



# SHAPING THE **AGENDA** FOR **PROSPERITY**

SPEECHES OF THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT

**AMENAH F. PANGANDAMAN**

VOLUME II: JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024



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*Quote on the back cover from the Secretary's message during the Recognition Ceremony for Resource Persons on the National Guidelines on Internal Control Systems (NGICS) and the Revised Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual (RPGIAM) held on February 28, 2024, in Manila*

# SHAPING THE AGENDA FOR PROSPERITY

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# About the Secretary

## AMENAH F. PANGANDAMAN



Amenah F. Pangandaman is the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

As DBM Secretary—the only female member of the country's Economic Team—she is the Chairperson of the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB), the Government Quality Management Committee (GQMC), and the Committee on Devolution (ComDev).

She is also Chairperson of the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) which, under her leadership, once again became a member of the global OGP Steering Committee beginning October 2024 and in February 2025 hosted the OGP Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting for the first time, participated in by over a thousand open government champions and reformers from more than 40 countries.

As the first Filipina Muslim Budget Secretary and the only Filipina Muslim in the Cabinet of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., she is also Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) which ensures the seamless transitioning to full autonomy of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). For her efforts as IGRB Chair, she earned the Gawad Kapayapaan Award given in 2024 by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU).

Among the achievements of the DBM during Sec. Mina's less than three years in office are the successful passage of the New Government Procurement Act (Republic Act No. 12009), hailed as the biggest anti-corruption measure in the country's recent history; the institutionalization of the Philippine Open Government Partnership through Executive Order No. 31; the creation of the Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms Roadmap 2024-2028; the full adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS); the strengthening of Program Convergence Budgeting (PCB); and the Philippines being recognized by the Open Budget Survey as being No. 1 in budget transparency not just in Southeast Asia but in the whole of Asia.

Sec. Mina also championed the much-awaited salary increase and for the first time, the granting of medical allowance for government employees, as well as the updating of the position classification and compensation scheme and system of career progression for public school teachers and school heads.

The hardworking Budget Secretary carries more than 20 years of experience in government service and has worked in both the Executive and Legislative branches, as well as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). She served as Undersecretary and Functional Group Head of the DBM Office of the Secretary from 2018 to 2019. She was Chief-of-Staff of former Senate President Edgardo J. Angara and also worked as BSP Assistant Governor, pushing for reforms on digitalization of payments and financial inclusion.

A truly dedicated public servant, she was awarded "Outstanding Filipina in the Field of Public Service" at the Gawad Pilipino Awards 2025 and granted an honorary Doctorate Degree of Philosophy in Economics (Honoris Causa) by the Mindanao State University (MSU) in Marawi City during its 61st Commencement Exercises. She was also recognized as "Public Servant of the Year" by the Asia Leaders Awards, "Outstanding Public Servant" by the Public Attorney's Office, and PeopleAsia's "People of the Year" in 2023 and 2024.

Sec. Mina holds a degree in Economics from Far Eastern University and a diploma and Master's degree in Development Economics from the University of the Philippines. She has also attended the London School of Economics for an Executive Master of Public Policy.

In her spare time, she volunteers for the Dugtong Buhay Movement bloodletting drive, which she founded in partnership with the Philippine Red Cross, the Philippine National Police, and the Philippine Coast Guard; finds ways to support the local textile and fashion industries; and spends quality time with her family and her adorable dog, Bimby.

## FOREWORD

# A VISIONARY LEADER

Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman's unwavering dedication to fostering good governance, advancing game-changing reforms, and ensuring inclusive economic growth affirms her reputation as a transformative leader. This has earned her numerous accolades, including the prestigious title "Outstanding Filipina in the Field of Public Service."

As the country's 12th Budget Secretary, she continues to make history by leveraging her unique position as the only woman in the Economic Team and the only Muslim Filipina in the Cabinet of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.

Under her leadership, the Department of Budget and Management has been championing anti-corruption and open government initiatives, modernizing the procurement landscape, strengthening public financial management, and digitalizing the bureaucracy. These monumental strides ultimately fulfill the needs and aspirations of the Filipino people while positioning the Philippines as one of the fastest-growing economies in Asia.

This second volume of her Book of Speeches captures Sec. Mina's impressive achievements as a public servant, highlighting her firm resolve to bring to life the Agenda for Prosperity and make the government closer to the people. Her speeches also show her commitment to genuine public service as she not only illuminates the Administration's vision for economic transformation but also amplifies the voice of the Filipino people.

As you read through the pages of this book, may you be inspired not only by the words but especially by the actions of Sec. Mina—a visionary leader shaping our nation's Agenda for Prosperity.

**MARGAUX V. SALCEDO**

Undersecretary

Advocacy, Capacity Development,  
Economic Affairs, and Stakeholder Relations (ACES)



## CHAPTER I: TRANSPARENCY

*Since her first day as Budget and Management Secretary, Sec. Mina has prioritized the establishment of a Philippine public procurement system that is truly inclusive, sustainable, reliable, and transparent.*



## Taking the Philippine Procurement System to the Next Level

Official Launch of the Methodology  
for Assessing Procurement Systems (MAPS) Report  
September 26, 2023 | Mandaluyong City

To World Bank Country Director Ndiamé Diop and Senior Procurement Specialist & Hub Coordinator Dominic Aumentado; Asian Development Bank Procurement Directors Rustam Abdukayumov and Jeffrey Taylor; Commission on Audit Assistant Commissioner Atty. Roy L. Ursal; fellow public servants, guests, ladies and gentlemen: Good morning.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, allow me to thank the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank for working alongside the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) in the assessment of the Philippine Public Procurement System using the 2018 updated MAPS—an important tool for evaluating the government procurement performance of a country.

It is also remarkable that the MAPS assessment proper was actually carried out during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic from January to November 2021. Fast forward to June 2023, the MAPS Final Assessment Report was published and issued the Seal of Approval.



*The Budget Chief discusses the proposed amendments to the decades-old Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA).*

And this couldn't have been more timely as we have just presented to the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) Meeting led by no less than our president, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM) last week, our proposed amendments to our 20-year-old Procurement Law. In fact, it was one of the priority bills included in the Common Legislative Agenda (CLA) of the 19th Congress to further advance the attainment of our social and economic transformation agenda.

As you know, Republic Act No. 9184, or the landmark Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), authored by the late Senate President Edgardo J. Angara—I was a young researcher during that time in his office—and enacted on January 10, 2003, was envisioned to address the lack of transparency and competition, eliminate collusion and political interference, and lessen delays in the procurement process.

GPRA was one of the biggest anti-corruption laws in the country which was, in fact, recognized by no less than the World Bank as a world-class legislation.

However, there has already been rapid transformation in technology over the past two decades, and the pandemic not only propelled the urgency for digital transactions in the country but also brought to light inefficiencies in the law in times of crisis. Even PBBM said during his latest State of the Nation Address that we need to make government procurement more attuned to our changing times.

And so, we commit to making the revised GPRA with its amendments as monumental and world-class as its predecessor.

Aside from adhering to international standards, our proposed amendments to the GPRA are aligned with the Key Areas for Improvement and Recommendations in the MAPS Report.

These proposed amendments will ensure a “fit-for-purpose” concept or “appropriateness” in the adoption of procurement modalities and address procurement challenges experienced on the ground.

We likewise recognize that one of the main pain points in public procurement is the lack of proper planning. This has resulted in gross inefficiency caused by failed biddings and poorly crafted technical specifications or requirements.

## TRANSPARENCY

To bridge this gap, our proposed amendments intend to introduce various strategies in procurement planning including market scoping, early procurement activities, engagement of a procurement agent, and the use of framework agreements to expand the pool of prospective bidders, take advantage of economies of scale, minimize the burden of conducting separate procurement activities, and generate time and money savings.

We will likewise leverage digitalization and innovation to make public procurement more efficient and transparent through the modernized Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (mPhilGEPS).

We will also soon have an electronic reverse auction and an electronic or eMarketplace which we will expand to not just common-use supplies but also non-common-use supplies.

And because sustainability is one of my advocacies and a commitment of this Administration, we will adopt a Green Public Procurement Strategy to procure goods, infrastructure projects, and consulting services with reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle. We will also integrate green practices and environmentally relevant criteria in the procurement design of a project.

Meanwhile, in constant pursuit of fiscal transparency and accountability towards an open government, we will also mainstream public participation in the procurement process by inviting at least two observers—one from the private sector and one from the civil society—to sit in procurement proceedings, ensuring equal access to information at all stages of the procurement process.

We actually presented our game-changing reforms during the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Global Summit last month in Tallinn, Estonia. And we were the only ASEAN member representative among anti-corruption champions in the high-level roundtable discussion on “Sustaining Leadership and Catalyzing Global Action on Anti-Corruption.”

Finally, as also cited in the MAPS Report, we recognize the need to establish an enabling environment for the professionalization of the procurement function. To address this, we will strengthen the institutional framework of the GPPB and GPPB-Technical Support Office to align its organizational structure and staffing with the technical and administrative support needed to implement all procurement reforms.

## Shaping the Agenda for Prosperity

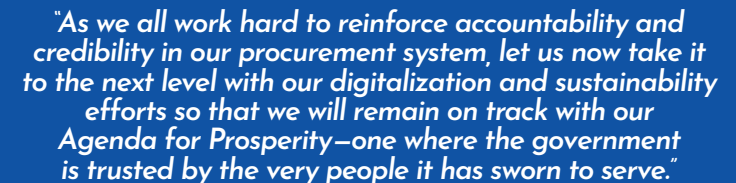
While the GPRA is an exemplary law, our society has changed drastically since its enactment 20 years ago. As such, it is no longer only beneficial but imperative for us to utilize the latest social and technological developments that we can use to meet the law’s noble objectives.

As we all work hard to reinforce accountability and credibility in our procurement system, let us now take it to the next level with our digitalization and sustainability efforts so that we will remain on track with our Agenda for Prosperity—one where the government is trusted by the very people it has sworn to serve.

And we hope that the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and all our partners in prosperity will continue to stand with us and help us create a public procurement system that is truly inclusive, sustainable, reliable, and transparent—one that we can proudly put at the heart of delivering public services.

Thank you.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



*“As we all work hard to reinforce accountability and credibility in our procurement system, let us now take it to the next level with our digitalization and sustainability efforts so that we will remain on track with our Agenda for Prosperity—one where the government is trusted by the very people it has sworn to serve.”*

## #ProcureProSummit: Building a Cadre of Procurement Professionals as Catalysts for Innovation and Competitiveness

Procurement Summit 2023  
October 23, 2023 | Pasay City

To our Government Procurement Policy Board-Technical Support Office (GPPB-TSO) Executive Director Atty. Rowena Candice M. Ruiz and our Procurement Service-Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM) Executive Director Atty. Dennis S. Santiago; our senior officials from various government agencies and fellow public servants; World Bank Senior Procurement Specialist Mr. Dominic Aumentado; and our other stakeholders, guests, ladies and gentlemen: Good morning. *Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

I am very honored and delighted to welcome all of you to this year's Procurement Summit where we strengthen collaborations and networks among procuring entities, suppliers, contractors, and consultants to help level the procurement needs of the government with the local market.



*DBM Secretary joins procurement experts and leaders from the World Bank, the Government Procurement Policy Board - Technical Support Office, and the Procurement Service-DBM for the Procurement Summit 2023.*

This year, we take our Procurement Summit to the next level guided by our theme, "Building a Cadre of Procurement Professionals as Catalysts for Innovation and Competitiveness."

And this is very timely, as we continue to push for the enactment of a stronger Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA)—one that is more attuned to the changing times and responsive to the evolving needs of our people.

In line with the government's bureaucratic efficiency and digital transformation agenda, we will leverage the adoption of digitalization and innovation in the new GPRA to make public procurement more efficient and transparent.

I also encourage everyone, especially GPPB-TSO, PS-DBM, and our procurement practitioners to make use of data science and data analytics to ensure that our policies are done and prepared, executed based on facts, and are data-driven.

Under its System of Accountability, we will ensure the professionalization of procurement officials. In fact, we will strengthen the institutional framework of the GPPB and GPPB-TSO to align its organizational structure and staffing with the technical and administrative support needed to implement all the procurement reforms in the bill.

And this Procurement Summit will take us one step closer to our vision of forging our path toward excellence and competitiveness.

I am excited to share that in this two-day Summit, we will have a Procurement Clinic for our stakeholders, as well as an exhibition of innovative products and services, including booths from the GPPB-TSO team and the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS).

And for the first time, we have partnered with state universities and colleges in our campaign for the professionalization of procurement system, anchored on the results of the Methodology for Assessing Procurement Systems (MAPS) initiative spearheaded by the World Bank and the Development Assistance Committee.

We have likewise curated several breakout sessions for procuring entities; civil society organizations; micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs); and contractors—true to our pursuit of an open government.



## TRANSPARENCY

As you can see, the GPPB-TSO has been doing its best to realize its vision to become a center of excellence for an innovative, responsive, and sustainable public procurement system.

To our dear stakeholders, I hope you will join us in reinforcing a procurement system that will bring us closer to our goal of a new Philippines—one where the government is trusted by the very people it has sworn to serve.

Thank you again for your service and congratulations on your 5th Procurement Summit! *Mabuhay ang GPPB-TSO!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

## Shaping the Agenda for Prosperity



DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman joins former Procurement Service-DBM Executive Director and now Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Managing Director Atty. Dennis Santiago (third from left) and his successor, current PS-DBM Executive Director Atty. Genmaries S. Entredicho-Caong (second from left) during the agency's appreciation event for trusted partners.

### One in Procurement and Service 2024: Transformative Public Service in the Digital Age

Procurement Service-DBM (PS-DBM) Appreciation Event  
February 29, 2024 | Pasay City

My warmest greetings to our colleagues and fellow public servants from various government agencies.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

I am honored and delighted to join the Procurement Service-Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM) as it celebrates yet another milestone event for its stakeholders. On behalf of PS-DBM, led by Executive Director Atty. Dennis Santiago, allow me to extend our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to our dear client agencies for your steadfast support and continued preference for PS-DBM as your trusted procurement partner.

This event's theme, "ONE in Procurement and Service 2024: Transformative Public Service in the Digital Age," speaks volumes about PS-DBM's commitment to achieving the government's Agenda for Prosperity, leveraging digitalization towards bureaucratic efficiency and improved public service delivery. As a testament to this, we are getting closer and closer to having a new and stronger Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA)—one that is more attuned to the changing times and responsive to the evolving needs of our people. Just yesterday, we attended the third and last hearing for the new GPRA. I thank Executive Director Atty. Dennis Santiago for his invaluable support in advocating this vital legislation that will propel

our procurement systems to the future—and of course, the PS-DBM family who are helping us make this happen.

The modernization of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System or PhilGEPS, for instance, is a truly significant step towards ensuring efficiency, transparency, and world-class quality in public procurement. We will even have an eMarketplace similar to Shopee and Lazada, enabling our client agencies to purchase common-use supplies and equipment or CSE in the comfort of their own offices and workstations. We will likewise expand the eMarketplace to include non-common-use supplies such as government vehicles—truly taking the Philippine procurement system to the next level!

And towards sustainability, we will also implement a Green Public Procurement Strategy to reduce the environmental impact of our procured goods and infrastructure projects.

If you will also recall, we signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Land Bank of the Philippines in August last year to commence the Government Purchase Card (GPC) Program. The GPC is a credit card that will serve as an alternative payment solution for the procurement of goods and services by national government agencies, further streamlining and expediting the procurement process by eliminating procurement lead time, among others. This will be discussed in detail by our speaker from Landbank.

All of these wins are anchored on President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s vision of a *Bagong Pilipinas* where the government is truly responsive to the needs of the people, accountable to its constituents, and fulfills its promise of prosperity to everyone. And we begin by reforming and digitalizing our procurement system so that the Filipino people will get the service that they desire and deserve.

Congratulations to PS-DBM and our beloved client agencies on the success of this event. United as One in Procurement and Service, may we never cease to work passionately in closing the gap between the government and the people we serve.

*Maraming salamat po at mabuhay po kayong lahat!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Coming Together for Successful Program Budgeting and Expenditure Management

2024 Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia (PEMNA)  
Budget Community of Practice (B-CoP) Meeting  
March 25, 2024 | Taguig City

To the World Bank Country Director for the Philippines, Mr. Ndiame Diop, together with World Bank key officials and specialists; PEMNA B-CoP Chair, Director of State Budget Preparation, and Directorate General of Budget of the Indonesia Ministry of Finance, Mr. Rofyanto Kurniawan; PEMNA Steering Committee Co-Chair and Director-General for Fiscal Sustainability of the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Korea, Mr. Junho Park; Head of the PEMNA Secretariat and Director of Center for Asia-Pacific Fiscal Affairs of the Korea Institute of Public Finance, Dr. Kyoungsun Heo; and to all participants from member countries of the Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia (PEMNA), good evening.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

The Department of Budget and Management of the Philippines is honored to host tonight's very important gathering of our Budget Community of Practice (B-COP).

Just two weeks ago, I was in New York as head of the delegation for the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. In my keynote, I invited all member states and stakeholders

to participate in constructive dialogue and foster collaboration for synergy and impact.

In this same spirit of multilateral cooperation, I would like to call on our PEMNA member countries to take part in this knowledge-sharing and learn from each other's best practices, so we can better carry out our respective mandates.

For this year's PEMNA B-CoP Meeting, we want to highlight the key principles and effective foundations for successful program budgeting. I know we've had a great start today with the session on Program Classification and the structuring of our budgets to enable the use of evidence, as well as the session on Pragmatic Program Budgeting and overcoming design obstacles to budget planning, management, and control.

In the Philippines, we have what we call the Program Convergence Budgeting (PCB) through which agencies work together to meet common objectives instead of competing for budgets. This is also consistent with the strategies espoused in our Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 to adopt coordinated action involving a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in achieving intended goals and outcomes. Guided by this framework, we consolidate and optimize the resources of the national government to gain its maximum benefit and multiplier effects for the economy and ultimately, the Filipino people.

*"I would like to call on our PEMNA member countries to take part in this knowledge-sharing and learn from each other's best practices, so we can better carry out our respective mandates."*

And so, alongside the PCB, we continue to adopt our existing reforms for greater budget transparency.

These include the execution of our commitments under the Philippine Open Government Partnership or the PH-OGP—which I currently chair. I am proud to report that as of last year—for the first time since we co-founded OGP in 2011—the OGP has been institutionalized in the Philippines through Executive Order No. 31, s. 2023. This ensures that open government values are embedded in policies and programs across

all government agencies. Because of this initiative, we were recognized as "a trailblazer in open governance not only in Asia but also within the Partnership" by no less than OGP Chief Executive Officer Sanjay Pradhan during the OGP Global Summit in Estonia.

I am also happy to share one of our participatory initiatives which we recently launched with our Department of the Interior and Local Government—the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting. Here, we will be partnering with local civil society organizations in identifying lagging municipalities to be provided with funding for safely managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services.

Still towards transparency, we likewise ensure the timely and online publication of our key budget documents, which include the People's Budget series, to support informed public debate on the National Budget.

Aside from PH-OGP, digital transformation has always been one of my top priorities as Budget Secretary. Hence, we are targeting to fully digitalize our Public Financial Management (PFM) Systems, beginning with the adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) across all government agencies, pursuant to Executive Order No. 29, s. 2023.

Just a few weeks ago, we partnered with the Asian Development Bank and held a workshop series on the development of the Philippine PFM Reforms Roadmap 2024 to 2028—a blueprint that will enable the full digitalization of our PFM processes and harmonize PFM policies across agencies.

This supports our PFM Competency Program (PFMCP), which we have expanded to capacitate not only budget officers from our national government agencies but also from local government units. This program empowers local PFM practitioners by equipping them with the necessary competencies to perform their critical role in their respective localities.

Finally, towards efficiency, as procurement is a major bottleneck to efficient government spending, I am also happy to share that the Philippines is getting closer to having a new Government Procurement Reform Act. The law aims to promote spending efficiency by adhering to global standards in procurement and leveraging digitalization through the establishment of an electronic Marketplace.



## TRANSPARENCY

We will also champion sustainability with green public procurement by encouraging agencies to procure common-use supplies and equipment items with green specifications. And in line with our commitment to open governance, we will introduce a participatory procurement process where members of the non-government sector will serve as observers during procurement proceedings.

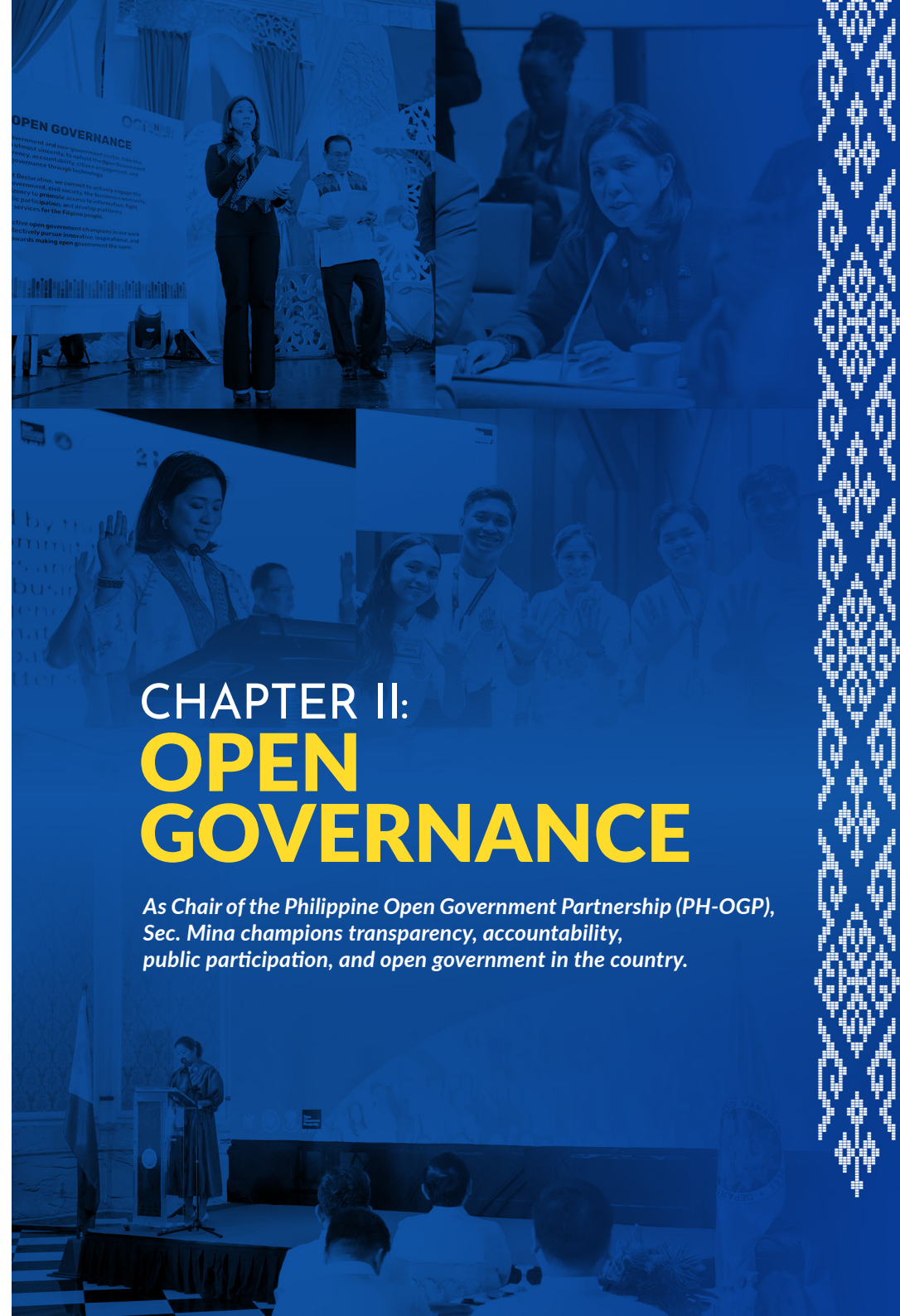
These are just some of the programs, policy directions, and reforms that we in the Philippines are working on to ultimately achieve our Agenda for Prosperity.

And through our strong network here in PEMNA, I am positive that we will all further strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of PFM systems in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Thank you once again for coming all the way to the Philippines for us to exchange and dialogue on our best practices. Together, let us achieve our shared dreams for our nations.

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahiwa Barakatuhu.*



## CHAPTER II: OPEN GOVERNANCE

*As Chair of the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP), Sec. Mina champions transparency, accountability, public participation, and open government in the country.*



From left to right: DBM Undersecretary Rolando U. Toledo, DSWD Undersecretary Adonis P. Sulit, DBM Undersecretary Margaux Salcedo, DILG Undersecretary Mario Iringan, DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga, DBM Secretary and PH-OGP Chairperson Amenah F. Pangandaman, Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin, Supreme Court Associate Justices Samuel H. Gaerlan and Maria Filomena D. Singh, NEDA Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan, then DOF Undersecretary Cielo Magno, and Director Davidson Torres from the Office of Senate President Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

## The Road to Better Governance: Whole-of-Government for Open Government

Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP)  
Government Steering Committee Organizational Meeting  
August 18, 2023 | Manila

Good afternoon.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, allow me to express my gratitude to all of you for making time despite your busy schedules. Thank you for being one with the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) and the Department of Budget and Management in our quest to fully institutionalize OGP in the country.

More importantly, yes, we are happy that we have representatives here from the Senate (Director Davidson Torres since our Senate President is busy now because of the sessions and committee meetings) and, of course, our Justices from the Supreme Court (Justice Samuel Gaerlan is a good friend and Justice Maria Filomena Singh—good afternoon) to show the solidarity of the Legislature and the Judiciary with our advocacy to push for open government in the country. This meeting would not be possible also without the support of the Office of Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin—thank you for facilitating this, Undersecretary Leonardo Roy Cervantes.

As you know, we are advocating a whole-of-government approach, so that includes our respective institutions sharing in the advocacy of open governance.

I am delighted to share with all of you that through the able leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM), we have already taken a great stride toward institutionalizing open government with the issuance of Executive Order (EO) No. 31 on June 20, 2023. This EO is a remarkable feat for the Administration and a momentous win for our people.

