



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT
BY

HON. PATRICIA P. SOLORZANO
CHAIRPERSON
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

DURING THE
55TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2011
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK

PHILIPPINES



STATEMENT
BY

HON. PATRICIA B. LICUANAN
CHAIRPERSON

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

DURING THE
52TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2011
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

55TH Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
22 February-4 March 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I have been attending the Commission on the Status of Women since, for almost a quarter of a century. But this 55th session of the CSW is extra special. With women all over the world, the PHW is celebrating the birth of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women or U.N. Women. And we welcome Ms. Michele Bacnet as its first Undersecretary General and Executive Director. To say that there is an exciting dawn on U.N. women's activities is very likely would be an understatement. At the country level, our wish list is long - we wish that the U.N. at the country level was more engaged, that all U.N. agencies really work for women, we wish that the U.N. would help make gender central in all national development plans, that women like U.N. Women, are more highly placed and are brought to the mainstream of development planning and negotiations, that gender is not just revisited, reminded and returned to the axis of development, unacknowledged empowerment; that the U.N. work more closely and consistently with the women's movement. As a supporter of the women's movement, I wish to recognize the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign, and a global network of NGOs that work tirelessly for the creation of U.N. Women. Congratulations to all and whenever let us get to work.

The Philippines remains deeply committed to the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Millennium Development Goals. Our national efforts have been strengthened by the ratification of the Beijing Platform on Women, the comprehensive ratification of CEDAW, and the translation of CEDAW in national legislation.

Allow me to address some of the 55th Commission on the Status of Women. In almost every aspect of education, women and girls outnumber men and boys in the Philippines. Girls fare better in terms of enrolment indicators in primary and secondary education. In tertiary education, they complete the prescribed number of years but in some levels the drop out rates lower for females.

To address the issue of high rates of male drop out in schools, the Philippine Government scaled up its inclusive education plan through the Philippine Education for All 2015 Plan that will aim to bring all school-age children to school through dropout reduction, early grade learning systems, distance education, and back-to-school programs for out-of-school youth and adults most of whom are boys.

girls' enrolment and their advantage in tertiary or higher education where women constitute 61% of enrollees and 57% of graduates. In the Philippines, the issue does not seem to be gender equality in access to education but access to quality education, especially for girls and those living in rural areas. We are also warned not to be lulled into complacency by simple access statistics as gender equality in access to quality education are also issues, especially for girls and young women suffer more subtle discrimination such as sexual harassment and violence against women and girls. There are also concerns about lagging gender tracking in fields of study and career choice. Women dominate the fields of teacher education, humanities, social sciences, business administration, medical and allied fields, home economics, mass communication, and even natural sciences and mathematics, but remain underrepresented in engineering, technology and applied arts, religion and theology, law and jurisprudence, agriculture and down stream trade and industry, agri-agriculture fisheries and forestry, and maritime studies.

To address these, the Department of Education conducted training of teachers and school administrators on integrating gender and development issues in their curriculum, gender-related training to eliminate gender stereotyping in textbooks and instructional materials, and raising teachers' awareness of gender issues.

The Personal Safety Lessons (PSL) which aim to give information, develop self-esteem in children, and increase their ability to resist sexual offenders were piloted in 14 schools in 3 regions.

At the tertiary level, faculty from universities have formed the Women's Studies Association of the Philippines committed to include gender and women's studies in the general education curriculum and in other fields of expertise including agriculture, environment and science and technology.

At the Department of Engineering, University of the Philippines reports that 40% of the students are women comprising the majority in chemical engineering, industrial engineering and materials engineering and growing numbers in other fields. To boost enrollment in science and technology, Congress passed the Science and Technology Act of 1992, which aims to upgrade educational opportunities for women and men to pursue careers in science and technology.

It is important to note that while girls and women perform quite well in most traditional educational indicators, their educational gains have not fully translated into equal employment opportunities and better-paying jobs.

The labor force participation of women remains low compared to men despite higher educational levels. Men are more likely to be wage and salary and own account workers while women are likely to be unpaid workers and comprise 85% of the informal economy.

The Philippines is committed to pursue the Decent Work Agenda as spelled out in its Philippine Development Plan. The Department of Labor and Employment Programme has been translated into National Plan of Action for Decent Work. This plan seeks to increase employment and income opportunities for women, and recognizes that gender is a transversal and cross-cutting issue that should be a major concern in all decent work projects.

To facilitate decent work, gender based discrimination legislation has been enacted in such areas as sexual harassment, parenting and the granting of paid paternity leave to married male employees. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

1998 has been continuously operating and focusing on activities that promote the economic empowerment of women and gender equality through training, research and advocacy, gender and development. Aside from providing a whole range of vocational and technical education such as household service work and caregiving, opportunities are available for training of women in non-traditional trades such as auto mechanics, electronics, and welding. Recently, the Bureau of Labor Relations and Management has released data showing that female drivers have less accidents than male drivers.

To enhance the enabling environment for women's access to microenterprises development, the Philippine Commission on Women maintains a registry of services provided by agencies from the government economic cluster---trade and industry, science and technology, environment and natural resources, occupational safety and health as well as social protection agencies in the national health insurance system.

Two final points, Mr. Chairman.

The Philippine Government recognizes the important role of national mechanisms which promote and protect women's human rights stipulated in UN Convention and strongly supports the application for independent participation by national human rights institutions in CSW.

Finally, the Philippines has sponsored a resolution on *Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies*. We encourage member states to support our resolution.

Thank you.

The labor force participation of women remains low compared to men despite higher educational levels. Men are more likely to be wage and salary and own account workers while women are likely to be unpaid workers and comprise 85% of the informal economy.

The Philippines is committed to pursue the Decent Work Agenda as spelled out in the Philippine Development Plan. The Decent Work Country Programme has been translated into National Plans of Action for Decent Work. This plan seeks to increase employment and income opportunities for women, and recognizes that gender is a major cross cutting issue that should be a major concern in all decent work projects.

To facilitate decent work, gender based discrimination legislation has been enacted in such areas as sexual harassment, solo parenting and the granting of paid paternity leave. The Commission on Women (COW) has been established and Skills Development Authority (SDA) has been continuously operating and focusing on activities that promote the economic empowerment of women and gender equality through training, research and advocacy, gender and development. Aside from providing a whole range of vocational and technical education such as household service work and caregiving, opportunities are available also for training of women in non-traditional trades such as auto mechanics, electronics and welding. Recently, TESDA has also offered training for women bus drivers leading on data showing that female drivers have less accident than male bus drivers.

To enhance the enabling environment for women's access to microenterprises development, the Philippine Commission on Women facilitates synergy of services provided by agencies from the government economic cluster—trade and industry, science and technology, environment and natural resources, occupational safety and health as well as social protection agencies like the national health insurance system.

Two final points, Mr. Chairperson.

The Philippine Government recognizes the important role of national mechanisms which promote and protect women's human rights stipulated in UN conventions, and strongly supports the application for independent participation by national human rights institutions in OSW.

Finally, the Philippines has responded positively to the international community's call for women's empowerment in Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies. We enjoy member status to support our resolution.

Thank you.