



## PRESS RELEASE

### *Philippine Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva*

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## PHILIPPINES ADVANCES THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS IN THE EVENT OF DISASTERS AT THE 34TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



*The panelists of the side-event titled “Advancing Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters: Exploring Multi-stakeholder Perspectives, Practice Insights and Legal Frameworks”, held on 28 October 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland, (L-R) Kenya Permanent Representative Fancy Chepkemai Too, Philippines Permanent Representative Carlos Sorreta, IFRC Secretary General Jagan Chapagain, Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlaog of the Disaster Response and Management Group of the Department of Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines, Ms. Jenty Kirsch-Wood, UNDRR Head of Global Risk Management & Reporting and Senior Programme Management Officer, and Mr. Frank Mohrhauer, IFRC Director, National Society Development Services.*

**Geneva, 28 October 2024** – The Philippine Permanent Mission in Geneva, in cooperation with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), advanced the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters (PPED) at a well-attended panel discussion on the sidelines of the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent held in Geneva, Switzerland on 28 October 2024.

The side event, titled “*Advancing the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters: Exploring Multi-stakeholder Perspectives, Practice Insights and Legal Frameworks*”, was organized to discuss ways to advance PPED and the integration of relevant principles into international frameworks and humanitarian efforts. The panel discussion also raised awareness of the ILC Draft Articles on PPED, which outlines fundamental legal standards for safeguarding vulnerable populations during disasters, innovative approaches to embedding PPED within local, regional, and global disaster risk management and reduction strategies, and humanitarian frameworks, offering insights into existing methods, best practices, and possible opportunities.

In his welcome remarks, Philippine Permanent Representative Carlos Sorreta underscored that the Draft Articles, developed by the International Law Commission (ILC) in 2016, offer an important opportunity to strengthen the legal principles guiding disaster response, enhance international cooperation, and fulfill obligations to protect the most vulnerable. He encouraged the international community to reflect on how these Draft Articles can shape policies to protect all individuals in crisis.

IFRC Secretary General Jagan Chapagain delivered the keynote address, highlighting the effect of disasters especially on developing countries and the need to fill the legal lacunae on disaster risk reduction through the adoption of the Draft Articles on PPED.

The discussion was moderated by IFRC Director Frank Mohrhauer and included Assistant Secretary Irene Dumlao of the Disaster Response and Management Group, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) of the Philippines, who cited the strong disaster risk management laws in the Philippines. She also elaborated on the benefits of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) in protecting people and responding to the devastating impact of disasters in the Southeast Asian region. Ms. Jenty Kirsch-Wood, Head of Global Risk Management & Reporting and Senior Programme Management Officer of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), explained the importance of Article 9 of the Draft Articles on PPED. Said article provides for a general duty for disaster risk reduction. Both speakers also expounded on how strong and well-implemented legal and regulatory frameworks, at the national and regional levels, can make a positive difference in effectively managing disaster risks and saving lives. They also discussed the benefits of a global legally binding instrument for the protection of persons affected by disasters.



Dr. Gwendolyn Pang, Secretary General of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC), conveyed the PRC's support for the development of a global convention on the Draft Articles on PPED through a read statement. *“Clarifying the rules for international relief in such an instrument would bring life-saving benefits to countries like the Philippines. A new treaty could provide a degree of certainty about what states can expect from one another when they offer or accept disaster assistance,”* she stressed. Delegates from Indonesia, Portugal, and Ukraine also made interventions, showing much interest in the topic.

PDD Chair and Kenyan Permanent Representative Fancy Chepkemoi Too thanked the participants for their interest and active participation, and conveyed the PDD's readiness to encourage states on disaster risk reduction and expressed support for the Draft Articles on PPED.



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