Over a decade since the Philippines became a founding member of the Open Government Partnership, it was only institutionalized this year—a testament to this Administration's commitment to promoting transparency, strengthening social accountability, and empowering Filipinos through open governance and public participation.

EO 31 directs the creation of a Steering Committee, composed of representatives from the government and civil society organizations, which will set the direction, programs, and activities of the PH-OGP. It also authorizes the PH-OGP Steering Committee to invite the Legislature and the Judiciary to synchronize and complement our open government initiatives.

For this reason, this very meeting is also historic, as this is the first meeting of the PH-OGP Government Steering Committee following the issuance of EO 31. Much more so since we have united the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches—despite being independent of each other—for this noble cause. Truly, it is unity—the resounding call of PBBM—that fuels this Administration, ignited by our passion to serve the Filipino people.

As such, we look forward to your active and meaningful participation in today's meeting, and the next meetings to come. And, as we go about our discussions, I fervently hope that we maximize the opportunity not only to lay out our plans for OGP but also to lead by example in shaping the country's path toward genuine open government. Guided by the whole-of-government approach and even the whole-of-nation approach, let us join hands in pursuit of open governance and transparency, and ultimately increase the Filipino people's trust and confidence in government.

The road to better governance is open, and it starts with us.

Thank you very much. *Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Taking Greater Strides Towards Open Government Through Digital Transformation

OGP Global Summit - Innovation Talks:  
Fostering Transparency and Public Participation Through Open Budget Portals  
September 4, 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia

To our fellow champions and advocates of open government and good governance, a pleasant afternoon. In Filipino, *magandang hapon po*. And, since I am also from an Indigenous Muslim group in Mindanao in the Philippines, the Maranao, allow me to greet you in Arabic: *Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*.

I am Amenah F. Pangandaman, Budget Secretary of the Republic of the Philippines and the Chair of the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP).

As PH-OGP Chairperson, it is my honor to welcome you all to this PH-OGP-led side event.

First of all, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to everyone here today for engaging in this session. And, we are very fortunate to have with us as our distinguished panelists—Prudence Cele, Director in the National Treasury of South Africa; Juan Mauricio Ramírez,



DBM Secretary and PH-OGP Chairperson Amenah F. Pangandaman welcomes participants to a side event during the OGP Global Summit 2023 in Tallinn, Estonia.

Secretary of Finance in Bogota, Colombia; Eneken Lipp, Head of the State Budget Development Office of the Government of Estonia; and our very own, Maria Francesca Del Rosario, Undersecretary and Chief Information Officer of the Philippine Department of Budget and Management.

In line with the objective of the 2023 OGP Global Summit to renew democracy through cutting-edge digital governance, today's Innovation Talks will focus on Fostering Transparency and Public Participation through Open Budget Portals. And I believe we are in the best place to hold this dialogue as we are in Estonia, the world's first digital republic and home of the Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment.

Digital governance is one of the policy areas of OGP. As such, innovation and the use of digital technologies have always been an integral part of advancing open government reforms. Through digital transformation, we have created and opened up new spaces for engagement and empowered citizens to actively participate in identifying solutions to governance challenges.

Recognizing this, in the Philippines, the PH-OGP team really pushed for the institutionalization of OGP. And thankfully, our President recognizes the importance of both digital transformation and having an open government.

I am proud to share that Executive Order (EO) Nos. 29 and 31 were recently issued. EO 29 provides for digital transformation through the full adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) while EO 31 provides for the institutionalization of the PH-OGP. Together, these EOs will propel the country toward bureaucratic efficiency and fiscal transparency.

Now we also want to ensure public participation. We recognize that promoting inclusive digital transformation entails ensuring adequate feedback mechanisms. These include monitoring public services and publishing in open data formats so that the public will have increased access, use, and interoperability across various datasets. And this is where "Fostering Transparency and Public Participation through Open Budget Portals" comes in.

Open Budget portals provide the public with online access to budget information in open formats and in real-time. A 2017 study by the International Budget Partnership revealed that countries that have

moved beyond the Open Budget Index (OBI) score of 60, such as Mexico, Uganda, and the Philippines, introduced open budget portals as part of their Public Financial Management reforms. An OBI score of 60 indicates that countries publish sufficient information to allow public discussions on the budget.<sup>[1]</sup>

In the Philippines, the Department of Budget and Management ensures the timely and online publication of key budget documents, which include the People's Budget series, to support informed public debate on the national budget. We have also operationalized a Civil Society Organizations or CSO Desk to respond to requests for information and address budget-related queries.

These are just some of our mechanisms to ensure that every budget allocation, decision, and implementation involves public participation. But we must also acknowledge that with growing access to technology—through which citizens voice their concerns—comes a greater need to reinforce their trust and confidence in the government.

While viewing this as a challenge, we should also embrace it as an opportunity to change people's perceptions and encourage them to take part in public affairs.

Hence, I fervently hope that our Innovation Talks this afternoon will not only showcase how fiscal transparency portals and digital solutions contribute to increasing public understanding of the budget process but will also provide a platform to share how we can maximize the transformative potential of digital technology to ensure greater efficiency in the delivery of public services and ultimately uplift the lives of our citizens.

As governments, it is our responsibility to make it easier for our citizens to enrich our civic spaces. Thus, it is high time for us to meet them halfway in digital platforms and through digital transformation.

And it should not stop there. Digital transformation should lead us to digital governance that is not only felt by those who have access to it but more importantly, by those who do not have the means to do so. Only then can we say that we have genuinely opened the government to the people.

<sup>1</sup> International Budget Partnership. 2017. "The Road to Budget Transparency in the Philippines"

I understand that Estonia's slogan is "Positively Surprising." And indeed, Estonia is! I was told that taxes are completed online within five minutes, 99 percent of public services are available online 24/7, and nearly one-third of Estonia's citizens vote via the Internet.

This is the digital transformation that the rest of the world should emulate!

I came here personally to share our achievements in Open Government in the Philippines. But today, I hope to learn from the different countries about your policies and systems so that we may go back home motivated and inspired to do more for our country towards transparency, efficiency and open government.

Let us make all our countries "positively surprising" ... that we may take even greater strides towards having an Open Government!

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

*"Digital transformation should lead us to digital governance that is not only felt by those who have access to it but more importantly, by those who do not have the means to do so. Only then can we say that we have genuinely opened the government to the people."*



The Budget Chief and Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) Chairperson addresses fellow anti-corruption champions from around the world during the OGP Global Summit 2023 in Tallinn, Estonia.

## Putting Sound Procurement at the Heart of Delivering Public Services

OGP Global Summit - High-level Roundtable:  
Sustaining Leadership and Catalyzing Global Action on Anti-Corruption  
September 6, 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia

A pleasant noon to our fellow anti-corruption champions and advocates of integrity and accountability!

I come from the South of the Philippines, so *Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*.

I am Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman, Chair of the Philippine Open Government Partnership. And I am happy and proud to say that we are one of the founding members of OGP. And just to show the magnitude of procurement nationwide, data shows that overall, public procurement represents an average of 13 to 20 percent of GDP.<sup>[1]</sup>

And the same percentage increased during the time of the pandemic and global expenditure in procurement is estimated at nearly USD 9.5 trillion. And to zoom in, the Philippines—since we have a new Administration, we have a new Medium-Term Fiscal Framework—

<sup>1</sup> World Bank. 2020. "Global Public Procurement Database: Share, Compare, Improve!"

will invest 5 to 6 percent of our GDP from now until 2028 to infrastructure spending. And yearly, roughly 45 percent of our National Budget is for procurement.

So across the globe and even in the Philippines, public procurement is one of the governance aspects most prone to corruption. A study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) revealed that corruption drains at least 20 percent of the procurement budget.<sup>[2]</sup> Meanwhile, public procurement contracts that are awarded through a corrupt system may lead to lower quality of infrastructure and public services.

For this reason, delivering transparency in procurement and contracting processes is a pressing concern that merits global attention.

The Philippine procurement system also had its share of controversies in the past. Thus, this new Administration significantly advanced open contracting reforms and enriched participatory spaces for improved transparency and accountability in government procurement.

Thanks to these reforms, the Philippine government saved at least USD 12.26 million in 2022. With better procurement strategies and policies, we are estimated to save 26 to 29 percent of our total procurement spending.<sup>[3]</sup>

Within just a year, we have already made significant improvements in our procurement system. This was possible through three things: alignment with national development goals, strong political will, and collective action.

Our Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028, our country's medium-term socioeconomic blueprint, puts a premium on the transformation of public procurement, among others. This will be achieved through the use of data-driven tools, increasing private sector participation, observing Open Contracting Data Standards, implementing green public procurement, and modernizing the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System or PhilGEPS. Moreover, we are professionalizing our procurement practitioners.

Thankfully, our efforts at reform also have the support of our new president, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., who recognizes the need to make government procurement more attuned to our changing times.

<sup>2</sup> OECD. 2013. "Implementing the OECD Principles for Integrity in Public Procurement: Progress since 2008"

<sup>3</sup> MAPS-Assessment-report-philippines-volume1.pdf (mapsinitiative.org)



## OPEN GOVERNANCE

Thus, we will introduce amendments to our 20-year-old law on Government Procurement.

In line with our bureaucratic efficiency and digital transformation agenda, the proposed amendments include systems integration for a more seamless procurement experience and the introduction of an eMarketplace feature. And to further streamline the procurement process for greater efficiency, we are also proposing the mandatory use of our PhilGEPS. This will leverage technology in the submission and receipt of bid documents.

Moreover, mindful of OGP, our procurement process shall adhere to the principles of open government for increased transparency by mainstreaming public participation and inviting at least two observers—one from a duly recognized private sector and another from our civil society, to sit in all procurement proceedings, thus ensuring equal access to information at all stages of procurement.

With the simultaneous efforts of our partners in the private and civil society sectors, leveraging a whole-of-society and whole-of-nation approach, I am confident that we can create a public procurement system that is truly inclusive, sustainable, reliable, and transparent—one that we can proudly put at the heart of delivering public services.

Thank you very much.





## Revitalizing Democracy Through a Whole-of-Open-Government Approach

OGP Global Summit - Roundtable on Democratic Renewal:  
Making Democracies Stronger Through Openness  
September 7, 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia

To our colleagues from the Open Government Partnership (OGP) community, a pleasant morning.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

The Philippines is the first constitutional democracy in Asia. It was also in the Philippines that the historic People Power Revolution took place 37 years ago.

As a true testament to the Philippines' thriving democracy, no less than our President, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., said at the last People Power Anniversary (and I quote): "I am one with the nation in remembering those times of tribulation and how we came out of them united and stronger as a nation...I once again offer my hand of reconciliation to those with different political persuasions to come together as one in forging a better society—one that will pursue progress and peace and a better life for all Filipinos." I believe



*Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman discusses the thriving democracy in the Philippines during the OGP Global Summit 2023 in Tallinn, Estonia.*

this is a prime example not only of political maturity and our President's strong commitment to unity and peace but also of the true democracy that we are blessed to have in the Philippines.

According to The Economist Intelligence Unit, a London-based think tank, the 2022 Democracy Index of the Philippines was 6.73 out of 10,<sup>[1]</sup> while a local survey conducted in the last quarter of the same year found that a record-high of 89 percent of Filipinos were satisfied with how our democracy works.

These statistics reveal that our democracy, while present, is still a work in progress. We are also happy to note that while a report from the Freedom House says that global freedom declined worldwide for seventeen consecutive years,<sup>[2]</sup> the Philippines gained improvements for the past years.

Again, it is still a work in progress. Nevertheless, we are striving to make it the best quality of democracy we can provide for the Filipino people, given our sociopolitical context.

Revitalizing democracy and strengthening democratic institutions require constant effort, especially as we face more complex challenges in these changing times. That is why on our end, we have been working very hard to strengthen open government in the Philippines.

And I am proud to share that our hard work has begun to bear fruit. Last June 20, 2023, our President signed Executive Order (EO) No. 31, which we initiated. This is a landmark EO that—for the first time—institutionalizes the Philippine Open Government Partnership or PH-OGP. This entails the creation of a policy and decision-making multi-stakeholder forum composed of government and civil society representatives. It also formalizes the country's commitment to open governance through the PH-OGP National Action Plan.

Through this EO, we are transforming the whole-of-government approach into what we can call the whole-of-OPEN-government approach as the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches—despite being independent of each other—come together to harmonize our open government initiatives. We also plan to cascade this to the local level, ensuring vertical and horizontal open government integration.

<sup>1</sup> Economic Intelligence Unit. 2023. "Democracy Index 2022"

<sup>2</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/FIW-2023-Complete-Book.pdf>



Further, we are now preparing the country's first-ever medium-term OGP National Action Plan, which has a new feature in its design process through a technical intervention that ensures symmetry across commitment designs—from results to milestones—following theories of change.

On top of these, the Philippines remains committed to strengthening democracy and open government by having an open budget, as we publish all our budget documents; open contracting, where we encourage open information in all stages of our procurement process; and open dialogue, where we encourage public participation in policymaking.

We believe democracy is the best foundation for a sustainable and prosperous society—a society that we commonly aspire for in our countries. But, the success of our efforts would only be possible through the support of the whole OGP community. Together, let us scale up our actions in advancing reforms to build healthier and more vibrant democracies for our nations and the generations to come.

Let us truly embody a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. Because a democracy without participation is no democracy.

Again, thank you very much. *Maraming salamat po.*



DBM Secretary and PH-OGP Chairperson Amenah F. Pangandaman joins a thematic breakout session co-organized by the Philippines for the OGP Global Summit 2023 held in Tallinn, Estonia.

### Fiscal Openness Towards Meaningful and Impactful Public Participation

OGP Global Summit - From Inclusion to Impact: Harnessing the Power of the People to Make Public Budgets More Responsive  
September 7, 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia

To our fellow champions and advocates of open government and good governance, a pleasant afternoon. In Filipino, *magandang hapon po*. And, since I am also from an Indigenous Muslim group in Mindanao in the Philippines, the Maranao, allow me to greet you in Arabic: *Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*.

I am Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman, Chair of the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP).

First, I would like to thank the International Budget Partnership and the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency or GIFT for co-organizing this thematic breakout session. On behalf of the PH-OGP team, please also accept our profound appreciation for your usual support of the country's fiscal transparency efforts.

The Philippines has a longstanding history of harnessing the Power of the People for a responsive and open government. Today, we are embodying this through increased transparency, citizen participation, and accountability in public financial management affairs.

In the 2021 Open Budget Survey (OBS) results, the Philippines maintained its lead in the Southeast Asian Region for Public Participation in the budget process, achieving four notches higher than our 2019 performance.

We also ranked 19th worldwide alongside developed countries such as South Korea and the United Kingdom for budget transparency, after garnering an Open Budget Index score of 68 out of 100. This indicates that key budget documents are published promptly and comprehensively to support informed public debate. The Philippines is likewise reported to have adequate legislative and audit budget oversight, with a composite score of 74 out of 100.

This achievement was made possible by publishing budget documents and addressing the fundamental policy and technical issues in making budget information more available and accessible to Filipinos.

Among other budget documents, we have consistently published the Budget Priorities Framework, which guides the alignment of our budgetary priorities vis-a-vis our socioeconomic agenda; the Technical Notes on the Proposed Budget, which provides comprehensive narratives on how financial estimates link to achieving our development goals; and the People's Budget series—which got the highest score of 92 in the 2021 OBS—translated into three languages, which convey key budget information to the public.

However, we recognize that making technical budget data available is not enough. As governments, it is our responsibility to thoroughly explain the reasons behind the budget and translate these into forms that citizens can easily relate to. As such, we remain committed to improving the quality and accessibility of our budget publications by translating highly technical information into easily understandable fiscal data and creative graphics, packaging data into open formats, addressing the citizens' request for information, and even maximizing the information dissemination potential of social media.

Having citizens equipped with adequate knowledge and skills on the National Budget also means enabling them to meaningfully engage in various phases of the budget cycle and at different levels of government. Thus, it is also imperative that the Philippine government becomes prepared to accommodate our informed citizens through avenues of participation such as the PH-OGP movement, the Citizen Participatory Audit Program, and the enhanced public procurement process.

A responsive budget leads to more efficient budget allocation, improved public service delivery, and enhanced good governance—our common aspiration for our governments. More importantly, for me, a good metric of the success of a National Budget is its ability to genuinely respond to the

needs of the people—by how it is felt by our fellow citizens and its impact on their lives.

This begins with inclusion, through accessible information; and empowerment, by creating spaces for meaningful and impactful citizen participation, which we at the PH-OGP are working very hard on accomplishing.

We provide a safe space through our *Dagyaw* Town Hall Meetings where civil society organizations (CSO) and the community are given a platform to discuss national and local issues, together with government representatives.

We have established a CSO Desk where citizens are allowed to voice out budget-related concerns.

We are also harnessing the potential of digital technology for a transparent and open government by utilizing remote-sensing technologies to track the progress and speed of implementation of government projects. We call this Project DIME, or Digital Information for Monitoring and Evaluation, where more than just monitoring, citizens may also provide their feedback.

And to further boost citizen participation in the delivery of public services, the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting was created and budgeted for Fiscal Year 2024. Through this program, access to safely managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services of lagging municipalities nationwide will be accelerated and identified through local participatory budgeting activities.

Finally, we are applying a whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach to open government with the landmark institutionalization of the PH-OGP through Executive Order No. 31, which we initiated last year and was signed by the President last month.

As you can see, we are truly committed to OGP. Through all these initiatives, and more in the pipeline, we hope to truly co-create and collaborate with the Filipino people—from Inclusion to Impact.

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



PH-OGP Chairperson Amenah F. Pangandaman leads the launch of the OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign.

## Bukás na Kinabukasan: Transformation to an Open Government

Launch of the OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign  
October 11, 2023 | Quezon City

*Isang mapagpalang at pinagpalang araw po sa ating lahat!*

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, please allow me to express my sincerest gratitude to everyone who made this purposeful campaign successful through their invaluable support—the Local Government of Quezon City, represented by City Administrator Michael Victor Alimurung; our very own DBM-National Capital Region, Region IV-A, Region IV-B, and Region V, together with our partner agencies, most especially the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Philippine Information Agency; our partners from civil society organizations; our fellow public servants; and of course, our dear participants. Truly, this gathering is an embodiment of the essence of open government—*ang pagkakaisa ng mga mamamayan upang makilahok tungo sa bukás at mabuting pamamahala ng bayan.*

*Alam po ba ninyo na ang Pilipinas ay isa sa walong bansang nagtatag o founding member ng Open Government Partnership o OGP? At makalipas ang labindalawang taon mula nang sinimulan natin ang OGP, patuloy pa rin ang ating pagsusumikap sa pagsulong ng open government o gobyernong walang tinatago.*

*Mapalad din po tayo dahil ang ating mahal na Pangulo—ang Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.—ay sumusuporta sa ating adbokasiya ng Open Government. Under his supervision and administration, sa kauna-unahang pagkakataon, kahit na noong 2011 pa itinatag sa Pilipinas ang OGP, ay ngayon lamang nagkaroon ng institutionalization ng Open Government.*

*Nitong Hunyo ay inaprubahan na niya ang Executive Order (EO) No. 31 na nagmamamandato o ini-institutionalize ang Philippine Open Government Partnership sa ating gobyerno.*

*Ibig pong sabihin, lahat po ng sangay ng ating gobyerno ay kailangang maging bukás o transparent at isulong ang pakikilahok ng taumbayan o ang tinatawag na public participation. Through EO 31, the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches—despite being independent of each other—are now working closely to synchronize and complement our open government initiatives. We will also integrate open government vertically and bring PH-OGP to the local level through OGPinas!*

*Ito po ay itinuturing nating malaking tagumpay, hindi lamang po para sa PH-OGP Steering Committee, kundi para sa sambayanang Pilipino.*

When we recently attended the 2023 OGP Global Summit in Tallinn, Estonia, we had the opportunity to personally meet and discuss our OGP efforts and initiatives with the OGP Chief Executive Officer himself, Sanjay Pradhan. *Sa pagpupulong pong iyon, pinuri po ng OGP CEO ang Pilipinas sa pagiging trailblazer ng open governance sa Asya at maging sa buong mundo. Sinabi rin po niya na ang open government ay nakaukit na po sa DNA ng bawat Pilipino.* I am proud to share that in the latest results of the Open Budget Survey, the Philippines was acknowledged as the leading country in the Southeast Asian Region for Public Participation in the budget process.

*Napakarami po nating magagandang inisyatibo at pagsusumikap upang isulong ang bukás na pamamahala sa bansa. Hangad po natin na sa pamamagitan ng OGPinas!, mailapit natin ang mga inisyatibong ito upang yakapin at mas lalo pa po nating mapagpaganap. Tulad po ng sinabi ko sa Philippine Delegation sa Estonia, the Philippines must be THE example of open government.*

So let us work harder and let us work together! Our mission here for OGPinas! is to encourage and instill a culture of transparency, accountability, public participation, and overall, open government in the country.



*Marahil, kayo po ay kawani ng gobyerno na nagnanais ng bukás at malinis na pamamahala; lider-estudyanteng hangad ang edukasyong bukás para sa lahat; miyembro ng civil society na layuning buksan ang mga pampublikong serbisyo sa mga sektor na kadalasang hindi natin naaabot; o mamamayang may gustong ipahayag sa ating gobyerno.*

*Anuman po ang dahilan ng inyong pakikilahok sa umagang ito, ang nais po naming ipahayag sa lahat ay may boses kayo at mayroon din pong makikinig. Bawat isa po sa atin ay susi sa bukás na kinabukasan.*

So, maximize this opportunity. Engage in discussions and take up spaces. Make your voices heard.

Let us be empowered by our vision for an open government and let us empower others through this platform to make the changes we all desire for the betterment of our country—even beyond our Agenda for Prosperity.

*Sa pagkakataong ito, makipag-usap, maki-diyalogo, makilahok, at sama-sama nating abutin ang pareho nating mithiin: isang Bagong Pilipinas na may nagniningning na kinabukasan para sa lahat.*

*Maraming salamat po at mabuhay po tayong lahat.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



From left to right: BARM Minister Ubaida Pacasem, BARM Chief Minister Ahod Balawag Ebrahim, DBM Secretary and Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) Co-Chairperson for the National Government Amenah F. Pangandaman, BARM Minister and IGRB Co-Chairperson for the Bangsamoro Government Mohagher Iqbal, and BARM Minister Sha Elijah Dumama-Alba

### Fulfilling the Promise of a Thriving BARM Through Open Government

OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign  
January 24, 2024 | Cotabato City

*Isang maganda at pinagpalang araw po sa ating lahat!*

*Hindi po lingid sa kaalaman ng mga nandidito na ako po ay isang taas-noong tubong Mindanao. Ako po ay isang Maranao, kung kaya naman, ako rin po ay anak ng BARM. So please allow me to begin by saying, Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

Allow me to also acknowledge the presence of Rt. Hon. Lord Jack McConnell of Glenscorrodale, former First Minister of Scotland, member of the UK House of Lords, and expert adviser of Westminster Foundation for Democracy, extending to us the UK government's commitment to the Bangsamoro peacebuilding.

Secondly, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to everyone who made this purposeful advocacy campaign possible through their invaluable support:

- our very own DBM Regional Office XII headed by no less than Director Akmad J. Usman;
- our colleagues from BARM—Chief Minister Ahod Balawag Ebrahim, Ministry of Finance, and Budget and

Management Minister Ubaida Pacasem, Ministry of Interior and Local Government Minister Sha Elijah Dumama-Alba, and the Office of the Chief Minister–Bangsamoro Information Office;

- the Local Government of Cotabato City led by Mayor Mohammad Ali “Bruce” Matabalao;
- my fellow Maranao, Associate Justice Japar B. Dimaampao;
- the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, represented by Mr. Zalave Dinas, and our partners from the civil society organizations;
- our fellow public servants, and of course, our dear participants.

We ended last year’s run of OGPinas! in Davao City, and I couldn’t be happier to be back in my beloved Land of Promise, now in BARMM, to kickstart the year—only two months since I expressed my hope to also bring OGPinas! here—a testament to the hard work and commitment of the DBM to empowering BARMM and a true testament to our strong relationship with the region. To the BARMM ministers who have supported this event, once again, *maraming, maraming salamat po! Shukran.*

Definitely, we have a lot of reasons to celebrate including this momentous collaboration among BARMM, DBM, and PH-OGP, sharing the common desire to bring the government closer to the people.

Most of all, we are truly blessed because we are also commemorating the 5th Founding Anniversary of BARMM this week. As Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Relations Body working very hard on the development of BARMM, this truly warms my heart and means a lot to me.

Back to OGP—*Alam po ba ninyo na ang Pilipinas ay isa sa walong bansang nagtatag o founding member ng Open Government Partnership o OGP?* And it was only under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM), through the issuance of Executive Order No. 31 last June 2023, that we have institutionalized the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP).

In line with this EO, we have brought the OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign to different strategic locations around the country—from Luzon to the Visayas, and Mindanao—in pursuit of strengthened public participation in policymaking and governance.

*Sa pag-iikot po namin sa iba’t ibang bahagi ng Pilipinas, nakita ko po na napakaraming magagaling at matutuwid na mga local officials na*

*nagsusulong ng open government o bukás na pamamahala sa kanilang mga nasasakupan. At higit na mas marami po ang ating mga kababayan na nagpakita ng kanilang pakikiisa sa ating adbokasiya. Gaya po ng sinabi ng Chief Executive Officer ng Open Government Partnership na si Sanjay Pradhan noong nakaraang OGP Global Summit sa Tallinn, Estonia, ang open government ay talagang nasa dugo nating mga Pilipino—at ang OGPinas! ay matibay na patunay nito.*

*Hindi lamang po dahil ako ay isang Mindanaoan ngunit dahil na rin sa aking mga personal na karanasan at pakikisalamuha sa ating mga kapatid dito sa BARMM, alam ko pong napakalaki ng ating pagpapahalaga sa good governance.*

In fact, one of the principles that the Bangsamoro Administrative Code adheres to is that, in pursuit of moral governance, the Bangsamoro Government shall maintain honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability, and participation in governance; and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption.

