

**INTERNATIONAL MINISTERIAL
CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR POWER IN
THE 21ST CENTURY
26-28 October 2022, Washington D.C.,
U.S.A.**

Madame President,
Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

A month after taking office, President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. gave a clear policy directive to diversify the national energy mix in our pursuit of a reliable, secure, sustainable, and affordable power supply.

Amidst the depletion of natural gas resources and projected decline of coal-fired power plants, the projected demand for a clean energy pathway in the Philippines is expected to grow at 4.4% per year, or almost 68 gigawatts of additional capacity by 2040.

The decision to go nuclear is even more compelling now in the face of a daunting triple threat: the challenge of post-pandemic economic recovery, steep inflation and rising energy costs, and the urgency of mitigating climate change.

As one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change, our participation in this conference is not just about economic considerations; but also to urge the international community to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and expedite the decarbonization of the power sector.

The Philippines' Nuclear Energy Program Inter-Agency Committee will evaluate and formulate a national strategy to include a roadmap and timeline in the preparation of a nuclear energy program, as well as measures to address infrastructure gaps and issues.

We continue to study all our options, including the possible deployment of small and medium-sized or modular reactors or SMRs, which may hold advantages for an archipelagic country with over 7,000 islands.

We continue to closely monitor developments in advanced reactor design and new fuel cycle technologies, including IAEA activities related to strengthening nuclear safety and security, as well as promoting non-proliferation.

We underscore the importance of the IAEA's comprehensive support, through its Technical Cooperation Program, to countries interested in or embarking on nuclear power programs.

The IAEA conducted a [Phase 1 Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review Mission](#) to the Philippines in December 2018, which assessed the status of Philippine infrastructure for the introduction of nuclear power.

The Mission identified current gaps in our nuclear infrastructure, as well as needs, opportunities for capacity-building and best practices. We look forward to working closely with the Agency in addressing the recommendations and suggestions issued by the mission.

We hope to develop a new Integrated Work Plan and update our Country Nuclear Infrastructure Profile with the IAEA to facilitate planning of cooperation activities on nuclear power.

Our Country Program Framework for 2022 to 2027 identifies “energy and industry” and “nuclear and radiation safety and security and radioactive waste management” as priority areas for technical cooperation between the Philippines and the IAEA.

In the last seven years, the Philippines has implemented a total of 29 technical cooperation projects in the area of energy and industry, in

addition to participating in a number of regional and interregional projects related to the different nuclear energy infrastructure issues.

We have an ongoing national Technical Cooperation project on “Developing Nuclear Energy Infrastructure” which focuses on the following: one, stakeholder involvement; two, development of the nuclear fuel cycle policy and radioactive waste disposal, adaption of the mechanism for nuclear emergency preparedness and response; three, legal and regulatory aspects; and finally, siting.

We also attach importance to developing our human resources for a future nuclear power program.

Last June, we started the recommissioning of the Philippine research reactor to support education and training of our future nuclear scientists and engineers, as well as enhance our national capacity in research, development and innovation. We hope to have this subcritical research reactor fully operational by 2023.

Madame President,

The Philippines will uphold the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards in our nuclear activities, in line with our commitment to protecting human health, the environment and society.

We continue to strengthen our capacities in radiation protection, radioactive waste management, transport safety and emergency preparedness and response.

We recently ratified the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material last year, and continue to reinforce our physical protection regime.

We are developing a comprehensive nuclear law that will ensure adherence to the relevant nuclear safety, security and liability conventions, as well as establish an independent nuclear regulatory body for the regulation and licensing of all nuclear activities and facilities in the Philippines.

The Philippine Congress recently established a Special Committee on Nuclear Energy that will look at the legislative aspects of nuclear power.

Finally, we remain cognizant of the challenges associated with promoting wider recognition of nuclear power, including gaining public acceptance and confidence.

A public perception survey on nuclear energy conducted in 2019 indicated that almost 79% of Filipinos approve, or find acceptable, the possible use or rehabilitation of an existing nuclear power plant. Around 65% approve of the constructions of new nuclear power plants, and more than 78% were willing to learn more about nuclear energy.

We continue to engage stakeholders, encourage frank discussion, and listen to their concerns.

Thank you, Madam President.