



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations

Agenda Item - 86: Protection of persons in the event of disasters

79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

4 October 2024, Trusteeship Council

UN Headquarters New York

Mr. Chair,

As it is my first time to take the floor, on behalf of the Philippines, I wish to express full support for you and the members of your Bureau. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the Sixth Committee for the trust reposed on me to continue chairing the Working Group on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters or PPED which will begin its work on Monday.

As an archipelagic state located in the boundary of major tectonic plates, at the center of a typhoon belt, the Philippines ranks high for population exposure and vulnerability to hazards.

The latest World Risk Report, which assesses disaster risk for 193 countries across 100 indicators, ranks the Philippines as number 1 among the countries with highest risk, for the 16th year. We also rank fourth worldwide, in terms of highest exposure.

With climate change, there will be an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme natural events.

Thus, to us, the rationale for the International Law Commission's Draft Articles, the frequency and severity of natural and human-made disasters and their impact, is urgent and real. Disasters have stronger impacts when interacting with multiple hazards, impacting people, but also the environment and economy.

Mr. Chair,

We have a rare – and in my view – a once-in-a-generation chance to step up and give life to our mandate, as part of the United Nations General Assembly, for the codification and progressive development of international law, on an issue that spells life or death for many.

The serious consideration of the Draft Articles is consistent with our collective responsibility to deliver a more resilient future. A durable framework for the protection of persons could be part of a long-term, sustainable, and durable response to the rise in disasters.

The Draft Articles' emphasis on human dignity, human rights, especially the right to life, and humanitarian principles, is consistent with the spirit of our national law. At the recent high-level meeting on Sea Level Rise, we highlighted the protection of persons as the so-called

human face of sea level rise, which is a slow-onset disaster. We noted, in this regard, the value of synergies in UN processes, including our ongoing work on PPED here in the Sixth Committee.

We, therefore, welcome anew the opportunity to examine the draft articles on PPED, exchange views in light of inter-sessional developments, and to consider further the recommendation of the ILC for the elaboration of a convention by the Assembly or by an international conference of plenipotentiaries on the basis of the draft articles, or any other potential course of action.

The Philippines, in its national capacity, will continue to engage constructively during the second and final session of the Working Group, recognizing the urgency of a prevention-focused, forward-looking, and multilateral approach to reducing disaster risks, and the need to collectively move forward in considering the Draft Articles.

As the Philippines gears up for its hosting of the 2024 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Manila later this month, where global leaders will convene to identify solutions to disaster risk issues and promote coordination and cooperation on the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Asia and the Pacific, we will continue to spotlight the value of the Draft Articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters as part of the long-term, sustainable, and durable solutions. **END**