Indeed, we must make the call for open government and good governance stronger and louder here in Mindanao and in BARMM. *Marami na po tayong pinagdaanan para makamit ang kapayapaang ating tinatamasa sa kasalukuyan. At ngayon, kailangan naman natin ang open government upang mapangalagaan at lalong mabigyang-halaga ang tinatamasang kapayapaang ito.*

*Kaakibat po ng peacebuilding process ang pagsiguro na ang ating mga kapatid at kababayan sa Mindanao ay makaahon sa kahirapang bunga ng ilang taong labanan.* As such, I firmly believe that peacebuilding and socioeconomic recovery will be sooner achieved if we invest in inclusive, responsive, and accountable governance systems. We need to establish public trust in our institutions that will strengthen our commitment to carrying our people forward into a peaceful future.

And this is what *Bagong Pilipinas* is all about—the new tagline of the Administration—shaping a government that is truly responsive to the needs of the people; one that is visionary and accountable to its constituents; and one that fulfills its promise of prosperity for everyone, including the future generations.

At this point, I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate BARMM and its Government of the Day for having its Fiscal Year (FY)



2024 budget approved on December 21 of last year—just one day after PBBM signed the FY 2024 General Appropriations Act.

*Bilang Budget Secretary, ako po ay lubos na naniniwala na ang budget ang pinakadaan upang maiparating natin sa ating mga kababayan na tayo ay tapat sa ating pangako na tayo ay tutugon sa kanilang pangangailangan.*

Actually, PH-OGP is not new to Mindanao since the Province of South Cotabato joined the OGP Local Program in 2018 and has since crafted complementing local laws and resolutions that strengthen participatory governance. In fact, Governor Reynaldo Tamayo Jr. was with us during the OGP Global Summit. I hope that South Cotabato will inspire all provinces in Mindanao, and even BARMM, to embrace open government as they have.

We also recognize the significant contribution of our civil society organizations, people's organizations, and movements at the grassroots level in pushing for peace in Mindanao so I want to emphasize that this Open Government movement, OGPinas!, is for you—so that we can dialogue and work together towards transforming Mindanao from a land of promise to a land of promises fulfilled.

To my fellow Mindanaoans, please maximize this opportunity. *Ako po ay lubos na umaasa na ito po ang magiging simula ng pagyakap ng BARMM sa PH-OGP.*

I have always said that it is my dream to see a BARMM that is thriving and a Mindanao that shines as a land of promise—and I am confident that this dream will turn into reality through open government and good governance.

Hence, I call on each of you to join us in achieving our vision for an open government, and let us empower others through this platform to make the changes we all desire for lasting peace and prosperity in Mindanao—*tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas kung saan walang Pilipino ang maiiwanan, at kung saan ang gobyerno at mamamayan ay nagtutulungan at nagkakaunawaan.*

Muli, happy 5th BARMM Founding Anniversary! *Mabuhay po tayong lahat. Mabuhay ang BARMM at ang OGPinas!*

*Maraming salamat po. Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

### Bukás na Pamamahala Para sa Bata, Kasama ang Bata

Co-Creating OGP with Children:  
National OGP Consultation with Adolescents and Children  
September 30, 2023 | Quezon City

Hello and good afternoon to our very young participants today—the future leaders of our country—and to our OGP partners for this program!

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

For the young ones here who are not familiar with me, I am Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman of the Department of Budget and Management or DBM and I am also simultaneously Chairperson of the Philippine Open Government Partnership or PH-OGP Steering Committee.

First, I would like to thank and congratulate the Council for the Welfare of Children, the United Nations Children's Fund or UNICEF Philippines, the United Nations Development Programme or UNDP, our civil society organization (CSO) partners, especially the Positive Youth Development Network and Unang Hakbang Foundation, for making this trailblazing event possible. I would also like to thank the representatives from the Department of Education (DepEd),



*The National Open Government Partnership (OGP) Consultation with Adolescents and Children highlights the relevance of the OGP commitments to the Filipino youth.*

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) for joining us today.

This is the first time that we have engaged with adolescents for the Open Government Partnership or OGP. So, dear participants, you are a very special batch. You are the pioneer batch of junior advocates for OGP.

I am sure that you have already been introduced to the concept of Open Government. As you probably know by now, one of the important aspects and values encouraged by OGP is public participation in policymaking. We have already been doing that by consulting with national government organizations (NGOs) and CSOs. But this time, we have taken it a step further by consulting and dialoguing with our adolescent advocates!

So, I want to tell our young ones a very important message today: your thoughts matter. More importantly, your thoughts matter to us, your leaders in government. We want to hear you, we want to listen to you, and we want to take into consideration your ideas and perspectives. Because we, the current leaders in government, are not youth anymore. I am from Gen X; you are from Gen Z. We can only put ourselves in your place but only you really, truly know the challenges that you are facing. So, I hope that you have been fully participating and speaking up. Like Taylor Swift said, “Speak Now!”

But allow me also to share with you, our youth, what we—your leaders in government—have been doing for you.

On our end at the Department of Budget and Management, we are committed to pursuing the country’s economic transformation but with inclusivity and sustainability in mind. That means that we are focused on achieving economic growth but as we craft policies, we also seek to ensure that no one is left behind, especially not the youth nor the children, and that the impact is for all, including the future generations.

Let me share with you some numbers that you might not hear in the news or see on social media. For the development of children and youth through education, in the Fiscal Year 2024 proposed National Budget, we have allocated Php 924.7 billion to our Education sector. We have also included Php 41 billion for Education Assistance and Subsidies.

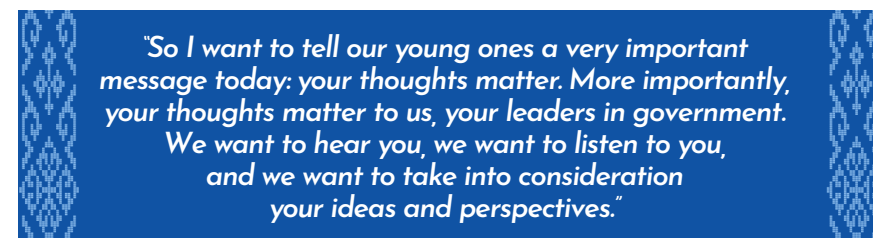
Aware of the necessity of being connected virtually today, especially for students, we are also making our country future-ready through digitalization. We are allocating Php 2.5 billion to support Free Internet Wi-Fi Connectivity in Public Places and State Universities and Colleges. On top of this, there is also a proposed allocation of Php 1.5 billion to help improve overall internet speed and affordability. We know how important the Internet is today, especially for students!

We are also addressing nutrition, which is very important in early childhood development. Hence, we have allotted Php 4.1 billion for the Supplementary Feeding Program of DSWD and Php 52 million for the Early Childhood Care and Development in the First 1000 Days Program.

These are just some of the initiatives of the government to ensure the growth and development of the next generations.

But we want to know from the youth yourselves what we might be missing or how we can further improve our service to the nation. So, as PH-OGP Chair, I encourage you all, through this event, to use this venue as a platform to air your concerns, ideas, and observations on various issues.

To our partners today, especially UNICEF and UNDP, thank you for supporting this milestone dialogue.



Our children and our youth include some of the most determined, creative, and inspiring members of our society. You are teeming with so much potential; you are our students, athletes, advocates, volunteers, speakers, storytellers, planners, and frontliners.

Hence, we recognize that it is incumbent upon us to provide you with accessible and safe spaces not only to ensure but also to encourage your meaningful participation and inclusion in the governance of our nation—as the title of this event suggests, “*para sa bata, kasama ang bata.*”

We want our children and youth to be empowered. *Kaya't pagsumikapan natin na ang kabataang Pilipino ay maging kabahagi at katuwang ng gobyerno sa paghubog ng isang lipunang hindi lamang makatao kundi makabata.*

A study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development concluded, "The well-being of society is most improved when investments are made in children."<sup>[1]</sup> Hence, on our part, we will continue investing in our children and our youth.

To our participants today: speak now! So that in the true spirit of OGP, we can improve government together. Please take advantage of this opportunity to bring fresh insight to our discussions, push for innovations, and most importantly, through the OGP platform, make the voice of your generation heard. After all, as Kailash Satyarthi, a children's activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner, once said: "No segment in society can match the power, idealism, enthusiasm, and courage of young people."

The Economic Team is now working hard to improve our economy so that we will have upper-middle-income status soon—that means a brighter future for all, especially the next generations. We call our action plan the Agenda for Prosperity. I hope that you, our participants today, and our partner NGOs and CSOs, will also become our partners in prosperity. Together, let us make our country a better nation for Gen Z and future generations.

*Maraming salamat po.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

<sup>1</sup> OECD. 2019. "Changing the Odds for Vulnerable Children: Building Opportunities and Resilience"



*The Budget Chief and PH-OGP Chairperson leads the commencement of the 2024 Open Government Week.*

### Philippine Open Government Partnership: Meeting the Moment, Raising Ambition, Rising to the Challenge

Open Gov Week 2024 Opening Ceremony  
May 27, 2024 | Quezon City

My heartfelt greetings and warmest welcome to our fellow champions of open government and good governance!

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to thank the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) Secretariat, headed by no less than DBM Assistant Secretary Rolando U. Toledo; PH-OGP Steering Committee members; our commitment holders; representatives from the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM); our development partners; Mr. Christoph Wagner, our Head of Cooperation of the European Union (EU) delegation to the Philippines; Dr. Selva Ramachandran, our Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); fellow reformers; policy experts; youth leaders; and civil society advocates for joining us in this endeavor and making this event a success.

All across the globe, we are facing a web of crises in the form of immense economic challenges, inequity, geopolitical shifts, a growing climate crisis, and the additional layers of complexity brought by new and emerging technology.



Despite this, a ray of hope shines through with the government and civil society working together to co-create ambitious and impactful reforms that transform our communities through the Open Government Partnership (OGP). And so, for this year's Open Gov Week, we are called to "Meet the Moment. Raise Ambition. Rise to the Challenge."

We meet the moment when we maximize our engagement in government decision-making. As reformers, it is upon us to take action against the perceived ills of our society, initiate change, and mobilize our fellow citizens to do the same. We must take advantage of the available platforms and use our voices, skills, and resources to the fullest extent.

In October 2023, with the valuable support of the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Philippine Information Agency, we launched our flagship open government nationwide advocacy campaign to strengthen public participation, "OGPinas!" And I am happy to share that in just seven months, we have already engaged 1,500 Filipinos from several provinces, cities, municipalities, and civil society organizations (CSOs) nationwide, encouraging everyone to inculcate the values of open government.

Best of all, we established the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting, making public participation in government a reality, as this will give 75 municipalities across the country access to safely managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services, but it will be the CSOs themselves who will identify the beneficiaries.

At PH-OGP, this is how we meet the moment.

Further, according to the OGP's Articles of Governance, OGP commitments should "stretch government practice beyond its current baseline concerning key areas of open government." Hence, it is our commitment that we will achieve demonstrable improvements in the 10 open government policy areas, thereby strengthening democracies and improving communities.

I am confident that we will achieve this as the first thing we did when I became OGP Chair was we institutionalized the PH-OGP—thanks to our President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.—through Executive Order No. 31. Through this, we now have not only a whole-of-government but a whole-of-open-government approach: the Judiciary became a commitment holder in the 6th PH-OGP National Action Plan—the country's first-ever medium-term national action plan on open government—and the members of the Senate have likewise expressed full support for our shared cause.

We have also welcomed a new set of non-government members to the PH-OGP Steering Committee, with a broader scope of representation by including representatives from the women, youth, environment and climate, and justice sectors. Relatedly, in today's program, we will recognize our civil society changemakers—previous Steering Committee members who have been instrumental in laying the foundations of a strong and inclusive community of open government reformers.

And of course, we are also very proud of our four additional local government units—Baguio City, Quezon City, Municipality of Larena, and Tagbilaran City—which have raised their ambition for open government and made it to the prestigious OGP Local Program.

Finally, we note that the 10 open government policy areas were also the highlight of the Open Gov Challenge launched during the 2023 OGP Global Summit held in Tallinn, Estonia, which we attended and for which the Philippines sent one of the biggest delegations. Likewise, this is the challenge before us in this year's Open Gov Week and the challenge we at the PH-OGP have been actively responding to.

As you can see, we have accomplished a lot for PH-OGP in recent months. And it warms my heart to see that more than meeting the moment, we have attested to the vibrancy of the open government movement and civic space in the Philippines. More than raising ambition, we have raised the quality of discussion on the country's governance. And more than rising to the challenge, we have made significant strides to uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos as represented in each of our sectors.

What remains now is for us to continue, if not surpass, what we do; be steadfast in our pursuit of a genuine open government; and realize our vision for a *Bagong Pilipinas*—a nation with an open government that meets the moment, raises ambition, and rises to the challenge.

Thank you very much.

Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.

*"More than raising ambition, we have raised the quality of discussion on the country's governance. And more than rising to the challenge, we have made significant strides to uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos as represented in each of our sectors."*



From left to right: Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, Tagbilaran City Mayor Jane Cajés Yap, Supreme Court Associate Justice Samuel Gaerlan, Commission on Elections Chairperson George Garcia, DBM Secretary and PH-OGP Chairperson Amenah F. Pangandaman, Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin, PH-OGP Co-Chairperson and MALAYA KA Inc. Executive Director Aurora Chavez, Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo, DFA Undersecretary Jesus Domingo, and DBM Undersecretary Margaux Salcedo

## Leading Transformational Collaborations Within the Partnership and Beyond

Philippine Open Government Partnership's (PH-OGP) Diplomatic Reception  
May 28, 2024 | Manila

To our Guest of Honor, Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin; Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court here present; my colleagues in the Cabinet and fellow government officials; my co-chair in the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP), Ms. Aurora Chavez and members of the PH-OGP Steering Committee; your Excellencies, members of the Diplomatic Corps; and to our fellow champions and advocates of open government and good governance:

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, please allow me to express my sincerest gratitude to the Heads of Diplomatic Missions and international organizations accredited to the Republic of the Philippines for generously accepting our invitation. We are celebrating Open Government Week around the world, not just in the Philippines, so being with all of you tonight is a strong sign of our one voice with the community of nations in pursuing open government.

I would also like to thank the Office of the Executive Secretary, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the PH-OGP Steering Committee, the PH-OGP Secretariat, and our National Action Plan commitment holders for their invaluable support in ensuring the success of this event.

As I mentioned, together with the rest of the world, we are celebrating the 2024 Open Government or Open Gov Week. This year's theme is: "Meet the Moment. Raise Ambition. Rise to the Challenge." We are calling on the open government community of reformers to take action and respond to the Open Gov Challenge.

The Open Gov Challenge—launched during the OGP Global Summit held in Tallinn, Estonia, in October of last year—aims to accelerate solutions in ten key policy areas of open government, namely access to information, anti-corruption, civic space, climate and environment, digital governance, fiscal openness, gender and inclusion, justice, media freedom, and public participation.

OGP Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sanjay Pradhan noted in his remarks at the Global Summit that to scale up ambitious reforms, we must mobilize stronger leadership inside our partnership and broaden our champions beyond our OGP community. This requires more OGP Heads of State and Ministers to visibly champion open government nationally and globally, mobilize ministries across the whole of government, and strengthen partnerships with key global platforms.

The role of the Diplomatic Corps in realizing our shared aspiration to make our nations more open, participatory, inclusive, and accountable is crucial. We already saw this when the Philippines joined other countries in founding the United Nations in 1945, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, and the OGP in 2011—all of which have significantly contributed to addressing global pressing concerns and have cemented their place as vital multilateral institutions.

Diplomacy, as you know, is instrumental in achieving national development goals. In the Philippines, it was essential in achieving a lasting solution to the recurring conflict in Mindanao and has likewise played a role in promoting economic stability and security across different administrations. Certainly, it will be vital in pursuing a genuine open government in the country.

As such, the PH-OGP has been working hard to lay solid foundations for open government locally and internationally. This is why we brought one of the biggest delegations to the 2023 OGP Global Summit, with

delegates not just from the Executive branch but from all three branches of government, including the Supreme Court.

At this Global Summit, we are very proud that no less than OGP CEO Pradhan recognized the Philippines as “a trailblazer in open governance not only in Asia but also within the Partnership.”

While the Philippines is a founding member of the Open Government Partnership, with our participation dating back to 2011 or over 12 years ago, we continue to work hard on being at the forefront of open government.

Under this Administration, at the initiative of DBM and with the immense support of our president, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM), we have institutionalized—for the first time—the PH-OGP through the issuance of Executive Order No. 31. Our profuse thanks to our President who is dedicated to making open government a vehicle for transformation of the Administration. This marked a historic feat for good governance in the country, paving the way for our Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches—despite being independent of each other—including our constitutional offices, to synchronize and complement open government initiatives.

*“Imagining the greater heights that we will achieve and the potential impact that we will create through the OGP gives us hope for a better and brighter future.”*

As a testament as well to the Administration’s commitment to open government, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) identified OGP as a key mechanism in deepening participatory governance in the country’s socioeconomic transformation blueprint, the Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028. This initiative was strongly commended at the OGP Global Summit.

To give life to this strategy and put public participation in action, we broadened the scope of representation in the PH-OGP Steering Committee to 20 members based on emerging global and national open government priorities. I am happy to share that the Committee now includes

representatives from the women, youth, environment and climate, and justice sectors—ensuring all voices are heard in the country’s governance.

To bring public participation beyond the Steering Committee, we launched the “OGPinas!”, our flagship nationwide advocacy campaign to strengthen public participation, reaching even the country’s farthest regions. I have personally joined the dialogues with civil society organizations and other sectors through this campaign, and since its launch, we have been to nine provinces in Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and even BARMM, and we have personally engaged with more than 1,500 Filipinos and counting.

I am also very proud to share that our local advocacy movement has borne fruit: four out of 55 new members of the prestigious OGP Local Program are local government units from the Philippines! And, we acknowledge the mayors of these LGUs who are here with us tonight. Let us give them a big hand! They are from Quezon City, Tagbilaran, the municipality of Larena, and Baguio City (Borongan and Cotabato have been members from way back). So Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and BARMM are well represented.

Alongside these, in fulfillment of the requirement of the OGP to produce a National Action Plan co-created with citizens, we have raised the bar, and instead of just producing a National Action Plan for one year, we completed the country’s first-ever medium-term action plan on open government through a highly consultative process, involving even children and the youth. This was a groundbreaking move, but we pushed for this because it ensures the sustainability of our commitments. I am proud that we now even have the Judiciary as a commitment holder—thanks to our dynamic Chief Justice as well, who is here with us tonight in full support of OGP—promoting open and accessible justice institutions.

At the DBM, we are also giving life to OGP by practicing participatory budgeting. I am pleased to report that 75 municipalities nationwide will receive access to safely managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services through the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting. The unique facet of this assistance fund is that the beneficiaries will be identified not by the government but by CSOs, attesting to the DBM’s commitment to the OGP principle of citizens’ participation as we deliver concrete benefits for our local governments.

In addition, we have localized access to information in 61 local governments and developed accessible means for the public to request information



from 570 government agencies through the Freedom of Information Acceleration Program.

This is reflected in the country's strong performance in the latest Open Budget Survey, which has positioned the Philippines within the top 30 among over 120 participating countries and a leader in the ASEAN Region in budget transparency.

To further strengthen accountability and ensure transparency, we will be guided by our Digital Transformation Roadmap, which promotes digitalization in fiscal-related government processes and data governance, thereby future-proofing our Public Financial Management system. In line with our 6th PH-OGP National Action Plan, we are implementing several digitalization projects, including Project DIME or the Digital Information for Monitoring and Evaluation Project, which utilizes existing technologies such as satellites, drones, and geotagging to compare fund utilization with actual project completion status.

At the OGP Global Summit in Estonia, one of my presentations that got the most applause and positive feedback was when I said that we are working on a new procurement system wherein we will enable public participation at all levels of the procurement process. I am happy to share that as of last week, or May 22 to be exact, with just a few months since the Global Summit, the New Government Procurement Act which I mentioned, has been ratified by Congress.

With the hard work as well of our DBM team, with our Procurement Service and our Government Procurement Policy Board, which I likewise Chair, our 20-year-old Government Procurement Reform Act has finally been updated to include a public participation mechanism, wherein observers from the private sector and civil society will now be invited to participate in procurement proceedings. This is a monumental win for efficiency, transparency, accountability, and OGP. To our legislators here today, *maraming salamat po*.

As you can see, we have been working very hard on OGP. And tonight, I have a big announcement to make: I am so excited to share with all of you that the Philippines has been chosen to host the OGP Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting in 2025! This will be in the first quarter of next year, and we hope to make this the most dynamic, fruitful, and memorable OGP Regional Summit. We hope that our Diplomatic friends will give us their full support for this gathering of OGP member nations in the region.

We believe that good governance and open government have been important drivers of economic growth and development, not only in the Philippines but also across Asia and the Pacific Region. With your support, we intend to leverage this, together with our vast experience in open government as evidenced by our accomplishments, emphasizing the importance of diplomacy to foster dialogue, peer-to-peer exchange, and transformational collaborations within the Partnership and beyond.

We have accomplished a lot for open government in recent years. Hence, imagining the greater heights that we will achieve and the potential impact that we will create through the OGP gives us hope for a better and brighter future.

And so, circling back to this week's theme, in the spirit of diplomacy and camaraderie, let us meet the moment, raise ambition, and rise to the challenge—TOGETHER.

We hope to see you all at the Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting! For now, please enjoy the evening, and let's celebrate our OGP wins!

I am confident that together, as *Bagong Pilipinas*, we will ensure that we remain a great example and a leader in OGP—in Asia and the Pacific and in the community of nations. *In Shaa Allah*.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

*Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay ang OGP! Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*

## Promoting Sound Fiscal Management Through the Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms Roadmap

Workshop Series on the PFM Reforms Roadmap 2024 to 2028  
March 11, 2024 | Video Message

To my colleagues from the national government, our development partners, members of the Legislative branch, and all public financial management researchers and practitioners present today, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Raḥmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First and foremost, I extend my warmest gratitude to the Asian Development Bank for hosting this workshop series dedicated to the development of the Philippine Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms Roadmap 2024 to 2028—a blueprint that will harmonize PFM policies across agencies and enable the full digitalization of PFM processes.

Through this workshop, we hope to review the PFM Reforms developed in the past years; identify gaps, potential challenges, and key learnings; and formulate key strategies in enhancing the implementation of these reforms over the medium term.

And with about 25 agencies present here today, we can all look forward to an exchange of inspiring ideas and innovative strategies that will help revolutionize the PFM landscape and further improve and harmonize our reforms, policies, and systems in the bureaucracy. Very briefly, allow me to share some budget reforms that we are implementing to ensure sound and efficient PFM in the country.

True to our commitment to the Filipino people, we are ensuring better and strategic planning and improving our budget preparation and execution process so that we can address the perennial challenge of underspending. We have integrated Performance-Informed Budgeting in the National Budget where agencies include their Major Final Outputs (MFOs) and other performance targets for their respective programs and projects—making it easier to evaluate their spending performance.

As Budget Secretary, institutionalizing and digitalizing our PFM systems has always been one of my top priorities. As such, we have been ramping up our digital transformation, starting with the adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information

## CHAPTER III: **DIGITALIZATION**

*Since her days as Assistant Governor at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to her rise as Budget and Management Secretary, Sec. Mina has been a steadfast advocate for digitalization, financial inclusion, and bureaucratic efficiency.*

System (IFMIS) across all government agencies, which we are approaching in a phased manner.

We are first developing the Budget and Treasury Management System or BTMS, with the primary objective of promoting fiscal discipline by improving resource allocation, allowing real-time transaction monitoring, and implementing comprehensive and automated accounting systems.

Alongside this, the DBM also recently launched Project TINA or the Technical Innovations in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) Application Project, which aims to create a unified system that will automate the budget process and boost operational efficiency.

Still towards bureaucratic efficiency, part of our vision is to be a champion of world-class procurement reforms. And to turn this vision into reality, we are advocating amendments to the decades-old Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA) which will address bottlenecks to efficient government spending and ultimately improve the use of public funds.

The new landmark law aims to achieve global standards in procurement by leveraging digitalization for efficiency and transparency through the establishment of the electronic Marketplace—an online platform where agencies may directly procure supplies and equipment from competent and reputable suppliers.

*"As Budget Secretary, institutionalizing and digitalizing our PFM systems has always been one of my top priorities. As such, we have been ramping up our digital transformation, starting with the adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) across all government agencies."*

We will also champion sustainability with green public procurement by encouraging agencies to procure common-use supplies and equipment items with green specifications.

And, in line with our commitment to promoting open governance, we will be introducing a participatory procurement process where members of the non-government sector will serve as observers during procurement proceedings.

This is also true to the spirit of the Philippine Open Government Partnership, which was institutionalized through Executive Order No. 31,

s. 2023. And I am happy to share that we continue to be recognized as a global leader in the open governance space, with OGP Chief Executive Officer Sanjay Pradhan naming the Philippines as "a country with open government in its DNA" during the OGP Global Summit in Tallinn, Estonia last year.

Amid all these, we are not forgetting our PFM practitioners themselves who play a pivotal role in promoting bureaucratic efficiency and ensuring sound fiscal management.

Just last year, we expanded our Public Financial Management Competency Program (PFMCP) to capacitate not only budget officers from national government agencies, but also from the local government units. Through this program, we hope to train budget officers on the intricacies of budget preparation and execution, financial accountability, and effective resource management. And I am proud to share that we have already empowered more than 4,500 PFM practitioners—and counting—nationwide, since our program started.

For 2024, we are planning to bring the PFMCP to at least 10 more regions and engage with thousands of local budget officers.

As you can see, the DBM is committed to championing innovative, responsive, and sustainable budget and procurement policies and reforms that will enable the government to steer the country towards inclusive and sustainable economic development. Through the development of the PFM Reforms Roadmap, we hope to achieve our Agenda for Prosperity and ultimately, a future-proof and sustainable economy.

So with the help of our partners such as the ADB, let us all work together in implementing game-changing reforms towards the equitable, prudent, transparent, and accountable use of public funds—and towards a *Bagong Pilipinas* that fulfills its promise of prosperity to everyone.

Thank you very much.



Scan the QR code to watch the **Secretary's full message**.





