

# PRESS RELEASE

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

14-16 Allée David-Morse, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland • Telephone No. +41 22 716 1930 • <http://www.genevapm.dfa.gov.ph>  
E-mail: [geneva.pm@dfa.gov.ph](mailto:geneva.pm@dfa.gov.ph) • Facebook: Philippine Consulate General, Geneva URL: <https://www.facebook.com/genevapcg/>

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### **JUSTICE SECRETARY SPOTLIGHTS PHILIPPINES’ ‘HONEST, OPEN, MEANINGFUL AND ENDURING ENGAGEMENT’ ON HUMAN RIGHTS**



*Secretary of Justice Menardo I. Guevarra represents the Philippines during the High-Level Segment of the 49<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the Human Rights Council on 01 March 2022. retary-General’s Report” on 17 February 2022.*

**01 March 2022, Geneva, Switzerland** – Secretary of Justice Menardo I. Guevarra affirmed the Philippines’ commitment to sustain its long tradition of constructive engagement with the UN system, underlining that government efforts and investments to strengthen national accountability mechanisms " stand to benefit even more from the Joint Program with the United Nations".

Secretary Guevarra’s address at the High Level Segment of the Human Rights Council on 1 March 2022 underscored that Philippines intends to pursue this engagement track even with the change in administration in June following Presidential elections in May.

Secretary Guevarra reported on progress on the Department of Justice's ongoing work on the review panel to investigate case files related to the anti-drug campaign and on suspected cases of extra-legal killings and other gross human rights violations, while underscoring the openness of the Philippines to dialogue with experts in the UN system on capacity-building initiatives, including on the 1991 Minnesota Protocol on Investigations of Potentially Unlawful Deaths.

He cited Manila's discussions with Norway, Australia and the United States for support to the Joint Program on Human Rights.

He also cited the invitation extended by the Philippines for the UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression to undertake visits to the country.

Secretary Guevarra said that the Philippines will continue to work with the international community and all its development partners to build on gains achieved and further deepen honest, open, meaningful and enduring cooperation in the sphere of human rights

Secretary Guevarra assured that the Philippines' "commitment to human rights will remain unaffected by the passing incumbency of administrations, rooted as it is on our long history of engagement with this Council and reflected in policies that protect and promote the fundamental rights and freedoms of our people."

However, the Justice Secretary underlined before the Human Rights Council that the Philippines' positive engagement "will draw the line between parties that engage in good faith, and those that abuse and exploit these mechanisms to make demands of accountability with little or no factual basis."

The Philippines has consistently called for the Council to observe the highest standards of due diligence and objectivity, as some processes have been misused by some actors to make unsubstantiated or false claims.

Secretary Guevarra is among 143 of Heads of States and Governments, Ministers and other dignitaries addressing the Human Rights Council at its 49<sup>th</sup> Regular Session from 28 February 2022 to 01 April 2022 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva Switzerland. **END**