dominated by traditional politics characterized by patriarchal values

patronage and corruption.

The national machinery and the budget department have issued two joint circulars to institutionalize gender mainstreaming in the activities and budgeting processes of local governments. A circular from the department of interior and local governments directs them to involve women in development planning through the formation of councils that represent different sectors of

the community. Gender indicators have been incorporated in the Local Government Performance Management System. These measures are

The formal provisions and mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention are definitely in place. However, the extent to which we are able to advance women's rights and gender equality needs to be viewed in the

context of other circumstances in our national life.

Continuing poverty in the nation exacerbates gender issues. Almost a quarter

of the population and close to a third of Filipino women live below the poverty line. Rural women bear the brunt of impoverishment, and occupy the lowest rungs of the economic ladder in agriculture. With devolution of powers and the

to-market roads. Other projects include electrification, day care centers, school buildings, and health stations. All such projects respond to the practical gender needs of women. Within six years, the Program will have assisted two

million poor households, or around 10 million Filipinos.

KALAHI has also funded capability-building activities and innovative income-generating projects. In collaboration with the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center (TLRC), ENTREPINAY groups composed of unemployed women have been organized in some 200 communities. TLRC provides training and helps the women's groups to start small-scale, home-based

businesses. Many of them have become self-reliant and productive members

discrimination against women, significant gains have been made to change gender values anent sex roles, male domination and female subordination.

In the next two decades, several laws and policies have been promulgated

which promote the value of shared parenting and egalitarian relationships.

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the institution of company mechanisms to deal with sexual harassment as

part of Labor Standards. It also sets strict policies for the processing of contracts of female overseas migrant workers, which are consistent with the Philippine Labor Code and provisions of the Convention against discrimination

and exploitation.

In mass media, there is a growing pool of influential journalists, filmmakers, artists and practitioners who articulate gender issues and concerns. Policies and legislations are being proposed to curb the display and circulation of pornographic materials in public places and on the Internet. A commercial

programs. The National Insurance Act now have for prenatal examinations

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promulgated for the promotion of public awareness on HIV-AIDS and its causes.

The transformation of gender constructions from traditional stereotypes to ones consistent with gender-fair and gender equal values remains a significant challenge. Diverse strategies in this regard will continue to be a major component of our legislative and civil advocacy.

Article 7 of the Convention calls for measures to eliminate discrimination in public and political life. Let me say that, despite the persistence of gender gaps in many aspects of our lives, Filipina women are well-represented in key positions of power and decision-making.

Women occupy four of twenty-three seats in the Philippine Senate, and there

are 32 women who sit in the House of Representatives, compared to 178 men. Similar patterns describe the proportion of women elected as local executives and legislators.

Women heads of offices, diplomats and bureaucrats have been staunch allies for advancing women's rights. Career executives have played critical roles in the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming processes in national and

local governance. Female legislators in the different tiers of government have sponsored laws that translate provisions of the Convention into national mandates and local ordinances.

A number of legislative and executive policies have also been adopted to increase women's participation in sectoral bodies established by the state, at

fishing villages both in Christian and Muslim areas. Programs have been

directed towards enlarging the spaces for women's participation in  
governance, broadening the scope of women's rights, and unifying the

situation of impoverished, abused and discriminated women. Civil society  
groups have proven to be staunch and tireless partners in the concerted quest  
for gender equality.

Our efforts towards eliminating gender inequalities have not been confined to  
our territorial boundaries. Filipino women in gender equality advocacy have  
constantly striven to link their work with like-minded women and organizations  
across the globe.

When we look at the situation of Filipino women, we have started to

They also agreed to certify the immediate passage of the *Magna Carta for Women*.

Madame Chairperson and members of the Committee, I have provided you with the highlights of the Reports we have submitted to this Committee.

We now welcome your comments, assessments and advice on these matters. As always, we are prepared to apply your expert views, insights and suggestions to the furtherance of our implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol.

A pleasant good morning to you all.