## Fortifying Cyber Cooperation for a Digitally Secure Philippines

Stratbase ADR Institute Conference:  
Fortifying Cyber Cooperation Towards Digital Security  
January 17, 2024 | Makati City

To our colleagues in the government, partners from the academe, as well as private and civil society organizations, cyber experts and the rest of the cybersecurity community, and our dear participants, a pleasant afternoon to all.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

I am honored to deliver this keynote for the second day of this very timely and relevant two-day conference. As you may all know, the Administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM) puts a premium on the country's digital transformation as a means to achieve our national development goals.

In his latest State of the Nation Address, PBBM underscored that “digitalization is the call of today” and that the “government must fully embrace digitalization to provide better service to the people.” In June of last year, PBBM also signed Executive Order No. 29, propelling our digital transformation advocacy forward by directing the full adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) in government agencies to improve bureaucratic efficiency and ensure the efficient delivery of quality services to the public.

Indeed, it is our responsibility to maximize the transformative potential of digital technology to ensure greater efficiency in the delivery of public services and ultimately uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos. Thus, we, at the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), are moving full speed ahead in digitally transforming our bureaucracy and our country.

Towards this mission, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) will receive a total of Php 6.9 billion budget for new appropriations under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 General Appropriations Act. And in fact, as we seek to apply the whole-of-government approach to digital transformation, we proposed a total of Php 38.7 billion to fund various ICT projects across the bureaucracy this 2024. This increased by 60.6 percent from its Php 24.93 billion budget in 2023.

Speaking from a budget perspective, we have fully embraced and are transitioning to digitalization as we are determined to have a more efficient and effective Public Financial Management (PFM) system in the country. In fact, digital transformation is at the core of the Department's reform agenda, especially as this has always been an advocacy of mine.

Following this, please allow me to share with you a few of our digitalization initiatives at the Department.

First and foremost, we will be launching our Digital Transformation Roadmap—our guiding document—which promotes data governance and digitalization in fiscal-related government processes. This roadmap has a dual transformation feature that will future-proof the entire bureaucracy by institutionalizing all the digital reforms spearheaded by the DBM.

In this roadmap, cybersecurity remains a paramount concern across various projects and initiatives from software development to infrastructure deployment. For software projects, implementing secure coding practices, regular code audits, and vulnerability assessments fortifies applications against potential threats. Meanwhile, employing strong access controls, encryption protocols, and intrusion detection systems adds layers of defense in infrastructure projects.

We also have Project TINA, or the Technical Innovations in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) Application Project, which will resolve pain points across our Budget and Management Bureaus, boost operational efficiency, and actively promote the digital evolution of the NEP Application. Through this project, we also aim to create a unified system

that will automate the budget process between the Executive and the Legislative branches of the national government.

Meanwhile, Project Marissa provides an innovative strategy that uses blockchain technology to enhance the management of critical data such as allotment release orders and other DBM records in public finances. Among its features are document tokenization to ensure immutability, tamper-proofing, and reliable digital history; a hybrid blockchain ecosystem to address both privacy and transparency needs; a user-friendly interface for document verification and tracking; and a public-facing portal on the public blockchain to facilitate independent verification and promote citizens' trust.

*"It is our responsibility to maximize the transformative potential of digital technology to ensure greater efficiency in the delivery of public services and ultimately uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos."*

We are also reviving Project DIME or the Digital Information for Monitoring and Evaluation Project, a game-changing initiative that utilizes existing technologies such as satellites, drones, and geotagging to compare fund utilization with actual project completion status for monitoring and evaluation of government projects while encouraging citizen dialogue. This is especially useful for far-flung areas to ensure that infrastructure development is realized, and adequate public service is delivered throughout the country.

Further, in recognition of the potential of data analytics in shaping strategic decision-making and fostering innovation, we have the Budget Data Analytics Managed Services Project, which includes the creation of four vital government dashboards. These will focus on monitoring and analysis of the 8-point Socioeconomic Agenda; inflation for food and non-food items; aggregate allotment per departments, agencies, and operating units; and financial performance, operational efficiency, and compliance of government-owned or -controlled corporations.

On a bigger scale, we will harmonize the policies and guidelines in the IT activities of the government through Project MITHI, or the Medium-term Information & Communications Technology Harmonization Initiative, in partnership with the DICT and the National Economic and Development Authority.

Likewise, we have been continuously lobbying and working for the passage of the Progressive Budgeting for Better and Modernized Governance or PBBM Governance Bill, which aims to streamline the processes of delivering programs and services across all government offices through the IFMIS. This will institutionalize the Cash Budgeting System, alongside the Budget and Treasury Management System (BTMS) which shall serve as a centralized database for all government financial operations from purchase to payment, and in turn, allow for real-time transaction monitoring.

To ensure the safe and seamless implementation of these initiatives, our Information and Communications Technology Group, headed by Undersecretary and Chief Information Officer Maria Francesca Del Rosario, has taken great strides to complement these with cybersecurity measures. These include the creation of a Zero-Trust Cybersecurity Framework, Data Loss Prevention, Identity and Access Management, Mobile Device Management, and Disaster Recovery Planning. And, I am very proud to share that we are the first in the bureaucracy to have an Information Security Division which will oversee our information security, cybersecurity, and IT risk management programs based on international standards and industry-accepted information security and risk management frameworks.

Further, we strongly support DICT's National Cybersecurity Plan 2023 to 2028, which emphasizes a risk-based approach and focuses on identifying individual Critical Information Infrastructures based on their significance and potential economic impact if breached.

For DBM, our ICT Group has also strategically allocated 20.92 percent of the Department's ICT budget to cybersecurity projects, which is notably even higher than the 10 percent internationally recommended standard based on the report published by the Deloitte Center for Financial Services.

All of these initiatives and achievements would not also be possible without the support of international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which provided us with technical assistance and benchmarking of best practices by other countries.

And so, before I end, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Embassy of Canada in the Philippines for co-hosting this conference. The success of this event is proof that the ever-increasing people-to-



## DIGITALIZATION

people ties between Canada and the Philippines have been strengthened throughout our 75 years of diplomatic relationship. And we hope to further strengthen this long-standing friendship, especially in the areas of digitalization and economic development.

In today's fast-paced, modern, and interconnected world, it is inevitable that we fortify cyber cooperation toward digital security—as the title of this event suggests. And I believe today's conference is a strong testament to our commitment to doing such, especially seeing astounding participation from different sectors of society, including members from the international community.

We are not oblivious to the challenges that we have, and we are well aware that we still have a long way to go to achieve our dream of digitally transforming our country. But as the famous saying goes, “The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Hence, I call on each and every one of you to take a step forward, maximize this opportunity, and enrich this avenue by sharing your knowledge and insights.

Together, let us explore innovative solutions and ensure a digitally secure Philippines.

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## CHAPTER IV: LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPOWERMENT

*Under Sec. Mina's leadership, DBM also empowered local governments through the Public Financial Management Competency Program which promotes good governance, financial accountability, and effective resource management.*





DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman joins the very first leg of the Public Financial Management Competency Program for Local Government Units (PFMCP for LGUs) held in Nueva Ecija in 2023.

## Tapat at Tumutugon: Capacitating Local Government Units in Public Financial Management

Public Financial Management Competency Program for Local Government Units  
September 29, 2023 | Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija

To Nueva Ecija Provincial Governor Aurelio Umali, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) President Dr. Feliciano Jacoba, and the NEUST community—*maraming salamat po sa mainit na pagtanggap sa* Department of Budget and Management; the Association of Local Budget Officers in Region III (ALBO III), Inc. headed by President Heriberto Tomas; my DBM colleagues, most especially to DBM-Regional Office III led by Regional Director Rosalie Abesamis whose support has been invaluable to the success of this activity; our local budget officers and Public Financial Management (PFM) practitioners; and all our participants: *Magandang araw po.*

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

Congratulations on being the first batch of the 2023 Public Financial Management Competency Program (PFMCP) for Local Government Units (LGUs).

This is also the first face-to-face PFMCP for LGUs this year! At *nakakatuwa naman po na marami tayong participants para sa buena manong event na ito. Buena mano po ito so dapat maswerte po tayong lahat!*

I would like to thank all of you for taking the time to participate in this event despite your busy schedules. I admire and commend your effort to improve yourselves through this program, your dedication to providing better quality public service, and your commitment to serving the people.

I have conversed with different PFM practitioners across the country, so I am aware of the many challenging situations and circumstances that you face at the local level.

*Mula sa pakikipag-usap natin sa iba't ibang mga LGU ay nalaman natin na isa po sa inyong mga hiling ay magkaroon ng targeted at LGU-focused na PFM Competency Program. Kaya po nagsumikap kami na maisagawa ito, kasama po ng PHILLBO.*

We specifically designed this training program for LGUs to deepen your knowledge on PFM with the end in mind of promoting good governance, financial accountability, and effective resource management in your respective localities.

That is why in the past two days, you were given updates and information under the Foundation and Budgeting Tracks; and today, you will learn about Government Procurement from our credible resource person, Atty. Maria Dionesia A. Rivera-Guillermo.

*Importante po ang procurement.* As we all know, procurement is one of the most crucial aspects of governance. In fact, we call it the heart of public service because it is through procurement activities that we are able to source materials to provide our fellow Filipinos with infrastructure, healthcare services, education materials, and more.

Hence, we are working very hard to improve our procurement systems to become future-ready, efficient, and, most of all, to ensure integrity in procurement processes. I am happy to share with you that just last week—September 20—we presented to the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) Meeting led by no less than our President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. our proposed amendments to the 20-year-old Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA). In fact, it was one of the priority bills included in the Common Legislative Agenda (CLA) of the 19th Congress to further advance the attainment of our social and economic transformation agenda.

These amendments include various strategies in procurement planning including market scoping, early procurement activities, and the use of

framework agreements. We will likewise leverage digitalization and innovation to make public procurement more efficient and transparent through the modernized Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (mPhilGEPS).

If all goes well, we will soon also have an electronic reverse auction and an electronic or eMarketplace which we will expand to not just common-use supplies but also non-common-use supplies. *Ito po ay similar sa Shopee at Lazada so mas madali na po tayong mag-order ng supplies for our use in our offices.*

We will also make our procurement systems go green! We will adopt a Green Public Procurement Strategy in the procurement of goods, infrastructure projects, and consulting services to ensure reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle. In addition, we aim to integrate green practices and environmentally relevant criteria in the procurement design of a project, and effectively establish a local market for green products.

*"Ultimately, that is the wisdom of the Mandanas-Garcia Supreme Court Ruling: to empower our LGUs to serve the people in your localities faster and better."*

Most of all, because DBM is the head of the Open Government Partnership Steering Committee in the Philippines, we will make procurement transparent by mainstreaming public participation in our procurement process. We will be inviting at least two observers—from the private sector and the civil society—to sit in procurement proceedings. And we will be the first country in the world to ensure equal access to information at ALL stages of our procurement process.

*Marami pa pong ibang reporma sa procurement but I will let our abled resource speaker go into details later.*

Now on the budget, I am proud to share that the House of Representatives approved the Fiscal Year 2024 General Appropriations Bill on third and final reading last Wednesday, September 27—wherein a total of Php 1.008 trillion or 17.5 percent will be allocated to local government units. And this feat would not be possible without your support, our dear budget officers, as you play a crucial role in bridging the needs of

our fellow Filipinos to the national government, making our PFM system responsive and people-centered.

Hence, we remain committed to continuing and even upscaling our efforts to provide you with more capacity-building and assistance in the future, as we update our PFM policies and guidelines to cope with the changing times and the evolving needs of our people.

I hope that through our capacity-building, you will be inspired not only to work harder but also to help us implement the necessary reforms that will improve our government systems and processes.

I also hope that this PFM Competency Program will help you create and execute the necessary Programs, Activities, and Projects (PAPs) that will make your respective LGUs thrive because ultimately, that is the wisdom of the Mandanas-Garcia Supreme Court Ruling: to empower our LGUs to serve the people in your localities faster and better.

*Sama-sama po nating paigtingin at pagitingin ang ating mga LGU sa pamamagitan ng wasto at tapat na pagsasagawa at paggamit ng ating mga budget tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas.* Together, let us secure a future-proof and sustainable economy and achieve our Agenda for Prosperity.

*Mabuhay po ang Region III! Mabuhay po ang Nueva Ecija! Mabuhay ang Pilipino at ang Bagong Pilipinas.*

*Maraming salamat po.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

## Building Synergy in the Delivery of Basic Services

Launch of the Support and Assistance Fund  
to Participatory Budgeting (SAFPB)  
February 21, 2024 | Cebu City

Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin C. Abalos Jr; Quirino Province Governor Dakila Carlo E. Cua; La Paz, Abra Mayor Joseph Sto. Niño B. Bernos; fellow public servants; guests; ladies and gentlemen: good afternoon to all of you. *Maayong hapon sa tanan*, Cebu!

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

When the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM) took over, the mandate given to us was clear: to craft a national budget that supports programs and projects that seek to advance the country's development goals over the medium term.

The President believes that budget choices have long-term consequences and actions undertaken today may prove necessary for our future. Thus, to have a truly inclusive and sustainable economy under a *Bagong Pilipinas*, priority has been given to creating more



DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman and then Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Benjamin C. Abalos Jr. lead the launch of the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting (SAFPB).

jobs; investing in infrastructure; ensuring a level playing field; upholding public order, safety, peace, and security; and promoting good governance, among others. This constitutes our Agenda for Prosperity.

And in our transformative journey toward a prosperous future, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to employ a whole-of-nation approach, particularly in finding solutions and implementing programs that would benefit our communities, including far-flung areas.

Thus, our Agenda for Prosperity requires public participation. It is important to hear the voices of the people that help governments be more accountable, transparent, and responsive. Moreover, increased public participation in government processes strengthens democratic institutions that will, in turn, help build synergy in delivering basic services.

Under the leadership of PBBM, we have created a space for the promotion of such participation through the signing of Executive Order No. 31, which institutionalized the Philippine Open Government Partnership or PH-OGP. This has paved the way for practicing good governance, promoting and deepening participatory governance, and bolstering public accountability and integrity.

I am proud to say that as Chair of the PH-OGP Steering Committee, we have been fulfilling our OGP commitments. With the institutionalization of PH-OGP, we have made great strides toward developing trust between governments and our citizens to improve and deliver development outcomes.

And now, we are taking another crucial step toward achieving our goal through the launch of the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting.

To achieve this objective, we have allocated a total of Php 1.0 billion for the Local Government Support Fund-Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting (LGSF-SAFPB) under the FY 2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA) to accelerate access to safely managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services in lagging municipalities nationwide, leaving no one behind in our *Bagong Pilipinas*.

The LGSF-SAFPB is designed to help improve water supply and sanitation through the construction, expansion, and upgrading of water supply system projects identified through local participatory budgeting process.



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPOWERMENT

We believe that ensuring sustainable water supply and sanitation services in local government units is key to human development, public health, and poverty reduction.

This program shall contribute to the full attainment of our goal of having empowered and responsible LGUs. Furthermore, this project shall provide a much-needed boost to the PBBM Administration's efforts to realize a responsive, accountable, and effective National Budget.

Our partnership and collaboration today have notably manifested the importance and essence of participatory budgeting in the country. Hence, let this important endeavor mark the start of our collective desire to promote a culture of mutual concern and regard for one another that would help shape the future of our society.

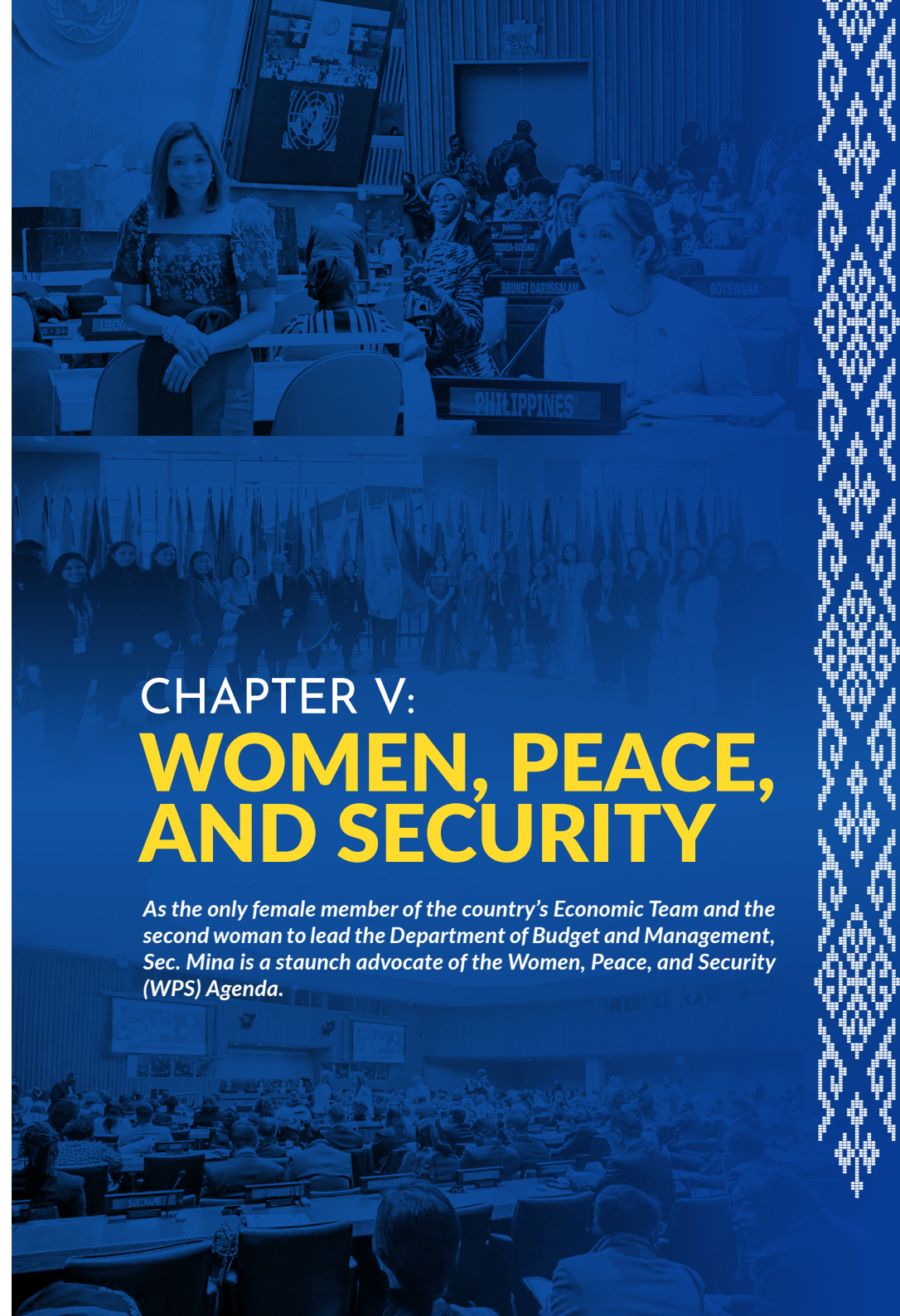
As I end, rest assured that the DBM is one with all of you as we continue to exercise our democracy, where every member of society has a say and is constantly involved in efforts to make our communities better.

We stand firm in our commitment to building synergy in the delivery of basic services through participatory budgeting and in making progress not just for some, but for all Filipinos.

*Kasama n'yo po kami sa pagpapalakas ng ating mga LGUs, sa pagpapaunlad ng bawat komunidad, at sa pagtaguyod ng isang progresibong Pilipinas para sa lahat.*

*Muli, maraming salamat at mabuhay po kayo.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## CHAPTER V: WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

*As the only female member of the country's Economic Team and the second woman to lead the Department of Budget and Management, Sec. Mina is a staunch advocate of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda.*

## Country Statement at the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68)

March 11, 2024 | New York City, United States of America

Excellencies, *Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*.

To our Muslim brothers and sisters, *Ramadan Mubarak*.

Mr. Chair (Ambassador Antonio M. Lagdameo), we are very proud of your leadership of this year's CSW. We are reminded of the Philippines' chairship in 1995 when the CSW played a crucial role as the preparatory committee for the negotiations on the draft Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA). This landmark document listed "Women and Poverty" as the first in its 12 areas of concern. And with its upcoming 30th anniversary next year, it is an opportune time to reflect on our progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

Upholding our commitment to gender-responsive governance and recognizing the intersectionality of the issues they face in society, the Philippines has made significant strides in promoting the rights of women and girls from different sectors.



DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman delivers the Philippines' statement during the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68).

In 2009, we enacted the Magna Carta of Women, a comprehensive anti-discrimination and gender-equality law. This law is further operationalized and translated into meaningful and targeted outcomes through the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Plan 2019 to 2025, the government's guide in formulating Gender and Development plans and budgets.

*"There is always more to be done to achieve a genuinely inclusive and gender-fair Philippines—and world. But this should only motivate us to continue to rise above the limitations we have experienced in the past and—in the true spirit of equality—make our voices even louder to achieve a future of empowered women and girls in a gender-equal world."*

As a testament to our commitment to financing with a gender perspective, all of our government agencies have been allocating at least 5 percent of their budget to support programs and activities on GEWE since 1995. In 2022, we spent an estimated USD 18.9 billion on gender programs.

At the same time, we continue to strengthen our institutions and social protection programs to address women's poverty. Our *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program, a conditional cash transfer program with a budget that has exponentially increased from USD 5.37 million in 2008 to USD 1.9 billion this 2024, has benefitted 4.4 million Filipino households. Cash grants are given directly to mothers of eligible households, increasing their ability to invest in the well-being of their families, thereby improving the survival, health, and access to education of their children.

With women-led micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) being the driving force of the Philippine economy, our government provides support to women entrepreneurs by strengthening their business skills through projects like the *Kapatid Mentor ME* (KMME) program which offers them coaching and mentoring, and government loans that improve their access to financing.

Aware of the vulnerabilities of women and girls during disasters, we are also working hard to incorporate gender-responsive measures in our climate action programs, including climate finance, such as our People's Survival Fund.



Recognizing the crucial role of women in the peacebuilding and development process of our Bangsamoro Region in Mindanao in the Southern part of the Philippines—home to Bangsamoro tribes, indigenous peoples, and settler communities—we established the Bangsamoro Women Commission, the body responsible for mainstreaming gender into the implementation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law, thereby ensuring the meaningful participation of women in decision-making at all levels of governance.

We continually celebrate women leaders in the country's governance. The Philippines has the distinction of having had two female presidents while our present Cabinet has five female Secretaries, including yours truly.

As Budget Secretary—the second woman to hold this position—I am proud to say that our initiatives to address the poverty experienced by women and girls in the Philippines are intersectoral and all-encompassing, from social protection to financial inclusion. Through collaborative efforts and targeted interventions, we are determined to break the chains of poverty and empower them at all levels.

There is always more to be done to achieve a genuinely inclusive and gender-fair Philippines—and world. But this should only motivate us to continue to rise above the limitations we have experienced in the past and—in the true spirit of equality—make our voices even louder to achieve a future of empowered women and girls in a gender-equal world.

Thank you and *mabuhay!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

## Welcome Reception for Heads of Delegations of the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68)

March 11, 2024 | New York City, United States of America

His Excellency, Ambassador Antonio M. Lagdameo, Heads of Governments, Ministers, ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

First of all, I would like to congratulate my co-host Ambassador Lagdameo, the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations (UN), for judiciously leading today's meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women.

I am deeply honored to address you tonight as Head of the Philippine Delegation. I am from a small city called Marawi in Mindanao where girls had difficulty accessing education, and women lacked access to health care, jobs, and other opportunities. So while I also proudly stand before you today as the only Filipina Muslim in the Cabinet and the only female member of the Philippine Economic Team, I also stand here representing all the women in the Philippines, and the world, whose rights we must protect and promote.

It is also a privilege for me to continue the mission of the great women who walked this path before me.

- In 1948, during the drafting of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, the Philippines already strongly advocated for equality between men and women;
- In 1979, at the 34th session of the UN General Assembly, the Philippines—a Filipino diplomat and senator—prepared the zero draft of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. The Philippines, alongside your countries, pushed for this treaty to be adopted;
- CSW serves as a platform for us to be visionaries. At CSW55 in 2011, the Philippines called for the adoption of a resolution that mainstreamed the gender agenda in climate change policies and strategies and the recognition of the differentiated impact of environmental crises, at a time when these issues were still far from mainstream consciousness; and
- CSW impels us to reach consensus through the power of dialogue. At CSW57, the Philippines chaired the negotiations on the Agreed Conclusion which focused on eliminating violence and discrimination against women and girls. This was a significant achievement because 10 years prior, the Commission failed to come to a consensus on the same theme.



In the next two weeks, we will reaffirm the power of multilateralism—global voices to bring hope, change, and impact for women and girls in every corner of the world. We are at a crucial juncture.

Almost 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, our world is facing multiple, converging crises. Skyrocketing cost-of-living across the globe, food insecurity, violent conflicts, a rollback in human rights and democracy, the after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change, among others, pose significant challenges for women all over the world. Care work remains undervalued and unequally distributed. Violence against women, sexual harassment, and systemic discrimination continue to undermine women's ability to fully participate in society.

This year's theme highlights how women's poverty hinders the full realization of gender equality, and how stronger institutions and financing with a gendered perspective can address this.

This thematic focus aligns well with the Philippines' implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting, as mandated in national laws such as Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women, as well as our national strategies, including the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Plan for 2019-2025.

Accordingly, we place high priority on the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women, inclusivity, respect for human rights, and innovation. Allow me to highlight some of our key programs that strengthen institutions and financing for women.

In 1995, we introduced the "Women's Budget" or the Gender and Development Budget in our General Appropriations Act, which defines the annual expenditure program of the government. This policy directs all government departments and agencies to allocate a minimum of 5 percent of their total annual budgets for gender programs, projects, and activities.

The Philippines, being one of the eight founding members of the Open Government Partnership or OGP, remains deeply committed to transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and civic participation. We just finished our 6th National Action Plan which seeks to improve the responsiveness of our public institutions to the needs of our citizens

*"So while I also proudly stand before you today as the only Filipina Muslim in the Cabinet and the only female member of the Philippine Economic Team, I also stand here representing all the women in the Philippines, and the world, whose rights we must protect and promote."*



From left to right: UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous, DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman, and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations in New York Antonio M. Lagdameo

through public participation and achieve transparency in the use of government resources.

