

PRESS RELEASE

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

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PHILIPPINES URGES TRANSPARENCY, JUDICIOUS USE OF FUNDS IN UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AT HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL SESSION IN GENEVA

Geneva, 09 October 2024 – Philippine Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Ambassador Carlos D. Sorreta called for transparency and the judicious use of scarce resources in the conduct of technical assistance by the United Nations (UN), at the ongoing 57th Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC57) in Geneva, Switzerland.



“Funds should go more to concrete projects rather than to salaries and administrative costs. Technical cooperation should help transform people’s lives. It should not be used as an excuse to entrench high-paying jobs or for political purposes”, Ambassador Sorreta stressed.

This is one of key lessons from the three-year joint programme on human rights that the Philippines and the UN embarked on to facilitate technical cooperation and capacity-building in support of national initiatives and institutional frameworks in six areas: (a) domestic investigative and accountability mechanisms; (b) data gathering on alleged police violations; (c) National Mechanism for Monitoring and Follow-Up (NMRF); (d) civic space and engagement with civil society; (e) drug control; and (f) counter-terrorism.

Ambassador Sorreta also underscored that capacity-building projects, to be effective, must be aligned with national priorities and time-bound and that national ownership must be respected to ensure sustainability of efforts.

The UNJP was concluded in July 2024, having successfully achieved its main objectives. *“We now take full ownership of our human rights agenda, while maintaining spaces for focused collaborative undertakings with bilateral partners and civil society”,* Ambassador Sorreta added.

The UNJP was managed through a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee, led by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the UN Resident Coordinator, bringing together various Philippine agencies, the Commission on Human Rights, UN agencies, civil society organizations, and representatives of donor countries.

Australia, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the European Union – that provided funding to the UNJP Multi-Partner Trust Fund under the stewardship of the UN Country Team. The Philippine Government provided 200,000 USD in addition to the budgetary resources allocated by relevant national agencies for specific projects under the UNJP.

On 4 October 2024, the Philippines organized a side-event on the sidelines of HRC57 in Geneva to mark the conclusion of the UNJP. The panel discussion titled “*After Technical Cooperation: Taking Ownership of the National Human Rights Agenda*” was headlined by DOJ Undersecretaries Raul Vasquez and Jesse Hermogenes Andres. The other speakers were Thailand Permanent Representative Usana Berananda, Australia Deputy Permanent Representative Emily Roper, Iceland Permanent Mission Counsellor Ragnheidur Kolsoe, Christian Salazar Volkmann, Director of Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division, OHCHR, and Ana Maria del Rosario-Dionela, Executive Director of ECPAT. **END**