We are also working hand in hand with civil society to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. Most recently, we have broadened the Philippine OGP Steering Committee Membership to include a seat for a women's sector representative to ensure the integration of the perspectives and voices of women in open government initiatives. And even better, she is now my Co-Chair for civil society.

In the area of peace and security, the Philippines steadfastly champions the full and meaningful participation of women. In the video address that we just saw, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. paid tribute to our valiant female revolutionaries who fought shoulder-to-shoulder with their male counterparts in our struggle for independence.

As a proud daughter of Mindanao in southern Philippines and Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB), representing the National Government in continuous dialogue with the ministers of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the participation of women in peace and security efforts, especially in Mindanao, means a lot to me.

As we work hard to ensure lasting peace and economic development in BARMM, it is worthwhile to look back and note that the peace efforts achieved success because of the participation of women.

In one of the rarest feats anywhere in the world, the government negotiating team was led by a woman, Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer. As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro this coming March 27, we also celebrate the Bangsamoro Women Commission, established through the Bangsamoro Organic Law, which integrates gender initiatives into the Region's Priority Agenda. This is the vehicle by which we will ensure the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in decision-making at all levels of governance in BARM.

Taking forward the Philippines' commitment to the global Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, I am proud to announce that the Philippines will host an International Conference on Women, Peace, and Security in Manila in October of this year.

In light of the upcoming 25th anniversary of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 next year, this conference in Manila will serve as an international stocktaking on the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and will highlight the power of inter-regional networks for sharing experiences, expertise and best practices in addressing challenges to meaningful engagement of women in peacebuilding. I invite your countries to participate in this conference.

With our stewardship of the peace in Mindanao, which offers lessons for inclusive peacemaking, and our role as a bridgebuilder in various multilateral fora, the Philippines will sustain its commitment as a pathfinder, partner, and peacemaker in the global community.

Our unwavering commitment to multilateralism is fully expressed in our bid for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for 2027-2028, which our President declared in his address before the General Assembly in September 2022. Once elected, we will serve our duty with a deep dedication to a peaceful, just, and equitable international order that is key to the flourishing of each of our nation's aspirations for our peoples.

Excellencies, distinguished guests,

Our gathering this evening sends a powerful signal about our profound dedication to women.

We invite all member states and stakeholders to participate in constructive dialogue and foster collaboration for synergy and impact. Our goal is to emerge with agreed conclusions and concrete actions that will propel us forward in achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls around the world.

Thank you and *mabuhay!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

## Policies and Strategies to End Women's and Girls' Poverty

68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women -  
Ministerial Round Table on Mobilizing Financing for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls  
March 12, 2024 | New York City, United States of America

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen:  
*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

The Philippines remains a committed partner in contributing to poverty eradication, the acceleration of gender equality, and the empowerment of all women and girls, as reflected in our Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028 and the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Plan 2019 to 2025.

To support gender mainstreaming, we introduced "The Women's Budget" as early as 1995 to implement programs and projects focused on GEWE. This was further strengthened by the Magna Carta of Women and regular policy issuances on preparing annual gender and development plans, budgets, and accomplishment reports.



DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman represents the Philippines at the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68).



## WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

In 2022, 24 percent of the National Government's budget was utilized to implement gender equality initiatives, including integrating gender-responsive elements into flagship programs.

Our *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program (4Ps), our largest social protection program, is a conditional cash transfer initiative that has benefited 4.4 million households, advancing access to education and health services, financial inclusion, and the empowerment of women and girls.

This is further strengthened by the *Kilos-Unlad* strategy, a social case management framework that facilitates the transition of beneficiaries from subsistence to successfully overcoming poverty.

Further, the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP) supports the vision of a gender-responsive MSME sector. With a USD 1.33 million budget in 2023, it created 3,348 jobs for Filipino women. We also improved women entrepreneurs' access to capital. In fact, 68 percent of those who access MSME loans were women business owners. This data supports the findings that more Filipino women use financial products and services than men.

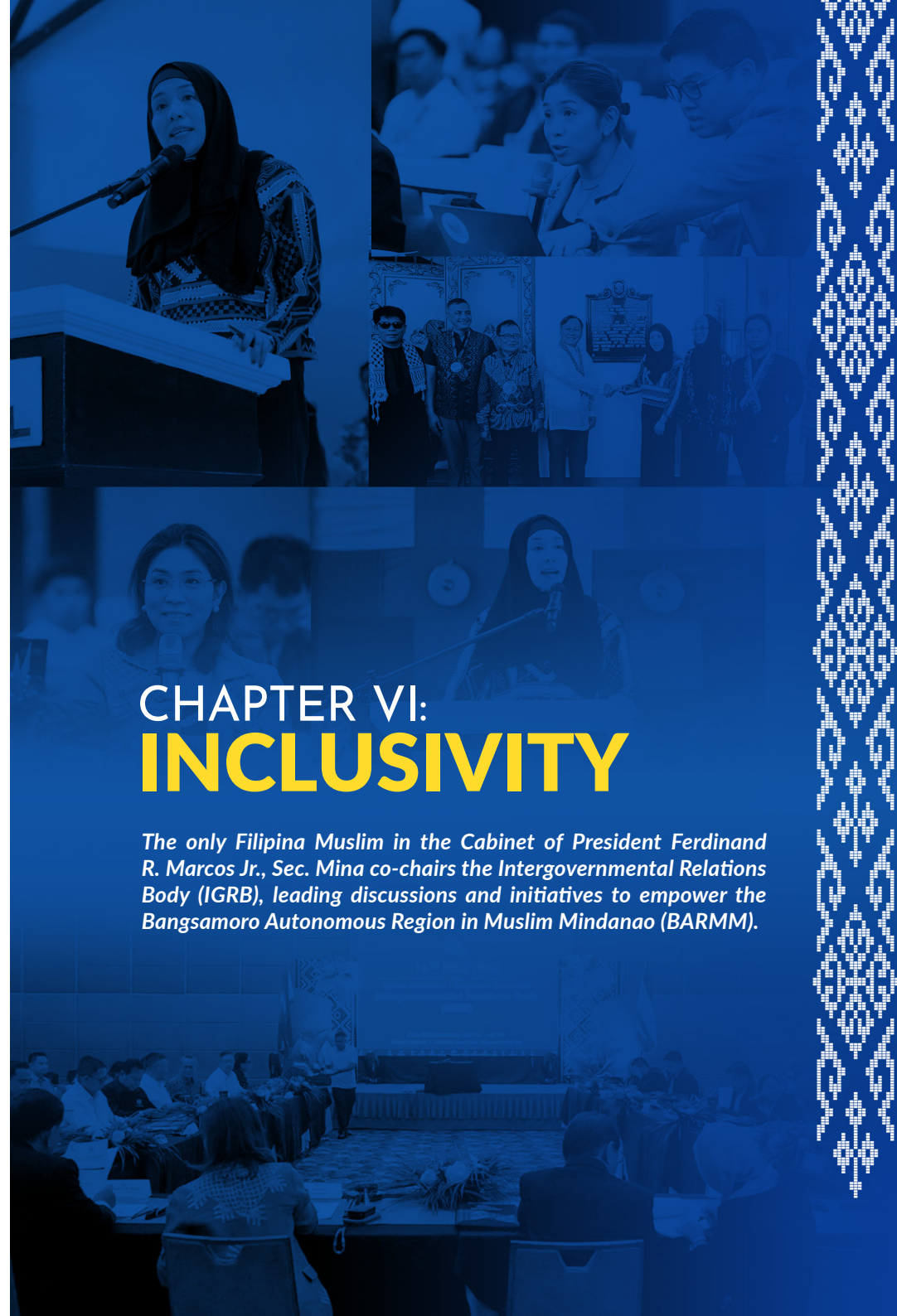
The Philippines also provides scholarships to students in secondary up to postgraduate level to address gendered poverty with a priority on science-based education that produces female graduates in technology, engineering, and mathematics careers.

A significant portion of the Philippine budget has also been allotted to support the health and nutrition of pregnant and lactating women, and to deliver culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive socio-economic services, which we will monitor through a gender budget tagging initiative.

Lastly, we recently signed the 2024 to 2028 Philippines-United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework that prioritizes joint initiatives with the UN on human capital development, inclusion, and resilience building.

Excellencies, the Philippines is one with the Commission on the Status of Women in recognizing and pushing for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by achieving global poverty eradication.

*Maraming salamat po. Thank you.*



## CHAPTER VI: INCLUSIVITY

*The only Filipina Muslim in the Cabinet of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., Sec. Mina co-chairs the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB), leading discussions and initiatives to empower the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).*





Amenah F. Pangandaman, the first Muslim Budget Secretary, joins the celebration of the 643rd Sheikh Makhdum Day and the unveiling of the historical marker of the Sheikh Makhdum Mosque in Tawi-Tawi.

## Muslim Mindanao: The Land of Fulfilled Promises, Peace, and Prosperity

643rd Sheikh Makhdum Day  
and Unveiling of the Historical Marker of the Sheikh Makhdum Mosque  
November 7, 2023 | Municipality of Simunul, Tawi-Tawi

To Tawi-Tawi Governor Yshmael Ismail Sali; Vice Governor Al-Syed Sali; Simunul Mayor Wasilah Abdurahman; Vice-Mayor Ershad Abdurahman; National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) Chair Dr. Emmanuel Calairo; National Museum Director General Jeremy Barns; Captain Christopher Auro and the Philippine Coast Guard; our fellow public servants and colleagues from the National and the Bangsamoro Governments; and to everyone gathered here today to witness this historical occasion: *Magandang tanghali po sa inyong lahat!*

*Assalamu alaikum wa Raḥmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

*Isang mapagpalang Sheikh Makhdum Day sa inyong lahat!*

First, I would like to thank the NHCP, BARMM, the Province of Tawi-Tawi, and the Local Government Unit of Simunul for this invitation. As a proud daughter of Mindanao and the only Muslim woman in the cabinet of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM), I am honored to deliver this keynote address for the unveiling of the historical marker of the Sheikh Makhdum Mosque. Together with the unveiling of the historical marker in the burial site of Sheikh Karim

ul Makhdum yesterday in Sibutu, these officially begin our countdown to the 650th Anniversary of the Philippine Muslim History and Heritage that will be celebrated in 2030.

While this is seven years away, we are very blessed to have a President who is one with us not only in advocating for the development and prosperity of Mindanao but also in recognizing the importance of Islam in our history and culture. So let me take this opportunity to thank PBBM—*bagong-bago pa ito*, fresh *na* fresh from Malacañang—for signing the Administrative Order No. 10, constituting the Situmiayat Wakhamsun Aldhikraa National Committee which shall take charge of the preparations for this celebration even as early as now. Rest assured that the Committee, chaired by the NHCP, with the NCMF and BCPCH as vice-chairs and with DBM as one of its members, will undertake the overall study, conceptualization, and implementation of programs and projects relevant to the commemoration with the end goal of reinvigorating the spirit of national unity. *Sa Bagong Pilipinas, makakaasa po kayong lahat na hindi lamang kasali kundi prayoridad ang Mindanao.*

*Kanina po ikinuwento sa atin ni Doctor Manny—tawag ko po sa kanya ay professor, kasi kapag may ibibigay po siya sa akin, laging libro; gusto po niya nagbabasa ako palagi ng libro—kaya si professor nung naikuwento niya kanina, he was only just three days in his position as chairman (of NHCP). Tapos, naimbitahan po tayo para sa 100-day countdown ng 125th Philippine Independence Anniversary. Habang nag-uusap po kami—siguro wala siyang maisip at nalaman po niya na ako po ay taga-Mindanao at ako po ay isang Muslim—sabi niya, parang kulang sa history ‘yung presence ng Islam. Pero mayroon na akong naisulat or mga anecdotes or historical background information and reference na ito ay magkakaroon ng celebration sa 2030. So with that small conversation, doon po lumabas ‘yung usapan namin para sa commemoration. That was just only March 3 of this year at wala pa pong isang taon.*

*Tulad po ng sinabi ko kanina, napirmahan na po ng ating mahal na Presidente ang Administrative Order No. 10 na nagpapakita ng kaniyang pagpapahalaga sa Mindanao. I believe this is because the Marcoses have in fact been staunch supporters of the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage from the beginning. In fact, it must be noted that President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. himself visited this very mosque in 1980 for the 600th anniversary of the establishment of Islam in the Philippines. Not only that, he also declared it a national cultural treasure. We are blessed that his son, PBBM, is now continuing this legacy for Muslim Filipinos.*

*Para sa akin naman po, it is especially meaningful for me to be present here today as a Muslim Filipina to personally honor Sheikh Makhdum,*

whom we remember and thank for being the missionary who brought Islam to the Philippines, which led to the building of this first-ever mosque in the country here in Tubig Indangan, Simunul, Tawi-Tawi. This mosque symbolizes the introduction of Islam to the country and its pillars—which have remained intact for centuries—are a testament to our people's rich history.

For us, Muslim Filipinos, this is an integral part of our narrative and our identity. And weaving this into our nation's history bridges religious and cultural gaps, and ultimately, promotes national unity.

I believe this is the message that the President and the NHCP are trying to impart—that Philippine Muslim history is and always will be an essential part of Philippine history. This is in line with the resounding call of the PBBM Administration to foster unity in the country amid our diversity.

*Napakahalaga po ng ganitong mga selebrasyon upang mas mapalawak ang kamalayan ng ating mga kababayan lalong lalo na ng ating mga kabataan, sa iba pa pong panig ng bansa tungkol sa kasaysayan nating mga Muslim Filipino. Hangad ko po na ito ay magbigay-daan upang yakapin ng mas maraming Pilipino ang ating kultura sa kabila ng ating mga pagkakaiba at magkaroon ng mas malawak na pag-unawa sa isa't isa tungo sa ating kapayapaan at pagkakaisa.*

We believe that it is through unity that we will successfully achieve our Agenda for Prosperity. At bilang Budget Secretary na tubong Mindanao, makakaasa po kayo na sisiguraduhin kong palaging kasama ang Mindanao sa pagkamtan ng adyendang ito.

I, together with the whole Department of Budget and Management, remain committed to the realization of a Muslim Mindanao that is thriving, and economic growth that is truly inclusive—one that reaches even the farthest ends of the country, including Tawi-Tawi.

Attesting to this commitment, we have fully released the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Block Grant to assist BARMM in achieving meaningful autonomy and lasting peace in the region. On top of this, we have also released Php 5.0 billion to fund the rehabilitation of conflict-ridden communities.

Our continuing capacity-building training and assistance to BARMM Public Financial Management (PFM) practitioners complement this. Just last month, we successfully conducted the PFM Competency Program, covering eight ministries of different BARMM provincial offices such as Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, and Maguindanao.

I am also proud to share that the House of Representatives approved the FY 2024 General Appropriations Bill on third and final reading, wherein some Php 80.6 billion is allocated for financial assistance to BARMM. And this includes the Annual Block Grant with Php 70.5 billion, reflecting an increase of 9.0 percent from 2023.

Meanwhile, Php 5.3 billion has been allotted to the PAMANA or the PAYapa at MASaganang PamayaNAn Program for infrastructure development in BARMM. This will be implemented by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.

I am also happy to share that under the 2024 proposed National Budget, the NHCP will receive not just Php 1 million, not just Php 100 million, but Php 250.78 million, of which Php 57.01 million will be used to support its Historical Commemoration and Promotion Program, and some Php 5.5 million for its Philippine Muslim History Project.

*"...Philippine Muslim history is and always will be an essential part of Philippine history."*

*Hangad po namin na ang budget na ito ay makatulong sa mga inisyatibo ng Komisyon upang patuloy po nating mabigyang-halaga at mapagyaman pa ang ating kasaysayan.*

As we look back at the beginnings of Islam in our country, let us find inspiration in our rich heritage, that Mindanao may finally transform from a land of promises to a land of promises fulfilled. May peace and prosperity in the dawn of the new Philippines—*ang Bagong Pilipinas*—be with us all. *In Shaa Allah.*

Once again, congratulations on the unveiling of the historical marker of the Sheikh Makhdum Mosque.

*Bilang anak ng Mindanao, mga kapatid ko po kayo, at napakasaya ko po na makapiling kayo dito sa Simunul ngayong 643rd Sheikh Makhdum Day at mabigyan ng karangalan ang ating mga ninuno. Maraming, maraming salamat po.*

*Mabuhay ang Tawi-Tawi! Mabuhay ang BARMM at ang mga Pilipinong Muslim! Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Peace, Progress, and Prosperity for the Bangsamoro Region

18th Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) Meeting  
May 8, 2024 | City of Cagayan de Oro

Minister Mohagher Iqbal, members of the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB), ladies and gentlemen, good day.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

We are now on our 18th IGRB Meeting and I would like to congratulate everyone for our accomplishments in ensuring the delivery of quality and responsive public service to our brothers and sisters in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the past months.

We were fortunate that, in our last meeting, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM) joined us to personally express his solidarity with our commitment to “forge a better future in a kinder society where opportunities reward hard work, dreams can come true, and peace with justice will reign.”

I take this opportunity to once again thank our beloved PBBM for lauding the IGRB for sustaining the gains of the Bangsamoro peace



Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) Co-Chairperson and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Minister for Basic, Higher and Technical Education Mohagher M. Iqbal (left) and IGRB Co-Chairperson and DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman (center) lead the 18th IGRB Meeting.

process. Indeed, we can all be proud that in less than two years, we have activated not just a few but ALL of the seven mechanisms of the IGRB. That is a testament to our shared commitment and dedication to uplifting BARMM.

We are also on the path to making the Philippines—through BARMM—an investment destination. The Bangsamoro region generated Php 3.3 billion worth of investments in the last three months of 2023 alone, generating employment for thousands of workers—proving that BARMM is truly transforming from the land of promise into the land of promises fulfilled.

Allow me also to commend BARMM and my colleagues in the Philippine Government for the successful commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) last April 29 in Maguindanao. As a daughter of BARMM myself, it was especially meaningful for me that on this third visit of mine to BARMM since I became Budget Secretary, this time it was with no less than the President—as you can see, BARMM is no longer a neglected region but a priority in our Agenda for Prosperity.

It was also especially meaningful as the celebration likewise featured a graduation ceremony for 100 former members of the MILF and MNLF who are now part of the Philippine National Police Force.

Indeed, the CAB signifies more than just an end to conflict; it symbolizes our commitment to inclusive economic growth and prosperity. Hence, we celebrate not only 10 years of upholding such an agreement but 10 years of peace and prosperity for the Bangsamoro Region.

Looking forward, in May 2025 or exactly one year from now, we will hold the very first elections for the BARMM Parliament. This will be one of many historic wins—our legacy—in BARMM. I fervently hope that we will have a fair, peaceful, and inclusive election; and that we may elect BARMM leaders who will genuinely represent the voices of the people. *In Shaa Allah.*

It is truly inspiring when no less than the President sees the value in what we do as the IGRB. As such, let us continue with utmost dedication in our mission to uplift the lives of our *kababayans* here in BARMM and work even harder for a *Bagong BARMM* in the *Bagong Pilipinas*.

Let us always be reminded of our collective resolve for a truly inclusive path toward peace that secures the present and the future not just of Bangsamoro, but of the whole nation.

*Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay ang IGRB! Mabuhay ang BARMM! Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Empowering Public Financial Management (PFM) Practitioners, Uplifting the Lives of the Bangsamoro

Public Financial Management Competency Program  
in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao  
October 20, 2023 | Video Message

To the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Chief Minister Ahod Balawag Ebrahim; Ministry of Finance, and Budget and Management Minister Atty. Ubaida C. Pacasem; Bangsamoro Treasurer Naila Z. Dimaraw; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Senior Representative Ide Soichiro; Colleagues from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM); and to our Public Financial Management (PFM) practitioners in BARMM Provincial Offices and all our participants: *Magandang araw po.*

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

Since 2018, the DBM, together with the Ministry of Finance, and Budget and Management of BARMM, also in cooperation with JICA, has been implementing major capacity-building activities to help and guide the Bangsamoro Government in establishing a sound PFM system—the fundamental foundation for good governance, financial accountability, and effective resource management.

In recognition of the bond we have built through friendship and partnership, and in the interest of pursuing economic development in Mindanao, especially BARMM, we are here once again to conduct another round of capacity-building training for our provincial offices.

We are more than happy to help in ensuring continued skills development among our PFM practitioners towards our common goal: formulating and implementing a dynamic fiscal policy towards the upliftment of the lives of the Bangsamoro.

For the past few days, our top-caliber subject matter experts walked you through the PFM fundamentals and introduced you to the Budgeting and Performance Track modules including fiscal planning, performance-informed budgeting, program expenditure classification, and budget preparation.

But this is just the first phase. We hope to see you again for the Phase 2 of our program which will cover budget execution, developments in budgeting, and internal audit—all towards our goal of elevating fiscal management capabilities within BARMM's provincial offices, improving efficiency and instilling transparency and accountability in budgetary processes across the region.

I have always shared with you my dream as a daughter of Mindanao: to see a BARMM that is thriving and a Mindanao that shines as a land of promise. And now, with this strong collaboration between the national government, BARMM, and JICA, we are starting to reap the fruits of our labor.

Just recently, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), through its Fiscal Division, commended the Philippines for proactively improving its PFM systems through digital transformation. This was during one of the sessions of the IMF-World Bank Annual Meeting held in Marrakesh, Morocco, in October.

Most notable was the fact that last June, President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. issued Executive Order No. 29 directing the full digitalization of PFM processes through the adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) throughout the bureaucracy. Rest assured that we are very much willing to assist BARMM in also leveraging digitalization so that together, we can take our PFM processes to the next level.

Now on the National Budget, we have also fully released the FY 2023 Annual Block Grant to assist BARMM in achieving meaningful autonomy and lasting peace in the region. On top of this, we have also released Php 5.0 billion to fund the rehabilitation of conflict-ridden communities.<sup>[1]</sup>

We are also proud to share that the House of Representatives approved the Fiscal Year 2024 General Appropriations Bill on third and final reading last September 27, wherein a total of Php 80.6 billion is allocated for financial assistance to BARMM. This includes the Annual Block Grant with Php 70.5 billion, reflecting an increase of 9.0 percent from 2023. Meanwhile, Php 5.3 billion has been allotted for the PAMANA or the PAYapa at MASaganang PamayaNAn Program for infrastructure development in BARMM. This will be implemented by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.

<sup>1</sup> <https://bangsamoro.gov.ph/news/latest-news/barmm-secures-p5b-fund-from-dbm-for-rehabilitating-conflict-ridden-areas-including-marawi/>

## INCLUSIVITY

And all of these would not be possible without our PFM practitioners who play a crucial role in bridging the needs of our people to our governments, making our PFM system more responsive and people-centered.

Through this capacity building, I hope that you will be inspired not only to work harder but also to embrace innovations through digital transformation, and help us implement the necessary reforms that will improve our government systems and processes.

After all, we have the same Agenda for Prosperity. Together, let us secure a future-proof and sustainable economy where no Filipino is left behind, including and most importantly, the Bangsamoro.

*Mabuhay ang Pilipino at ang Bagong Pilipinas. Maraming salamat po!*

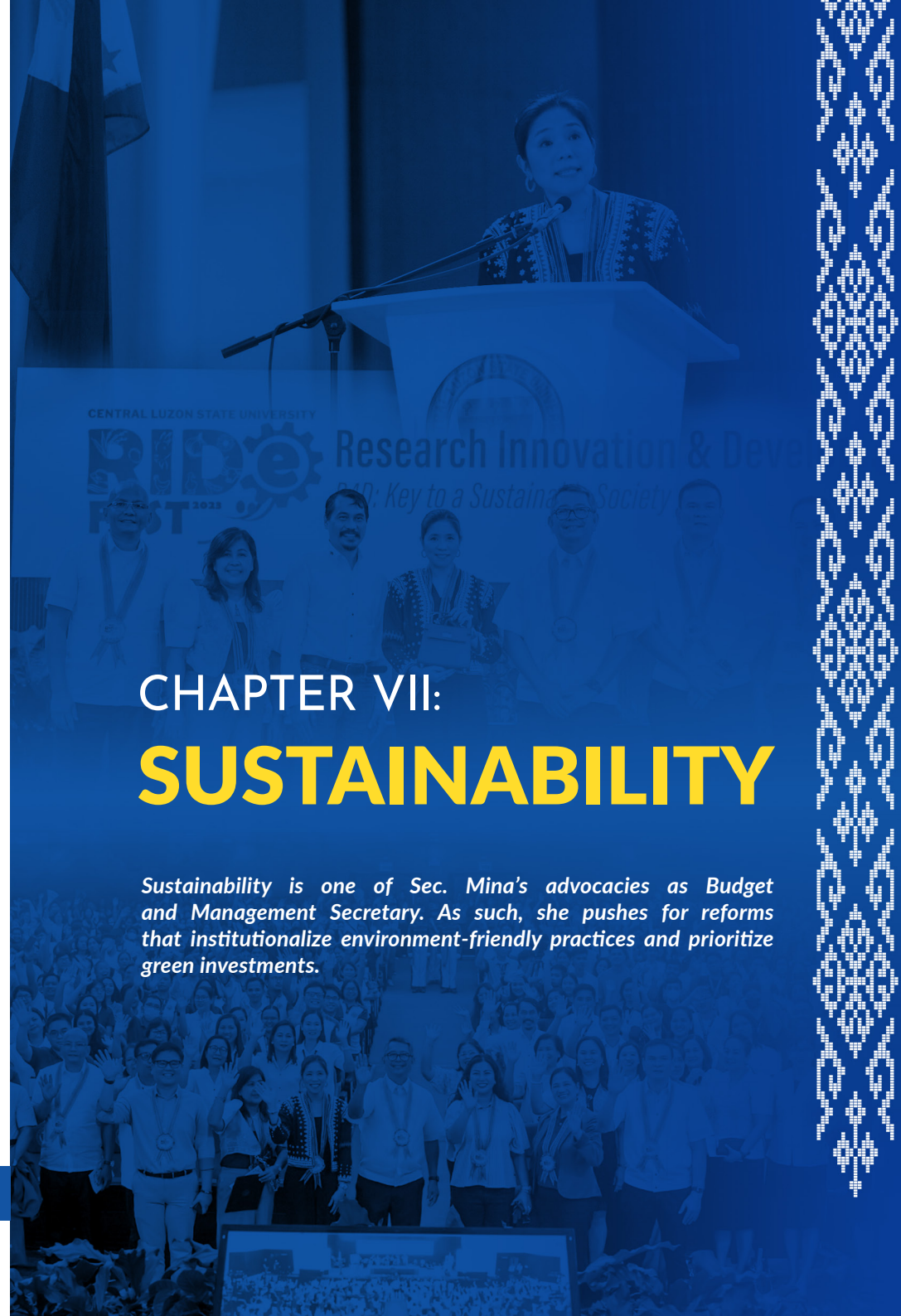
*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



Scan the QR code to watch the **Secretary's full message**.

## CHAPTER VII: SUSTAINABILITY

*Sustainability is one of Sec. Mina's advocacies as Budget and Management Secretary. As such, she pushes for reforms that institutionalize environment-friendly practices and prioritize green investments.*



## Greening the Philippines, Growing the Economy

Government Financial Management Innovators Circle (GFMIC), Inc.'s  
Joint 14th Annual National Convention (ANC) and 2023 Membership Conference  
August 22, 2023 | Tagaytay City, Cavite

To Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham N. Tolentino, Deputy Treasurer of the Philippines Erwin D. Sta. Ana, the officials and members of the Government Financial Management Innovators Circle (GFMIC) Inc., my colleagues from the Department of Budget and Management, and to our dear participants, good day.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to thank the GFMIC for inviting me to deliver this keynote speech and for lending me this platform to discuss Green and Sustainable Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms—an advocacy that is very close to my heart. I would also like to recognize the GFMIC for championing and building capacities toward responsive and ethical PFM systems, which is very much aligned with what we are pushing for in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

Our Undersecretary Joselito Basilio and Deputy Treasurer Erwin Sta. Ana presented green budgeting and the government's sustainable finance framework earlier. And now, I will talk about the country's Green PFM Reform Agenda—which, I believe, is the best topic to cap off today's program.

According to the International Monetary Fund, Green Public Financial Management or Green PFM can be defined as the integration of a climate-friendly perspective into PFM practices, systems, and frameworks—especially the budget process—to promote fiscal policies that respond to climate concerns.

In the recent State of the Nation Address of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., he stated, “We can never lose sight of our responsibility to the future. The economic agenda cannot and will not ever be incompatible with our climate change agenda.”

Hence, we, at the DBM, have committed ourselves to ensuring that our National Budget—the People's Budget—is not only inclusive but

also climate-responsive and climate-proof, securing a sustainable future for Filipinos. By doing so, we are taking the green path toward our Agenda for Prosperity.

Throughout the budget process, we have been tagging our climate change expenditures, enabling policymakers to better understand the scope and distribution of our climate action. It also provides much-needed evidence of our institutional readiness for scaling up climate finance in the country. This has increased the awareness of government agencies and local government units to craft climate and disaster-responsive budgets. More importantly, climate actions have been mainstreamed and institutionalized in our development plan and the National Budget.

As such, I am delighted to share that our budget for climate change adaptation and mitigation has been progressively increasing through the years. This year's climate change expenditure was earmarked at Php 464.5 billion, which is 60 percent higher than last year's allocation of Php 289.7 billion.

And we aim to sustain this in line with the Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028. Thus, in preparing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 National Budget, we have directed departments and agencies to prioritize, among others, programs and projects that accelerate climate action and strengthen disaster resilience through our Budget Priorities Framework under the National Budget Memorandum No. 147. This has resulted in tagging a total of Php 543.4 billion for our climate expenditures, equivalent to 9.4 percent of the proposed FY 2024 National Budget.

We are prioritizing water sufficiency projects with Php 294.46 billion, followed by sustainable energy with Php 180.72 billion, food security with Php 40.18 billion, knowledge and capacity development with Php 12.97 billion, and climate-smart industries and services with Php 6.02 billion.

And among the programs tagged under our Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) are the DPWH's Flood Management Program with Php 215.64 billion; DENR's National Greening Program with Php 2.50 billion; and the Protected Areas Development and Management Program with Php 1.04 billion.

At the local level, Php 2.00 billion is allocated for the Green Green Program to support LGUs in promoting green open spaces and infrastructure projects for active mobility such as bicycle lanes, bike racks,



elevated or at-grade pedestrian footpaths and walkways, sports facilities, and recreational trails. Meanwhile, in partnership with local civil society organizations, the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting will receive Php 1.0 billion to accelerate access to safely-managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services of lagging municipalities.

Greening PFM should also include sustainable public procurement. Hence, we are currently pursuing a Green Public Procurement Strategy, which includes the push for the development of a green local market. We hope that this practice will set an example for private-sector procurement, attract green investments, and broaden the competition in government procurement.

*"I call on every local budget officer and PFM practitioner here with us today, to not only support the Administration's efforts to implement IFMIS, but also to work together in making our vision of sustainable development a reality—one in which the colors that represent the Philippines are not only blue, red, yellow, and white, but also green."*

Aspiring to build a nexus between green and digital economy, we will complement our green PFM initiatives with digitalization efforts. This is following the latest directive of PBBM to adopt and implement the Integrated Financial Management Information System or IFMIS in the processing of government financial transactions through Executive Order (EO) No. 29. EO 29 directs the PFM Committee, composed of the DBM, the Department of Finance, the Bureau of the Treasury, and the Commission on Audit, to develop a PFM Reforms Roadmap which will expedite the development of IFMIS while ensuring the harmonization of policies across oversight agencies. And, we hope that the GFMIC will aid us in this endeavor, especially in ensuring that our efforts reach PFM information system users at different levels of government.

Acknowledging the need for a whole-of-society approach in our pursuit of sustainability, we have integrated strong climate dimensions for public investment projects in infrastructure, energy, and transport sectors, including those funded through Public-Private Partnerships.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our development partners for their unwavering support of the country's sustainability

efforts. Last July 31, PBBM and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen signed a Joint Declaration on the Green Economy Program, granting the Philippines 60 million euros or Php 3.6 billion. The program aims to assist us in areas such as circular economy, renewable energy, and climate change mitigation.

Greening PFM, and ultimately our economy, is not only for the sustainability of our environment. It will also generate revenue, create more jobs, and steer us toward attaining our development goals. We need to keep in mind that without a healthy environment and natural resources, there can be no thriving economy and no social development in the country.

We have already laid the foundation for a green Philippines by integrating and mainstreaming sustainable priorities in our national development strategy and PFM processes—including the budget cycle. However, a truly green and sustainable Philippines would only be possible through your support and cooperation.

So, I call on every local budget officer and PFM practitioner here with us today, to not only support the Administration's efforts to implement IFMIS, but also to work together in making our vision of sustainable development a reality—one in which the colors that represent the Philippines are not only blue, red, yellow, and white, but also green.

*Maraming salamat po.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman receives a plaque of appreciation from the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) for serving as keynote speaker in the Research Innovation and Development (RiDe) Festival.

## Fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Through Innovation and Green Investments

Central Luzon State University's (CLSU)  
2023 Research Innovation and Development (RiDe) Festival  
October 9, 2023 | Muñoz City, Nueva Ecija

To the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) Executive Committee headed by no less than your President Dr. Edgar Orden, Science City of Muñoz Mayor Baby Armi Alvarez, our colleagues from other national government agencies, professors, senior officers, personnel, and staff of CLSU, and to the bright and promising students of CLSU, *magandang umaga po*.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I thank CLSU for inviting me to deliver this keynote speech in this year's Research Innovation and Development (RiDe) Festival. Your theme—Research for Development or R4D: Key to a Sustainable Society—resonates with the advocacies that we have been continuously pushing for: innovation and sustainability. And I believe we are in the best place to hold this dialogue as we are in the Science City of Muñoz, the first and only Science City in the Philippines.

The importance of innovation in fueling development and driving economic growth has been recognized globally. According to the OECD or the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the buildup of innovation capacities has played a central role in the growth dynamics of successful developing countries.

A robust innovation ecosystem can help create jobs, increase productivity, and enhance our competitiveness. And it is for this reason that the present administration is investing heavily in innovation and technology.

Establishing a dynamic innovation ecosystem is at the heart of the socioeconomic transformation agenda of the Philippine Development Plan or PDP 2023 to 2028. The PDP outlines that, over the medium term, the government will provide a nurturing environment for basic research and development or R&D and knowledge creation; support market-driven and customer-centered R&D; scale up technology adoption, utilization, and commercialization; and promote an innovation culture and entrepreneurship.

This RiDe Festival is also timely and relevant. Last September 27, I joined the launch of the National Innovation Agenda and Strategy Document 2023 to 2032 led by no less than our President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. In his speech, PBBM reiterated the commitment of the Administration to make innovation an indispensable component of our nation's development agenda, and a key driver in our vision to achieve a truly smart and innovative Philippines.

Guided by this, we will bolster spending for research and development; support local enterprises; ensure food security through smart agricultural inputs to empower local producers; facilitate efficient and secure financial services; accelerate digitalization efforts to boost manufacturing processes and commercialization of products and services; improve mobility through better urban-rural linkages; and reduce carbon footprints of our transport systems.

And, I am proud to share that this places us on the right track. In the 2023 Global Innovation Index, which was also released last September 27, the Philippines was reported to rank 56th out of 132 economies—climbing three spots—with the country's innovation inputs improving for the first time since 2020. And given this performance, the country joined a group of middle-income economies such as China, India, Vietnam, and Indonesia that rose the fastest in ranking over the last decade.

The government recognizes that innovation begins with investing in our people, including our youth, and nurturing a conducive environment and culture for innovation. And so we will do this through Filipinnovation, a term coined by our friends from the National Economic and Development

Authority (NEDA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Filipinnovation is the whole-of-government approach to inclusive innovation. Through Filipinnovation, we eliminate silos as government agencies no longer work in isolation, and consequently, the impact of government funding is optimized with a multiplier effect. Seeing the promising research and technologies that you, our dear students, have devised makes me confident that we can further elevate Filipinnovation into a whole-of-nation approach.

On our end at the Department of Budget and Management, we have committed ourselves to ensuring that our National Budget—the People’s Budget—will secure a future-proof and sustainable economy toward our Agenda for Prosperity while investing in our people, advancing research and development, and promoting a culture of innovation in our country.

Hence, under the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 National Budget, we allocated a total of Php 25.94 billion to DOST, equivalent to a 4.5 percent increase compared to this year’s budget. This includes Php 8.23 billion for the Grants-in-Aid Program, which covers Php 3.61 billion to support our National S&T Agenda, such as the Science for Change and Small Enterprises Technology Upgrading Programs.

Some Php 1.33 billion will also be provided for the Research and Development initiatives of State Universities and Colleges. And the good news is that we have allocated roughly around Php 50 million for CLSU. Meanwhile, some Php 100 million is allotted for NEDA’s Innovation Fund, which aims to support enterprises engaged in developing innovative solutions that would benefit the country’s underprivileged sectors.

Adapting innovations in the Philippine agriculture sector is likewise crucial for enhancing productivity, resilience, and sustainability, especially since we aim to transform and modernize agriculture into a dynamic and high-growth sector. Thus, Php 1.5 billion will be allotted to the DOST’s National Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Sector R&D Program. This will fund facility development, capacity building, and research projects that will supplement the R&D initiatives of the banner programs under the Department of Agriculture.

We will complement this with up-to-date digital infrastructure and technologies. Thus, the proposed budget includes some Php 38.75 billion for digitalization using a whole-of-government approach. This increased by 60.6 percent from its Php 24.93 billion budget in 2023.

To propel economic transformation for a prosperous, inclusive, and innovative society, we will also scale up sustainable and green investments

with a total amount of Php 543.4 billion for our climate expenditures, equivalent to 9.4 percent of the proposed FY 2024 National Budget. This covers water sufficiency projects, followed by sustainable energy, food security, knowledge and capacity development, climate smart industries and services, and cross-cutting actions such as technology transfer, research and development, information, education and communication, and capacity building.



As you can see, the Administration is as dedicated and hopeful as you are. As we do our part, I hope you will also pursue the research and technologies that you will showcase at this festival, because they are all very promising. They have a lot of potential not only in realizing the vision of CLSU to be a world-class National Research University for science and technology in agriculture and allied fields but also in contributing to nation-building.

And before I end, I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to the whole CLSU community for your proactive research on crops, farm resources, agricultural or environmental engineering, and fisheries and livestock, among others. Research propels our humanity forward. Driven by curiosity, we open possibilities, find solutions, and pave the way for progress. Hence, you are also opening possibilities, finding solutions, and paving the way for progress in our agricultural sector—which was paid less attention in the past and given little funding to prosper.

To our dear students, you are blessed and privileged to receive quality education from your beloved university. I hope you will use this privilege to make the most of your education and uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos who do not enjoy the same. To find ways, through innovation, to make living easier for those who have it difficult in life, and to help our farmers, fisherfolks, agriculturists, agricultural workers, and other members of the informal sector.

Indeed, this is what *Bagong Pilipinas* is all about—innovation with impact—our key to a sustainable society, even beyond our Agenda for Prosperity.

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## CHAPTER VIII: SOCIOECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

*As Chair of the Development Budget Coordination Committee, Sec. Mina has been at the forefront of shaping and achieving the country's Agenda for Prosperity, steering the economy towards a high-growth trajectory.*



*DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman leads the turnover of the FY 2024 National Expenditure Program (NEP) to House Speaker Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez.*

### Agenda for Prosperity: Securing a Future-Proof and Sustainable Economy

FY 2024 National Expenditure Program (NEP) Submission to Congress  
August 2, 2023 | Quezon City

A pleasant morning to House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Majority Leader Manuel Jose Dalipe, Minority Leader Marcelino Libanan, Secretary General Reginald Velasco, House Committee on Appropriations Chairperson Elizaldy Co, Senior Vice Chairperson Stella Luz Quimbo, other honorable members of the 19th Congress, my fellow workers in government, and our media representatives who are here today.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Raḥmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

On behalf of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM), it is my honor and privilege to transmit to Congress—for its scrutiny, deliberation and approval—the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 National Expenditure Program (NEP). The FY 2024 NEP amounts to Php 5.768 trillion, equivalent to 21.7 percent of GDP. It is higher by 9.5 percent compared to the FY 2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Anchored on the theme, “Agenda for Prosperity: Securing a Future-Proof and Sustainable Economy,” the proposed National Budget is framed based on the 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda and will continue to support the goals of the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028.

**Ensure Food Security**

In our quest for food security and proper nutrition for Filipino families, the FY 2024 NEP will continue to support programs that boost the local production of major agricultural commodities including rice with Php 30.87 billion, corn with Php 5.28 billion, and high-value crops with Php 1.94 billion.

To further enhance productivity and ensure the sustainable use and management of soil resources, some Php 916 million will be provided for the National Soil Health Program.

Higher investments will also be provided for agricultural support services such as irrigation with Php 31.18 billion and the construction and rehabilitation of fish ports across the country with Php 4.94 billion.

Moreover, with the enhanced Geographic Information System for Agricultural and Fisheries Machinery and Infrastructure (GEOAGRI) map for farm-to-market roads, some Php 17.27 billion will be allotted for the construction of 1,144.58 kilometers of farm-to-market roads in key production areas. The government also stands ready in times of crises such as the El Niño by providing Php 9.00 billion for the Buffer Stocking Program.

**Reduce Transport and Logistics Costs**

As highlighted by PBBM during his second State of the Nation Address (SONA), infrastructure development is one of the key drivers of our continuing economic growth. As such, we will sustain this momentum through the Build Better More Program with Php 1.42 trillion, equivalent to 5.3 percent of GDP.

This will prioritize physical connectivity infrastructure such as road networks and railway systems, which will cover almost half or 43.5 percent of the budget. Specifically, this will support major transport programs such as the North-South Commuter Railway System and the Metro Manila Subway Project Phase I.

Significant budgetary support will also be provided for social infrastructure development which includes school buildings with Php 40.59 billion, hospitals and health centers with Php 15.31 billion, as well as water and power supply systems with a combined allocation of Php 9.01 billion.

**Reduce Energy Costs**

When it comes to lowering energy costs, renewable energy is our way forward. Hence, we will aggressively promote renewables and target a 35 percent share in the power mix by 2030. This will be achieved through the implementation of the Renewable Energy Development, Energy Efficiency

and Conservation, and Alternative Fuels and Technologies Programs with Php 501 million. Alongside power generation, we will relentlessly pursue total electrification through the NEA's National Rural Electrification Program with Php 2.30 billion.

**Address Learning Losses**

Echoing the pronouncement of our President, alongside the strengthening of our economy, we will also invest heavily in human capital development through education, health, and social protection.

As mandated by the Constitution, Education will remain our top priority with a total budget of Php 924.7 billion, equivalent to 16.0 percent of the FY 2024 NEP.

The education budget will support DepEd's MATATAG Agenda for Basic Education through the provision of higher allocations for textbooks and other instructional materials amounting to Php 12.04 billion. Furthering the cause of better nutrition for improved learning, we have also allocated Php 11.71 billion for the School-Based Feeding Program, among others.

Access to quality education will also be at the forefront of the government's education agenda through the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education (UAQTE) with some Php 51.12 billion. Of this amount, Php 21.70 billion will go to our 116 SUCs. Meanwhile, the Education Assistance and Subsidies will receive Php 41.05 billion.

**Improve Health**

Applying the lessons from the pandemic, the government has refocused its health priorities on ensuring reliable and accessible quality public health services for all.

Consequently, the Health Facilities Enhancement Program of the DOH will be provided with Php 22.98 billion for the construction, rehabilitation, and upgrading of health facilities, rural health units, and polyclinics, as well as the purchase of medical equipment and transport vehicles.

The government will also continue to expand access to quality health services by subsidizing the health premiums of the vulnerable sector through the National Health Insurance Program with Php 101.51 billion and by covering the medical assistance of 1.31 million indigent and financially incapacitated patients with Php 22.26 billion.

**Strengthen Social Protection**

In support of the Social Protection Floor Framework of NEDA, a higher allocation of Php 112.8 billion will be provided to assist 4.4 million households under the DSWD's *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program.



The recently launched Food STAMP or Philippine Food Strategic Transfer and Alternative Measures Program will be supported next year with Php 1.89 billion to address the nutrition needs of food-poor Filipinos.

Meanwhile, the allocation for Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens has been doubled to Php 49.81 billion to cover the increased monthly allowance from Php 500 to Php 1,000 for more than four million indigent senior citizens.

Housing being another priority of PBBM, the proposed national budget will also support the administration's flagship housing program, *ang Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino Program*, with Php 9.0 billion. It is envisioned to construct six million decent and affordable housing for Filipino families within six years.

### **Ensure Sound Fiscal Management**

We are also determined to ensure sound fiscal management.

Hence, the Philippine government is at the forefront of leveraging digitalization by adopting the Integrated Financial Management Information System or IFMIS throughout the bureaucracy following Executive Order No. 29, s. 2023.

To this end, some Php 2.92 billion will be allocated to improve the ICT systems of the Bureau of Internal Revenue for the efficient collection of revenues. The DBM will also continue to implement its Public Financial Management Program with Php 387.5 million which includes the Budget and Treasury Management System.

*"It is the Administration's fervent hope that this budget will continue to lay the groundwork for future-proofing the economy and making the country's growth inclusive and sustainable, not just for the Filipinos of today, but also for the future generations."*

### **Enhance Bureaucratic Efficiency**

Further, with the pronouncement of the President during his SONA that the government must fully embrace digitalization to provide better public service delivery, the FY 2024 NEP will allocate Php 38.75 billion to support the government's ICT expenditures.

The Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) will be at the core of this digitally transformed network of government services which will continue to be supported with Php 1.61 billion. Some Php 145.53 million will

also be allocated for the strengthened implementation of the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act to reduce bureaucratic red tape.

### **Prioritize Climate Change Expenditures**

Towards sustainability, a total of Php 543.45 billion has been earmarked for climate change mitigation and adaptation. This is equivalent to 9.4 percent of the total proposed budget, exceeding our commitment of 8.0 percent share under the Philippine Development Plan.

Recognizing its fundamental importance, the bulk of climate change expenditures will be allocated for water sufficiency projects with Php 294.46 billion to benefit communities all over the country.

We will also provide the Philippine Space Agency with Php 1.7 billion to better monitor our land and marine resources, as well as terrestrial ecosystems, to ensure both agricultural productivity and environmental integrity. Of which, Php 1.2 billion will be used for the Multispectral Unit Land Assessment (MULA) Satellite Development's second year funding requirement.

### **Propel Economic Development in BARMM**

Finally, to achieve lasting peace and progress in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the government will continue to provide financial assistance for BARMM amounting to Php 80.6 billion, which includes the Annual Block Grant with Php 70.5 billion, reflecting an increase of 9.0 percent. Meanwhile, about Php 1.0 billion will be set aside for the Marawi Siege Victims Compensation Program. Php 5.3 billion has also been appropriated for the PAMANA or the PAYapa at MASaganang PamayaNAn Program for infrastructure development in BARMM to be implemented by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.

In closing, let me remind everyone that every peso of the Php 5.768 trillion FY 2024 National Budget was optimized so we can remain on track with our Agenda for Prosperity. It is the Administration's fervent hope that this budget will continue to lay the groundwork for future-proofing the economy and making the country's growth inclusive and sustainable, not just for the Filipinos of today, but also for the future generations.

Thank you and we look forward to the DBCC briefing on August 10 wherein details of the budget will be discussed further and more thoroughly.

*Mabuhay ang mga Pilipino at ang Bagong Pilipinas.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Laying the Groundwork for a Sustainable Future: Priority Expenditures Supporting the Philippine Development Plan

Philippine Economic Briefing (PEB)  
September 12, 2023 | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Members of the economic team, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: *Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to thank the Philippine Embassy and our partner banks and institutions for giving us this opportunity to share the latest developments in the country's economic performance and investment opportunities, and on our end at the Department of Budget and Management, to highlight our Priority Expenditures.

To give you an overview, the National Budget of the Philippines for Fiscal Year 2023 amounts to Php 5.268 trillion or USD 94.1 billion. It is higher by 4.9 percent than our budget in 2022 and is equivalent to 21.9 percent of our GDP.

We want to ensure that our economic transformation is inclusive. Hence, the highest budget allocation has been provided for the Social Services sector—comprising Education and Health—equivalent to USD 35.7 billion or roughly 38.0 percent of our national budget.



From left to right: DBM Undersecretary Margaux Salcedo, BSP Deputy Governor Francisco G. Dakila Jr., DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman, then DOF Secretary and now BSP Monetary Board Member Benjamin E. Diokno, NEDA Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan, BSP Assistant Governor Arifa A. Ala, Philippine Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) H.E. Alfonso Ferdinand A. Ver, and HSBC Head of Communications in the Middle East, North Africa, and Turkey Nick Edwards

In the Philippines, no less than the Constitution mandates that Education be given the highest budgetary priority. Hence, we have allocated USD 16.0 billion for Education.

While we maintain Social Services as a top priority, we are also committed to our Medium-Term Fiscal Framework. Hence, the Economic Services sector has been given the second highest share in the budget with USD 28.9 billion or 30.8 percent of the General Appropriations Act of 2023.

We have also embarked on an ambitious infrastructure development program called Build Better More that aims to maintain infrastructure spending at 5 to 6 percent of GDP. For 2023 alone, we allocated USD 23.7 billion or roughly 25.0 percent of the national budget equivalent to 5.3 percent of GDP.

The bulk of this infrastructure budget is intended for the development of physical infrastructure aimed at improving physical connectivity throughout the country. Significant budgetary support was also provided for social infrastructure, which includes the construction of school buildings, hospitals, water and power supply systems, as well as housing and community facilities. To ensure that the Philippines becomes a viable investment destination, we are keen on improving our digital infrastructure. Some USD 445.0 million was allocated to accelerate the country's digital transformation.

Amid all this, we want our economic growth to be sustainable. Hence, climate actions have been mainstreamed and institutionalized in our development plan and the National Budget. This resulted in a significant increase in the budget for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures by about 60 percent compared to the previous year's allocation.

We also want to ensure inclusivity and are keen to uplift Muslim Mindanao. A total of USD 1.33 billion has therefore been allocated for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, or BARMM, as its government undergoes transition until 2025.

Looking ahead, the National Budget for Fiscal Year 2024, which is already undergoing congressional scrutiny as we speak, will prioritize shovel-ready projects, investments in human capital development, sustainable agriculture and food security, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, among others. This will guarantee the continuity of gains from this year's priority programs and contribute to securing a future-proof and sustainable economy.

Towards this end, some USD 9.69 billion has been earmarked for our FY 2024 proposed budget for climate expenditures. This will prioritize funding for water sufficiency projects, sustainable energy, food security,

knowledge and capacity development, and climate-smart industries and services.

Towards expanding our fiscal space and meeting our fiscal targets, we have initiated a couple of reforms.

Last June, the President issued Executive Order No. 29 directing the full adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) in government agencies to ensure the efficient delivery of quality services to the public.

We also hope to soon pass the Progressive Budgeting for Better and Modernized Governance Bill, which will institutionalize Public Financial Management reforms such as the Cash Budgeting System and further strengthen our efforts toward enhanced bureaucratic efficiency.

We are also overhauling our 20-year-old procurement law, which will ensure equal access to information at all stages of the procurement process. And, for sustainability, we are pursuing a Green Public Procurement Roadmap wherein the government will procure common-use supplies and equipment items with green specifications.

Moreover, we have also secured a momentous win for open governance in the country with the signing of Executive Order No. 31 institutionalizing the Philippine Open Government Partnership or the PH-OGP. In fact, before flying here, I was just in Tallinn, Estonia for the Open Government Partnership Global Summit where we presented the Philippines' reforms towards open government such as open contracting and the digitalization of the bureaucracy.

Finally, we have our very first Sovereign Development Fund, which is envisioned for the Philippines' economic development through strategic and profitable investments in infrastructure and other key sectors.

As you can see, we are working very hard to make the Philippines a top investment destination and uplift the lives of our people and future generations. The United Arab Emirates is very special to us. You have been so generous to our country over the decades. You provided humanitarian assistance during the Typhoon Haiyan, in 2010 when the Taal Volcano erupted, and some RT-PCRs during the pandemic. This time, please be with us not just in crises or disasters, but in our economic growth journey. We invite you to be our partner in prosperity and we will make sure that your time and experience will be worthwhile.

Thank you very much. *Maraming salamat po at mabuhay.*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Concretizing our Agenda for Prosperity Through Forward-Looking and Sustainable Partnerships

US-ASEAN Business Council: 2024 Philippine Business Mission  
May 20, 2024 | Pasay City

To our host, led by US-ASEAN Business Council Mission Lead, Senior Vice President and Regional Managing Director Brian D. McFeeters, and Mission Co-Lead and IBM Asia Pacific Vice President Stephen William Braim; distinguished leaders and members of the business community: a pleasant afternoon to all.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I express my utmost gratitude to the US-ASEAN Business Council for your invaluable contributions in facilitating dialogue, promoting trade and investment, and enhancing cooperation between the United States and ASEAN nations, including the Philippines. Your assistance and support throughout the decades have truly helped us time and again to achieve, regain, and maintain solid financial footing amid global and domestic challenges.

We do hope to further cement the Philippines' position as a strategic trading and investment partner of the United States. In spite of our long-standing relationship, there is always a vast headroom for our economic partnership to grow even more extensively, especially over the coming years.



So, allow me to underscore the compelling reasons why strengthening our partnership and investing in the Philippines is the most strategic move US investors and business partners can make.

#### ***Sustaining the Country's Growth Momentum***

The Philippines remains a frontrunner among emerging markets in the Asia-Pacific region, with its solid macroeconomic fundamentals and sound policymaking.

In fact, for the first quarter of 2024, the Philippine economy continued to expand by 5.7 percent, the same as Vietnam's, and performed even better than China (5.3 percent), Indonesia (5.1 percent), Malaysia (3.9 percent), and Singapore (2.7 percent), sealing our position as one of the fastest-growing economies in this dynamic region.

Clearly, we have the momentum for growth. Even multilateral organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) affirm the resilience of the Philippine economy, giving us the highest growth outlook for 2024 at 6.0 percent among countries with similar credit ratings, such as Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia.

#### ***Medium-Term Fiscal Program***

On the fiscal front, the Philippines remains committed to fiscal consolidation efforts, including cutting the deficit, albeit in a more practical, sustainable, and strategically paced manner. The government's track record of fiscal prudence, as shown by improvements in the quality of expenditure and relatively modest debt ratios over the past decade, strongly supports our fiscal consolidation process to reduce the deficit gradually.

Attesting to this, the deficit will gradually decline from 5.6 percent in 2024 to 3.7 percent in 2028. This will provide the necessary fiscal space to support the implementation of the government's expenditure priorities aligned with the 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda and Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028.

#### ***FY 2024 National Budget***

To support the implementation of the government's expenditure priorities, the Php 5.768 trillion National Budget for this year was carefully crafted to ensure that programs and projects aligned with the country's development goals are sufficiently funded and prioritized.

That's why more than half of the national budget—a total of 67.5 percent—was allocated for social and economic services.

The Social Services sector has received the highest budget allocation since 2007, with Php 2.1 trillion, or 36.7 percent of the national budget for this

year. The bulk of this will support programs that promote human capital development by revitalizing education (Php 983.5 billion), promoting quality healthcare (Php 322.3 billion), and strengthening social protection (Php 449.1 billion).

Meanwhile, the Economic Services sector received the second highest allocation, with Php 1.78 trillion, or 30.8 percent of the budget. This allotment will also fund the Agriculture and Agrarian Reform sector with Php 235.06 billion to support the administration's vision of making agriculture the primary source of our food security.

We will also scale up sustainable and green investments that propel economic transformation for a prosperous and resilient society. As such, Php 457.41 billion has been allocated to support climate change adaptation and mitigation measures aligned with the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) 2011 to 2028.

#### ***Infrastructure Development***

Higher investments will also be made in public infrastructure, which is expected to create a multiplier effect on the economy, reduce the cost of doing business, support the creation of quality jobs, and ultimately steer the economy towards sustainable economic growth. Hence, we are determined to maintain infrastructure spending at 5.0 to 6.0 percent of GDP annually until 2028.

For this year, we have allocated 5.7 percent of GDP or Php 1.51 trillion for the Build Better More Infrastructure Program. This is intended for the construction and rehabilitation of physical infrastructure such as roads, railways, flood control infrastructure, and buildings all over the country. It is likewise intended for social infrastructure such as school buildings, hospitals and health centers, and water supply and irrigation systems.

#### ***Public-Private Partnerships***

To fund these critical infrastructure projects, we are currently mobilizing diverse and innovative financing solutions, including strategic co-investments with the private sector through Public-Private Partnerships or PPPs. By partnering with the private sector, we hope to boost financing and harness the sector's advanced technical expertise in transforming the Philippine economy.

And I am happy to share that private sector participation is now made faster and easier with the recent enactment of the new PPP Code and the recent signing of its Implementing Rules and Regulations. The new PPP Code will further simplify the evaluation process and create a unified system for investors to refer to when engaging in PPP projects.



But even with a simplified evaluation process, the quality and inclusivity of PPP projects will not be compromised. Hence, we have also integrated gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) requirements, as well as climate change and environmental standards, as non-negotiable preconditions for approving PPP projects. This shall ensure that the PPP projects are gender-responsive and climate-resilient.

Attesting to this, we are proud to share that just last March, we signed a Concession Agreement with SMC-SAP & Company Consortium for the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) PPP project, making it the first PPP project to be approved since the new PPP Code was passed into law last December. The landmark project also sets the benchmark for efficiency for other pipeline projects as the fastest-approved PPP proposal in Philippine history—evaluated in just six weeks by the national government.

The newly approved PPP project aims to improve the overall passenger experience in NAIA through modernized terminals, optimized airport capacity, and reliable operations. This will enable airport capacity to significantly increase to 62 million passengers per year from 35 million, encouraging tourism and enhancing mobility. This is a testament to the administration's commitment to promoting world-class air transportation infrastructure.

*"We seek to secure a future-proof and sustainable economy marked by a single-digit poverty rate, manageable debt, more quality jobs, and improved public service delivery."*

Aside from the NAIA-PPP Project, we currently have 48 big-ticket infrastructure projects to be undertaken through PPPs. Nonetheless, we have an enticing selection of investment prospects for the private sector, featuring 185 big-ticket infrastructure projects in physical connectivity, water resources, agriculture, health and education, power and energy, and digital connectivity. Rest assured, as we are now under the banner of *Bagong Pilipinas*, you can expect nothing less than speed and efficiency in the handling of your investments when you partner with the Philippines.

Aside from investing heavily in implementation-ready infrastructure flagship projects, we are also pursuing game-changing budget reforms that promote digital transformation and open governance.

#### **Digital Transformation**

To this end, we are determined to fully digitalize and harmonize our Public Financial Management (PFM) systems and policies, beginning with the

adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) across all government agencies.

In this pursuit, the DBM, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank, conducted a workshop series and regional consultation workshops dedicated to developing the Philippine PFM Reforms Roadmap 2024 to 2028. This roadmap is targeted to be endorsed to the Office of the President by June 2024.

We will also launch a Digital Budget Management Roadmap, which we will be implementing in a phased manner, starting with Project TINA or the Technical Innovations in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) Application Project, which aims to replace the existing NEP generation tool, resolve pain points across DBM's Budget and Management Bureaus, and boost operational efficiency. Ultimately, its goal is to create a unified system to automate the budget process between the Executive and the Legislative branches.

This shall be complemented with Project Marissa, which utilizes blockchain technology to enhance the management of critical data such as allotment release orders and other DBM records in public finances.

I am also very proud of the revival of Project DIME or the Digital Information for Monitoring and Evaluation Project, which shall use existing technologies such as satellites, drones, and geotagging to monitor infrastructure projects while encouraging citizen feedback.

On a larger scale, we will harmonize the policies and guidelines in the government's IT activities through Project MITHI, or the Medium-term Information & Communications Technology Harmonization Initiative, in partnership with the Department of Information and Communications Technology and the National Economic and Development Authority.

#### **Procurement Reforms**

Moreover, the DBM is also advocating for amendments to the decades-old Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA) to make public procurement more attuned to the changing times and responsive to the evolving needs of people.

Senate Bill No. 2593, or the New Government Procurement Act (NGPA), has already entered the period of individual amendments which started on May 15, 2024. The NGPA aims to digitalize and streamline the procurement process while paving the way for a greener, more sustainable, transparent, and participatory procurement process. Part of this mission is to establish an electronic Marketplace or eMarketplace—an online platform where

agencies may directly procure supplies and equipment from competent and reputable suppliers.

We will also champion sustainability with green public procurement by encouraging agencies to procure common-use supplies and equipment items with green specifications. And in line with our commitment to promoting transparency and public participation—the basic tenets of open governance that we advocate—we will open our procurement process to the non-government sector by allowing them to participate during procurement proceedings.

#### Closing

Moving forward, we seek to secure a future-proof and sustainable economy marked by a single-digit poverty rate, manageable debt, more quality jobs, and improved public service delivery.

This means that by 2028, we hope to lift about 14 million Filipinos out of poverty, invest more in our very young and well-educated population, implement 185 infrastructure projects, and cut debt to 55.9 percent.

However, we recognize that we can only achieve this through a whole-of-nation approach, with our partners in the US-ASEAN Business Council and all of you leading corporations in the business community playing a crucial role in this endeavor.

As the Philippines moves towards achieving its Agenda for Prosperity, we hope to likewise see greater economic engagement between our two countries. I hope you will continue to be valuable partners of the Philippines. I am confident that together, we can promote economic expansion and open a wide range of opportunities towards a *Bagong Pilipinas* that we all aspire for.

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Leveraging Monitoring & Evaluation Towards our Agenda for Prosperity

10th Monitoring and Evaluation Network Forum  
November 29, 2023 | Quezon City

To NEDA Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan, Undersecretary Joseph J. Capuno of the Investment Programming Group, our stakeholders in “Charting the Path Forward through Partnerships in M&E,” and all our participants in today’s forum: Good afternoon.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to congratulate the National Economic and Development Authority for the success of the 10th Monitoring and Evaluation or M&E Network Forum. Thank you for providing a venue to showcase the country’s M&E initiatives and for cultivating a community of practice on M&E for the past decade.

I am glad to note that for this year, our plenary and breakout sessions were able to showcase our current efforts towards further strengthening M&E that is responsive to the 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda and the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028.

As you may already know, the proposed National Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024—the first budget fully prepared under the

administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.—continues to pursue our Agenda for Prosperity, this time securing a future-proof and sustainable economy. It will continue to lay the groundwork for the realization of our country's economic goals identified in the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF), the 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda, and the PDP.

And we are relentlessly working for the passage of this budget amounting to Php 5.768 trillion, or equivalent to 21.7 percent of our GDP, and an increase of 9.5 percent from this year's level. I am happy to share that we are in the last stretch prior to the signing of our General Appropriations Act as the Senate already passed their version of the General Appropriations Bill last night.

But our work does not end here. In fact, this is just the beginning. What follows is the year-round budget execution, and most importantly, the accountability phase of the budget cycle wherein agencies must set up and implement M&E mechanisms to ascertain the effectiveness of the programs and projects on which they spend.

Agencies likewise submit regular Financial Accountability Reports, as required by the DBM and the Commission on Audit. We then review the financial and physical performance of agencies against their targets to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and closely monitor agencies' performances. This is crucial so we can address bottlenecks proactively.

And this is exactly what we did when we issued Circular Letter No. 2023-10 last August, wherein we required all government agencies to submit "catch-up plans" to facilitate budget execution for the rest of FY 2023. Through this issuance, we also tried to ascertain the underlying causes or reasons for underperformance and undertake measures to address them.

Thankfully, National Government disbursement accelerated significantly from 93.4 percent of the program as of June 2023 to 98.9 percent as of September. This was mainly driven by the robust disbursement in the third quarter, reaching Php 3.82 trillion as of the end of September. DBM has also already released roughly 97.2 percent of our 2023 National Budget as of the end of September, while our Government Final Consumption Expenditure accelerated to 6.7 percent in the third quarter of this year.

And, I am very happy to note that all these contributed to our economy achieving a 5.9 percent growth for the third quarter of this year,

significantly up from 4.3 percent in the second quarter as we pushed for greater efficiency in budget utilization through a whole-of-government approach.

Another crucial aspect of the budget accountability phase is citizen participation. To ensure transparency, DBM ensures the online availability, timeliness, and comprehensiveness of key budget documents including the People's Budget series—the less technical yet comprehensive version of the government's proposed and enacted national budgets.

We also ensure that citizens are able to participate in the monitoring of programs and projects through the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) which was recently institutionalized through Executive Order No. 31, s. 2023. This aims to ensure that the open government values of transparency, civic participation, accountability, and technological innovation are embedded in government policies and programs. And to further expand the open government space, we have successfully launched the OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign, engaging hundreds of Filipinos around the country in pursuit of strengthening public participation in governance. We just conducted its final leg for this year last week in Davao City.

As you can see, monitoring and evaluation and people's participation are crucial in ensuring that every budget allocation, decision, and program implementation will benefit the Filipino people, and so we are grateful for M&E platforms such as this forum.

Again, congratulations to NEDA and our M&E partners and stakeholders! Rest assured that the DBM is one with you as you build the competence of individuals and institutions in the creation and use of M&E in the public sector, and as you consolidate the efforts of communities on M&E, all towards the achievement of our Agenda for Prosperity.

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

*"Monitoring and evaluation and people's participation are crucial in ensuring that every budget allocation, decision, and program implementation will benefit the Filipino people."*



## FY 2025 National Budget: Renewing our Contract with the Filipino People

FY 2025 Budget Forum with National Government Agencies  
January 23, 2024 | Pasay City

To my dearest colleagues and fellow public servants from our national government agencies, *isang mapagpalang araw po sa ating lahat.*

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, allow me to express how grateful I am to see all of you here, ready to face a brand-new fiscal year just a month after President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. signed the FY 2024 National Budget into law.

The swift passage of this budget is a testament to our commitment and dedication to carrying out our mission. *Napakaganda po ng sinabi ng ating mahal na Pangulo noong General Appropriations Act (GAA) signing—that the national budget is “the instrument which tells us how the taxes paid by the people will be returned to them” and that “in effect, we are signing the renewal of our annual social contract with our taxpayers.”*

*Kaya naman* here we are again, ready to enter into another social contract with our taxpayers through the preparation of the FY 2025 National Budget.



True to our commitment to the Filipino people, we will ensure better and strategic planning, and improve our budget preparation and execution process so that we can address the perennial challenge of underspending. This is why we are always looking at how the agencies utilized their previous year's budget, as well as the progress of their mandated programs and projects. We want to make sure that only implementation-ready proposals are considered, securing not only the equitable allocation but also the proper utilization of public funds. Because we owe it to the people.

As such, your agencies' budget proposals should contain concrete program plans and designs that outline key procurement and implementation milestones. As we all know, procurement is a major bottleneck in efficient government spending so I am happy to announce that we are getting closer to having a new Government Procurement Reform Act, with the approval of House Bill No. 9648 by the House of Representatives last December 12, 2023. So now, we can all look forward to a procurement system that is more attuned to the changing times.

Of course, we will ensure the continuous alignment of our priorities and policy directions with the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, our 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda, and the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework.

Infrastructure development will likewise remain a priority through the Build Better More Program given its multiplier effects on boosting the Philippine economy. However, as emphasized in our National Budget Call, increased infrastructure spending shall not, in any way, detract from the full support provided to the poorest, lagging, climate change- and disaster risk-vulnerable areas, as well as the social services sector.

Now we also want to upgrade the government's institutional capacity to perform its mandate while ensuring optimal and efficient use of resources. This is why we have been ramping up our digital transformation towards bureaucratic efficiency, which has always been my advocacy. With the full adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) following the signing of Executive Order (EO) No. 29, we will digitalize our Public Financial Management (PFM) processes and institutionalize the Cash Budgeting System, alongside the Budget and Treasury Management System (BTMS).

Speaking of institutional capacity and as part of our commitment to inclusivity, the FY 2025 budget proposals shall also incorporate the provision of funds for the capacity building of local government units (LGUs) to enable them to assume their devolved functions and services.

I am also proud to share that in 2023, we brought our PFM Competency Program around the country to empower our LGUs and even the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Further, the National Budget shall provide for agencies' regional programs that are responsive to the needs of the poorest, disadvantaged, and lagging LGUs. Given this, we expect our Agency Central Offices to coordinate with their respective Agency Regional Offices to finalize their budget proposals subject to the department priorities in different regions and the likely constraints for regional planning and budgeting following the Mandanas-Garcia Supreme Court Ruling.

Finally, we will continue the adoption of reforms for greater budget transparency, openness, accountability, and reliability. This includes the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP) to strengthen the participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) and to ensure the sustainability of budget and governance reforms. I am proud to share that we have reached several milestones for open governance last year, with the institutionalization of PH-OGP through EO 31, as well as the launch of the OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign engaging hundreds of Filipinos from all over the country.

I am now leaving you in the very capable hands of our resource speakers from our Fiscal Planning and Reforms Bureau, as well as our Budget and Management Bureaus who will discuss the budget proposals for inclusion in agency PS, MOOE, and CO Budget, the Budget Preparation Forms and Instructions, as well as the Submission Requirements and Budget Preparation Calendar.

As a final remark, thank you all once again for your hard work which led us to various milestones, and which I know will propel us to even greater heights. And today, we will begin with the crafting of our National Budget for, by, and with the Filipino people.

*Mabuhay po tayong lahat!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC): Working in Harmony, Fostering a Prosperous Economy

DBCC's 50th Anniversary Legacy Book Launch  
May 14, 2024 | Manila

To our Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo; members of the Diplomatic Corps and Congress; our colleagues from the Cabinet; former Senator Alberto Romulo; former Budget Minister Dr. Jaime Laya; colleagues in the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) and its Executive Technical Board; representatives from our resource institutions; development partner agencies; members of the press and the academe: A pleasant day to everyone.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

Before anything else, HAPPY ANNIVERSARY! Thank you for making time and for gracing the halls of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) with your esteemed presence for us to celebrate together the 54th anniversary of the DBCC.



We are blessed to have not one but two celebrations because we are also celebrating the monumental milestone of five decades of the DBCC, which we were not able to celebrate in 2020 due to the pandemic. In commemoration of the DBCC's 50 years, we are also launching this afternoon a book that documents the achievements, challenges, and reforms of the DBCC in those milestone years.

We have entitled this “50 Years in Harmony” because it is only through the harmonious collaboration of the DBCC that we have achieved economic progress and weathered global headwinds throughout the decades.

Established on May 14, 1970, the Presidential Development Budget Committee—which would later become the DBCC—was created, and I quote, “to ensure harmony and consistency as to the ends and objectives of the Annual Budget and Long-Range Development Plans.”

*“It is only through the harmonious collaboration of the DBCC that we have achieved economic progress and weathered global headwinds throughout the decades.”*

Over the years, the DBCC has been the frontrunner in shaping the country's economic landscape through its review and approval of the national government's macroeconomic targets, revenue projections, borrowing level, aggregate budget level, and expenditure priorities, recommending to the Cabinet and the President the consolidated public sector financial position and fiscal program for the nation. Indeed, the DBCC has played a crucial role in our country's governance and development since its inception.

And I am happy to share the good news that we are reaping the fruits of our hard work. With a 5.6 percent year-on-year growth in 2023, we are on track to maintain our status as one of the fastest-growing economies in Asia.

We are also projected to be one of the top 20 fastest-growing economies in 2024 by the International Monetary Fund. With this robust economic performance, the Philippines is forecasted by S&P Global to become a one trillion-dollar economy by 2034, joining mainland China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia, Taiwan, and Indonesia as one of the largest economies in the Asia-Pacific. And just this March, during the World

Economic Forum, Google Philippines lauded the “amazing growth” of the Philippine economy under the PBBM administration. All these and more were only possible precisely because the DBCC works in harmony.

It is, therefore, with great pride that we launch the 50th Anniversary Legacy Book of the DBCC against the backdrop of our high-performing economy. And I am truly elated and honored because this book and this afternoon's launch have brought together the country's brightest minds and greatest economic managers. We even have the very first Budget Minister on board, Minister Jaime Laya, and the first Minister of Budget and Management before the DBM became a department, former Senator Alberto Romulo. We also have representatives from the three branches of the government—the Executive, Legislature, and even the Judiciary, with no less than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo—with us this afternoon, depicting how managing the economy is truly a whole-of-government affair.

It is with great pride that I also congratulate the authors of our legacy book for diligently finishing their excellent articles for this book despite your busy schedules. Thank you for sharing your wonderful insights and expertise on the Philippine economy. Likewise, thank you to everyone who has made this book a dream come true.

I am proud to say that this is not just a pomp piece but a solid economic masterpiece with a hardcore historical review of 50 years of fiscal and monetary policies and socioeconomic planning in the Philippines penned by our economic luminaries. I am certain that this book will be a valuable resource even for future generations, learning from both the travails encountered and the triumphs won by the DBCC.

Of course, while we look back at what the DBCC has achieved in the past 50 years through the pages of this book, we must also look forward to the next 50 years. Let this book serve as a reminder that we must always work in harmony—towards the economic transformation that we all aspire for the nation, to achieve our Agenda for Prosperity and the dream of *Bagong Pilipinas*.

*Maraming salamat po. Happy 54th anniversary to the DBCC! Mabuhay po tayong lahat! Mabuhay po ang Bagong Pilipinas!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*





## Sustaining Economic Growth Through Transformative Governance

UP School of Economics and Philippine Center for Economic Development  
Alumni Association Reunion: A Conversation with Finance and Budget Secretaries  
on Financing Sustained Economic Growth  
August 19, 2023 | Quezon City

A pleasant afternoon to all.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to thank the UP School of Economics (UPSE) for this invitation with my former professor, my mentor, and someone whom I am now honored to call my colleague in the Cabinet, the head of the Economic Team, and Department of Finance (DOF) Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno—who will forever be my professor.

Thank you also to our dear participants for being present today, especially the alumni of the UPSE Program on Development Economics (PDE). It certainly feels good to be back in the halls of this institution that rigorously trained us to be prime movers and leaders in our field. And, of course, special shoutout to our batch, Batch 33 of PDE.

Indeed, UPSE prepared me for the work in the Senate, in the Executive, and even in Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. And I am grateful for this privilege to present to you today our country's socioeconomic agenda and reforms toward transformative governance.

### **Socioeconomic Agenda**

To ensure that we do not neglect socioeconomic objectives even as we achieve high-growth performance, our Fiscal Year 2023 National Budget, amounting to Php 5.268 trillion, has been aligned with the 8-point Socioeconomic Agenda and the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023 to 2028.

Thus, the Social Services sector—comprising Education and Health—has been given the highest budget allocation with Php 2.0 trillion or roughly 38.0 percent of the 2023 budget, while the Economic Services sector has been given the second highest share with Php 1.62 trillion or 30.8 percent of the total national budget.

This prioritization remains the same for the proposed FY 2024 National Budget, now amounting to Php 5.768 trillion, attesting to the current Administration's resolve to reduce poverty, boost infrastructure, reinforce human capital development, and attain upper-middle-income status by 2025.

### **Infrastructure Development**

We have allocated Php 1.3 trillion in the 2023 National Budget to sustain the momentum of the public infrastructure boom through the Build Better More Program. In line with the MTFF, the infrastructure disbursements will be maintained between 5.0 to 6.0 percent of the GDP in the medium term, reaching Php 2.3 trillion by 2028.

The bulk of the infrastructure budget is intended for the development of physical connectivity infrastructure. This includes Php 478.7 billion for roads, Php 283.2 billion for flood control projects, Php 164.1 billion for local infrastructure development, and some Php 40.1 billion for railways this year.

For social infrastructure development, some Php 29.2 billion has been allocated for school buildings, Php 16.7 billion for water supply systems, and Php 14.4 billion for hospital and health centers. Meanwhile, some Php 3.7 billion has been allotted for power supply systems, Php 2.5 billion for housing and community facilities, and some Php 30.1 billion for irrigation systems.

We are also keen on improving our digital infrastructure. Hence, to continue harnessing the potential of a digital economy and achieve

universal connectivity, we have allocated Php 24.13 billion for the digital transformation of the bureaucracy and the country.

Finally, in line with our commitment to sustainability and in response to the growing demand for green investments, we have in the pipeline infrastructure investment opportunities that align with internationally accepted definitions of green investments.

### **Alternative Financing Strategy**

To help finance all these, the Economic Team will tap Public-Private Partnerships or PPPs. We recognize the important contributions of the private sector not only in bridging the infrastructure gap but also in implementing and innovating climate change solutions. And so, we are working on the provision of legal and regulatory support to PPPs and the development of local PPP projects in priority sectors. And incidentally, the head of the PPP Center is our batchmate—Ms. Ma. Cynthia Hernandez.

In addition, we pushed for the recent passage of the Philippines' very first sovereign development fund to promote fiscal stability through strategic and profitable investments in key sectors and augment the government's limited fiscal space to fund its programs and projects.

### **DBM Reforms**

At the Department of Budget and Management, we are also doing our part in achieving the transformation toward a more transparent, efficient, and responsive government which are crucial aspects of sustaining our economic growth.

Through our Digital Transformation Roadmap, we are promoting data governance and digitalization in fiscal-related government processes. This is why digital transformation is at the core of our Public Financial Management (PFM) Reform Agenda.

In constant pursuit of bureaucratic efficiency and fiscal transparency, the President issued Executive Order No. 29 directing the full adoption and implementation of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) in the processing of government financial transactions.

The Executive Order directs the PFM Committee, which consists of the DBM, together with the DOF, the Commission on Audit (COA), and the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr), to conduct a review and reengineering of the key PFM processes including budget management and execution, cash management, and accounting and reporting.

We will also develop a PFM Reforms Roadmap to expedite the development of IFMIS while ensuring harmonization of policies across oversight agencies.

And in line with our PFM Reforms, we are also presenting to the President on Tuesday our proposed amendments to the decades-old Government Procurement Reform Act authored by the late Senate President Edgardo J. Angara.

I am also delighted to share that we have taken great strides toward open governance in the country with the signing of Executive Order No. 31 institutionalizing the Philippine Open Government Partnership or the PH-OGP.

Over a decade since the Philippines became a founding member of the Open Government Partnership, it was only institutionalized this year—a testament to this Administration's commitment to promoting transparency, strengthening social accountability, and empowering Filipinos through public participation.

With all these developments, I hope you can see that our government is working, and more importantly, the Philippine Economic Team—all from UP—is working very hard.

More than the good news of our credit ratings, the S&P Global Market Intelligence forecast has declared that the Philippines is on its way to becoming a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2033, and no less than the World Bank declared that the Philippines will achieve above-middle-income status in the next two years. So, there are a lot of things to be thankful for.

*"With all these developments, I hope you can see that our government is working, and more importantly, the Philippine Economic Team—all from UP—is working very hard."*

Now, we are not oblivious to the challenges that we have, and we are well aware that we still have a long way to go to achieve our dream of prosperity for all. But given that the Economic Team—again all from UP—I am confident that we will achieve our Agenda for Prosperity. Our economic transformation has already begun and I have no doubt that we will secure a future-proof and sustainable economy. *In shaa Allah.*

Thank you very much. *Mabuhay po tayong lahat at padayon!*

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

## Budget Reforms Toward Fiscal Sustainability and Bureaucratic Efficiency

Philippines-Japan High Level Joint Committee Meeting on Infrastructure  
Development and Economic Cooperation  
August 28-29, 2023 | Tokyo, Japan

*Konnichiwa. Hajimemashite.*

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

For the Department of Budget and Management, I am happy to share that we have already submitted to Congress last August 2 the proposed Php 5.768 trillion (USD 103.82 billion) National Budget of the Philippines for Fiscal Year 2024, and the Economic Team already briefed both the House of Representatives and the Senate on the budget just a couple of weeks ago.

We continue our Agenda for Prosperity, towards securing a future-proof and sustainable economy. Hence, our proposed national budget was crafted with the end in mind of meeting the economic targets of our Medium-Term Fiscal Framework, aligned with our 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda and Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028.



*The Budget Secretary delivers updates on the country's infrastructure development and economic cooperation.*

This budget prioritizes implementation-ready infrastructure projects, investments in human capital development, sustainable agriculture and food security, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, among others.

Complementing these priority programs, we have been working hard on major budget reforms that promote sound fiscal management and bureaucratic efficiency.

First, we now have real-time and online monitoring of government financial transactions through the full adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). An integral part of the IFMIS is the development of the Budget and Treasury Management System (BTMS) which shall serve as a central database for all vital information and is targeted to be launched by the last quarter of the year.

Further, we have digitalized and streamlined the procurement process through the Modernized Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (mPhilGEPS).

We are also determined to accelerate investments in infrastructure at 5 to 6 percent of the country's GDP and other key sectors through the country's first-ever Sovereign Development Fund, the Maharlika Investment Fund.

Finally, as Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB), we have taken crucial steps in promoting good governance and sustainable development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Mindanao (BARMM). Last year, we conducted capacity-building initiatives for BARMM executives, with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

These are all part of our Agenda for Prosperity and the Philippine Economic Team, with the able leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., is determined to make these objectives a reality.

Thank you. Arigatou gozaimasu.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



## Creating Ripples of Change Through a Culture of Internal Control

Recognition Ceremony for Resource Persons on the National Guidelines  
on Internal Control Systems (NGICS) and the Revised Philippine Government  
Internal Audit Manual (RPGIAM)  
February 28, 2024 | Manila

A pleasant afternoon to everyone joining us in this celebration of passion and dedication to service.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to everyone who has made this event possible—the Systems and Productivity Improvement Bureau (SPIB) led by Assistant Secretary Clarito Alejandro D. Magsino and the entire SPIB staff; National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) Vice Chairperson and Executive Officer Alberto A. Bernardo and our recognized resource persons; and of course, our future resource persons whom we celebrate this afternoon.

As you may all know, we are gathered here today for the Recognition Ceremony of our resource persons (RPs) on the National Guidelines on Internal Control Systems (NGICS) and the Revised Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual (RPGIAM). This is where the candidates who have completed the first four phases of the Program will be conferred recognition and form part of the roster of our recognized RPs.

But of course, this ceremony is also a gathering meant to recognize our achievements, and more importantly, the people behind them.

Looking back, we have a long list of accomplishments to be proud of and grateful for in the past year. Please allow me to enumerate some of them.

First, we have empowered a total of 508 internal audit practitioners hailing from 146 national government agencies, including government-owned or -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and state universities and colleges (SUCs), through the conduct of nine batches of the RPGIAM capacity-building training.

## CHAPTER IX: SERVANT LEADERSHIP

*A truly dedicated public servant for more than 20 years, Sec. Mina believes in instilling a culture of excellence in the bureaucracy and pushing for reforms that fulfill the needs and aspirations of the Filipino people.*



DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman leads the signing of the Revised Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual.

We have also engaged about 660 high-level participants, including department secretaries, heads of agencies, board of directors/audit committee members, and other senior officials through four Executive Briefings on the NGICS and RPGIAM.

Aside from these, we have conducted management briefings and awareness seminars tailored for requesting agencies, including the Cebu Port Authority, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, the Department of Agriculture, the Philippine Coconut Authority, and the Department of Finance.

Finally, through the Public Financial Management (PFM) Competency Program for Local Government Units and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, we have capacitated more than 1,500 PFM practitioners in 2023, providing comprehensive insights into the principles and concepts of internal control and internal audit, among other PFM core areas.

We were able to achieve all of these because we are joined by very able and passionate individuals as our Resource Persons on the NGICS and the RPGIAM.

And so, to our currently recognized RPs, thank you for your service and commitment to establishing a strong and responsive internal control system in the country. May this recognition bring you more inspiration to continue doing the great work that you are already doing.

And, to our newly recognized RPs, you have undergone a rigorous process to get to this point so you should all be proud of yourselves. I know that you have already brought significant changes to your organization, but now, you are bestowed with the opportunity to make an even greater impact on the country.

*Sa lahat po ng naririto ngayong araw, taos-puso po akong nagpapasalamat at sumasaludo sa inyo. Kayo po ang dahilan kung bakit tayo ay patuloy na nakapagbibigay ng capacity-building at technical assistance sa ating mga kapwa lingkod-bayan upang mapabuti po natin ang ating mga serbisyo publiko. Sana po ay patuloy ninyo kaming samahan at suportahan na lalo pa nating pagandahin ang ating internal audit and control culture sa bansa.*

Let us always keep in mind that while we come from different backgrounds, we are bound by a common purpose: to forward an excellent internal audit and internal control culture in the country that will pave the way for better public service, ultimately uplifting the quality of lives of our fellow Filipinos.

To end, allow me to quote former U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy: "Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others... he sends forth a ripple of hope." Relatedly, I believe that each of us in this room is a force that creates ripples of change—one employee, one office, and one institution at a time. And I am confident that, collectively, these ripples will become waves of transformational change for the nation and our fellow Filipinos, *tungo po sa Bagong Pilipinas, kung saan ang gobyerno ay tumutugon sa tunay na pangangailangan ng mamamayan.*

*Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay po tayong lahat!* Again, congratulations!

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

*"Relatedly, I believe that each of us in this room is a force that creates ripples of change—one employee, one office, and one institution at a time. And I am confident that, collectively, these ripples will become waves of transformational change for the nation and our fellow Filipinos, tungo po sa Bagong Pilipinas, kung saan ang gobyerno ay tumutugon sa tunay na pangangailangan ng mamamayan."*

## Listening to the Voices of the Citizens, Instilling Quality Culture in the Government

Development Academy of the Philippines' (DAP) 5th Government  
Quality Management Program (GQMP) Symposium on Service Quality Standards  
December 13, 2023 | Video Message

Good morning to all my fellow government officials and employees joining today's 5th Government Quality Management Program (GQMP) Symposium.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

First, I would like to thank the Development Academy of the Philippines, headed by President and CEO Atty. Engelbert C. Caronan Jr., for once again inviting me to deliver a keynote message at this event anchored on the Government Quality Management Program or the GQMP.

As you know, GQMP is a national government program that promotes and enhances quality improvement in the public sector. One of its components features institutionalizing the Service Quality Standards, assuring consistency in the quality of public services. Designed to steer the bureaucracy towards more citizen-centric service delivery, the program puts citizens at the heart of public institutions while instilling a quality culture.

*Tulad po ng sinabi ko sa katatapos lamang na 2023 Public Sector Quality and Productivity Improvement Forum—kung sa private sector po ay mayroon tayong tinatawag na customer service, tayo rin po sa gobyerno ay may pinagsisilbihan, at 'yan ay ang ating mga kababayan.* After all, the government exists for and because of the people. This means that, as public servants, our fellow citizens are our clients.

*"Indeed, effective and responsive public services, created and implemented by listening to the voices of the people, should be standardized, enhanced, improved, and even institutionalized."*

While we are already committed to delivering standardized and high-quality services to the citizens—which is why we are gathered here today—allow me to nevertheless highlight how we can achieve this especially by listening.

Let's take a look at your theme: "Translating Insights from Clients to Standardize Service Experience."

As the theme suggests, understanding the client's context is vital in driving the standardization of their service experiences. This is a very good continuation of last year's theme, "Towards Quality Service for all Citizens" because it espouses the call to actively listen to our clients or our constituents to be able to provide them with quality services that truly respond to their needs.

Likewise, obtaining and utilizing research-based and citizen-centric information in developing and delivering government services—one of the topics to be discussed today—will not be possible without actively listening to the citizens.

Surely, services crafted through active citizen engagement will be more accepted and supported by the people.

Indeed, effective and responsive public services, created and implemented by listening to the voices of the people, should be standardized, enhanced, improved, and even institutionalized.

A very notable example of this is the GQMP which capacitated 990 key officers and staff of public sector organizations in 2022 alone, provided technical assistance to 111 agencies as of December 2022, and certified 200 agencies under the ISO 9001:2015 Standard Quality Management System as of April 2023.

At the Department of Budget and Management, we also make sure to actively listen to our *kababayans*, and so we are also working hard to contribute to the improved productivity and public service delivery of the bureaucracy through the Fiscal Year 2024 National Budget, as well as through structural reforms such as the proposed amendments to the Government Procurement Reform Act, the continuation of the initiatives of the Philippine Open Government Partnership, and the DBM's digital transformation roadmap.



As such, I call on each of you to listen and learn from today's discussions. Most of all, learn to listen to our fellow Filipinos. *Dahil ang pagpapabuti ng ating mga programa, sistema, gobyerno, bansa, at maski na ng ating mga sarili ay nagsisimula sa pakikinig. At sa ating pakikinig, matutugunan natin ang tunay na mga pangangailangan ng ating mga kababayan tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas.*

Thank you very much.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidayah, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*



From left to right: DBM Legal Service (LS) Director Atty. Andrea Celene M. Magtalas, Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman, Legal and Legislative Group Undersecretary Atty. Janet B. Abuel, and LS Assistant Director Atty. Rosemarie D. Pagala

### Within the Bounds of Law: Ensuring an Equitable, Prudent, and Transparent National Budget

2024 Legal Service Forum  
March 6, 2024 | Manila

To my dearest colleagues and fellow public servants here at the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), especially from the Legal Service, *magandang araw*.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

Last January, we kicked off our budget preparation season for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 through our Budget Forum where I reiterated our commitment to promoting the sound, efficient, and effective management and utilization of government resources.

And this Legal Service Forum—which is now on its third year—is a fitting follow-through as it aims to ensure the proper implementation of the FY 2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA), particularly in the release and use of funds, consistent with applicable existing laws. So thank you and congratulations to our Legal Service, led by our Undersecretary for Legal and Legislative Group, Usec. Janet Abuel and Director Andrea Celene Magtalas, for spearheading this.



Scan the QR code to watch the **Secretary's full message**.

I said this during last year's LS Forum and I will say it again: without our dear lawyers and legal officers, DBM would be lost. Your knowledge and expertise are essential in ensuring that every document we release is consistent with the mandates and limitations of the Philippine Constitution, and compliant with existing laws, rules, and regulations.

As we align our understanding and interpretation of the Special and General Provisions of the FY 2024 GAA, and the Veto Message of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (PBBM), let us also be reminded of his statement when he signed the National Budget last December—that “good government dictates upon us the duty to spend the appropriations we have cobbled together for the CORRECT purposes, the RIGHT way, on time, and on budget.”

Hence, let me renew my call to our public servants here today to fully participate in improving our budget preparation and execution process so that we can address the perennial challenge of underspending. As PBBM also said, “Implementation delay and illegal deviations inflict the same havoc of denying the people of the progress and development that they deserve.”

Towards this end, we are doing our best to improve and streamline our processes through digital transformation and capacity building. We have launched Project TINA, or the Technical Innovations for the National Expenditure Program (NEP) Application, which will resolve pain points across our Budget and Management Bureaus and boost operational efficiency.

We have likewise kicked off Project DIME or the Digital Information for Monitoring and Evaluation of major government projects. We are also continuously capacitating our Public Financial Management (PFM) practitioners through our PFM Competency Program.

Beyond efficiency, let us also work hard to ensure transparency, as we keep our budget and other releases open to public scrutiny. Allowing every allocation, decision, and program implementation to involve public participation is in line with the spirit of the Philippine Open Government Partnership, which we fully support and strongly advocate.

Let us also continue to stand for inclusivity, as we ensure that no one is left behind, including our local government units and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. As I said during the 17th

*“With the guidance of our Legal Service, we must also always ensure that all our actions are within the bounds of the law even as we seek ways to fully utilize and improve the law.”*

meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations Body last month, we have been working hard to make Mindanao a shining example of peace and development in the Philippines.

Towards furthering bureaucratic efficiency, let us also continue to improve our public service delivery and enhance the government's institutional capacity through the National Government Rightsizing Program.

I also aspire for our procurement systems to be efficient, effective, and world-class. Hence, we are pushing for the new Government Procurement Reform Act which will make our public procurement system more attuned to the changing times.

Above all, with the guidance of our Legal Service, we must also always ensure that all our actions are within the bounds of the law even as we seek ways to fully utilize and improve the law.

Together, let us steer the nation forward *tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas* and towards the achievement of our Agenda for Prosperity.

*Mabuhay po tayong lahat* and may we all have a productive day ahead.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*

## Achieving the Agenda for Prosperity through Service Above Self

District Conference of the Rotary International District 3800  
March 22, 2024 | Mandaluyong City

Rotary International President's Representative (RIPR) Patrick Chisanga and spouse Petronella; District Governor Ronald "Pope" Solis and spouse Vicky; Past Rotary International Director (PRID) Raffy Garcia and spouse Minda; past district governors, district officers, Rotarians; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen: A pleasant afternoon to all.

*Assalamu alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.*

I am Secretary Amenah Pangandaman of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) but my friends and colleagues call me Sec. Mina for short.

Before anything else, I would like to congratulate the Rotary District 3800 for the success of your District Conference, culminating your Rotary year.

I would also like to thank you for this opportunity to speak with very able, passionate, and young professionals who are eager to make a positive impact on our communities. It is my honor to be in the presence of esteemed Rotarians from the Resilient District—the cities of Malabon, Navotas, Caloocan, Valenzuela, Marikina, Pasig, San Juan, Mandaluyong, and the Province of Rizal.

While you come from different backgrounds and localities, you are bound by a common purpose: to create lasting change through promoting integrity and advancing world understanding, goodwill, and peace.

As the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management, I truly support this mission. In fact, I have always looked up to Rotarians. Even as a graduate student of the Development Economics Program at the University of the Philippines Diliman and in my first job ever as Research Assistant of then Professor, now NEDA Secretary Arsi Balisacan for a World Bank project, I always aspired to find ways to create a positive impact on the lives of Filipinos—just like Rotarians.

Meanwhile, in my previous work as Chief-of-Staff to former Senate President Edgardo J. Angara, and later as DBM Undersecretary and then Assistant Governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, I sought to exemplify the Rotarian motto of Service Above Self.

As a public servant of over 20 years, working in these different branches of government, in a way I have always carried this motto with me, hence always underscoring the importance of service. In fact, if you look at my Instagram page, you will see that my personal motto is "We rise by lifting others."

So allow me to share with you the Agenda for Prosperity that we are undertaking at the DBM which we hope will ultimately redound to the upliftment of the lives of all Filipinos. We are working very hard to establish key structural reforms that would enable sound fiscal management and promote bureaucratic efficiency in government that will propel the country's economic performance and socioeconomic agenda towards our vision for a *Bagong Pilipinas*.

### **Sustaining the Country's Growth Momentum**

On the recent performance of the economy, the Philippines has been among the dynamically emerging markets in the Asia-Pacific region with its sound macroeconomic fundamentals and fiscal discipline.

In fact, we posted a GDP growth rate of 5.6 percent in 2023, making us one of the fastest-growing economies in this dynamic region, performing better than Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

Clearly, we have the momentum for growth. Even international financial institutions share this optimism, with our GDP growth matching, or even exceeding the forecasts of the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO).



*The Budget Chief addresses over 600 Rotarians during the District Conference of the Rotary International District 3800.*



**2023 National Government Full-Year Fiscal Performance**

On the fiscal front, we are committed to restoring macro-fiscal stability through fiscal consolidation, guided by the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework—our blueprint for fiscal planning and implementing policies to achieve robust economic growth. We aim to reduce our debt-to-GDP ratio to less than 60 percent by 2025 and the deficit-to-GDP ratio to pre-pandemic levels by 2028.

For 2023, we remain on track to achieving our fiscal targets. The Administration successfully registered an increase of 7.86 percent in revenue collections, hitting Php 3.824 trillion and exceeding the government's target by 2.55 percent. Meanwhile, the national government's spending performance reached Php 5.336 trillion, surpassing the 2023 spending target by 2.06 percent. Given this, the deficit-to-GDP ratio improved to 6.2 percent in 2023 from 7.3 percent in 2022.

**Socioeconomic Services under the FY 2024 National Budget**

Part of ensuring sound fiscal management over the medium term is making sure that the government's limited resources are focused on attaining the country's development goals. Guided by our Agenda for Prosperity, the National Budget shall address the most compelling needs of the Filipino people.

Thus, for the Php 5.768 trillion national budget for FY 2024—the first budget fully prepared under the administration of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.—the national government prioritizes human capital development, shovel-ready infrastructure projects, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, among other equally important sectors.

This explains why a total of 67.5 percent of the budget was allocated for both social and economic services, with the shares of essential subsectors, such as education, health, and transportation accelerating the fastest among other sectors.

Recognizing the importance of infrastructure development in steering sustainable economic growth, a big chunk of the budget will go to the administration's Build Better More Program, which will be strongly supported by Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). And I am happy to share that we recently signed the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the PPP Code, which aims to further simplify the evaluation process and create a unified system for investors to refer to when engaging in PPP projects.

However, the crafting and passage of the National Budget is only half the battle. Reforms must be instituted in the entire budget cycle—from preparation, legislation, and execution, up to monitoring, evaluation, and the accountability phase. It is only then that we can truly carry out our

mission to ensure the equitable, prudent, transparent, and accountable allocation and use of public funds.

In this context, I would like to discuss with you the game-changing budget reforms that we have introduced to enhance efficiency, transparency, and public participation in the budget process.

**Open Government**

After two decades in public service, I can attest to you that it is indeed with citizen participation, coupled with initiatives on transparency, accountability, and digitalization, that the government can better deliver public services that have a concrete, felt, and transformative impact.

I currently chair the Philippine Open Government Partnership or the PH-OGP, the main consultation platform of the Participatory Governance Cluster (PGC) of the Cabinet that provides an avenue for interface between the government and the citizens.

Recognizing the crucial role of open government in building a more resilient democracy, we have institutionalized the PH-OGP through Executive Order No. 31, s. 2023 to ensure that open government values are embedded in policies and programs across all government agencies.

With this initiative, the Philippines was recognized as “a trailblazer in open governance not only in Asia but also within the Partnership” by no less than OGP Chief Executive Officer Sanjay Pradhan during the OGP Global Summit in Estonia. This is proof that because of our efforts, the Philippines continues to be recognized as a global leader in the open governance space.

To further strengthen our commitment to this initiative, we also developed a more ambitious and citizen-empowered PH-OGP National Action Plan (NAP). We have likewise expanded the open governance space by conducting the OGPinas! Nationwide Advocacy Campaign as we introduce the 6th PH-OGP NAP and its commitments and provide an avenue for feedback—socializing the plans of the PH-OGP for the medium term. And as of date, we have already visited seven (7) regions, including the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), engaging almost a thousand Filipinos across the country.

What we do in OGP is therefore very unique and important. We put emphasis on building a high-trust society by promoting transparency, participatory, and accountability measures at all levels of the bureaucracy and in partnership with civil society. And through the active engagement of our citizens, including you, our dear Rotarians, I am confident that we can make any initiative as strong and inclusive as it could ever be.

One of our participatory initiatives—which I hope you could also take part in—is the Support and Assistance Fund to Participatory Budgeting with Php 1.0 billion, which we launched last month, with the Department of the Interior and Local Government. The unique aspect of this program is that we will be partnering with local civil society organizations in identifying lagging municipalities to be provided with safely-managed and resilient water supply and sanitation services.

And attesting to the diversity and strengthened collaboration between the government and the civil society, the PH-OGP Steering Committee is composed of both government and non-government members who will work together to ensure sustainability and irreversibility of successful reforms.

#### ***Gender Inclusion and Women Empowerment***

Broadening its Steering Committee Membership, the PH-OGP included a seat for a women's sector representative to ensure the integration of the perspectives and voices of women in open government initiatives. And I am proud to announce that my new counterpart for civil society, Ms. Araw Chavez, the Executive Director of MALAYA KA, was elected Co-Chair this year. Together, we will work hard for a gender-fair, inclusive, and open government.

Just last week, I headed the Philippine Delegation to the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women held in New York. I reaffirmed the country's commitment to poverty eradication, the acceleration of gender equality, and the empowerment of all women and girls, as reflected in our Philippine Development Plan 2023 to 2028 and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Plan 2019 to 2025.

Delivering the Philippine Statement during the general discussion, I underscored the country's efforts in promoting the rights of women from different sectors and shared that the Philippines' support for women and girls is intersectoral and all-encompassing. Thus, through collaborative efforts and targeted interventions, we are determined to break the chains of poverty and empower women and girls at all levels.

And to concretize these commitments, we will strengthen the "Women's Budget," also known as the Gender and Development Budget, in our General Appropriations Act. This policy directs all government departments and agencies to allocate a minimum of five percent of their total annual budgets for gender programs, projects, and activities.

#### ***Digital Transformation***

Aside from PH-OGP, digital transformation has always been one of my top priorities as Budget Secretary. Hence, we are targeting to fully digitalize our Public Financial Management (PFM) Systems, beginning with the

adoption of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) across all government agencies, pursuant to Executive Order No. 29, s. 2023.

To jumpstart this initiative, the DBM, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank, launched a workshop series dedicated to the development of the Philippine PFM Reforms Roadmap 2024 to 2028—a blueprint that will enable the full digitalization of PFM processes and harmonize PFM policies across agencies.

This supports our Public Financial Management Competency Program (PFMCP), which we have expanded to capacitate not only budget officers from national government agencies but also from local government units. Through this program, local PFM practitioners are provided with the necessary competencies to perform their critical role in their respective localities.

To date, the PFMCP for LGUs has already been conducted in six different regions with a total of 3,209 local PFM practitioners who graduated from the program since its inception in September 2023.

And for the rest of the year, we are planning to capacitate an additional 6,500 local PFM practitioners in different provinces through nine more PFMCP-LGU sessions.

Still towards digital transformation, we will launch a Digital Budget Management Roadmap which we will be implementing in a phased manner starting with Project TINA or the Technical Innovations in the National Expenditure Program (NEP) Application Project which aims to create a unified system that will automate the budget process and boost operational efficiency. This shall be complemented with Project Marissa, which utilizes blockchain technology to enhance the management of critical data such as allotment release orders and other DBM records in public finances.

And I am also very proud of the revival of Project DIME or the Digital Information for Monitoring and Evaluation Project, which shall use existing technologies such as satellites, drones, and geotagging to monitor infrastructure projects while encouraging citizen feedback.

#### ***Procurement Reforms***

All of these efforts are also part of our commitment to ensuring better and more strategic planning, and improving our budget preparation and execution process so that we can address the perennial challenge of underspending or the difference between programmed disbursements and actual disbursements.

And because procurement is a major bottleneck to efficient government spending, I am happy to announce that we are getting closer to having a new Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), which aims to promote spending efficiency by adhering to global standards in procurement. Part of this mission is to leverage digitalization and establish an electronic Marketplace or eMarketplace—an online platform where agencies may directly procure supplies and equipment from competent and reputable suppliers. With the new GPRA, we can all look forward to a procurement system that is more attuned to the changing times.

We will also champion sustainability with green public procurement by encouraging agencies to procure common-use supplies and equipment items with green specifications. And in line with our commitment to open governance, we will introduce a participatory procurement process where members of the non-government sector will serve as observers during procurement proceedings.

### **Supporting Peace and Development in BARMM**

As a proud daughter of Mindanao and the only Muslim woman in the cabinet of PBBM, it is my dream to see a BARMM that is thriving and a Mindanao that shines as a land of promise. Hence, I am extremely committed to developing BARMM as an empowered, cohesive, and progressive region in the country.

The Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB), an intergovernmental body that deals with the relations of the Bangsamoro regional government and the Philippine national government, which I co-chair with Minister Mohagher M. Iqbal, has successfully convened all IGR mechanisms needed to complete BARMM's transition in less than two years. And I'm happy to share that our harmonious working relations across all IGR mechanisms have resulted in public-oriented decisions which we hope to have lasting benefits for both governments.

In fact, our strong collaboration has led to a fruitful partnership with the Japanese Government. Last November, we signed and exchanged Diplomatic Notes on the Non-Project Grant Aid for the acquisition of USD 6.8 million worth of construction equipment for road network improvement and disaster quick response operations in BARMM.

*"So allow me to take this opportunity to call on each of you to be our partners in pursuing our Agenda for Prosperity as we march on toward Bagong Pilipinas—a Philippines of new and better opportunities—with an inclusive, future-proof, and sustainable economy where no Filipino is left behind."*

And last January 22, the first BSP-licensed Islamic Bank—the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) Bank—opened in BARMM to serve the unbanked and underbanked population by offering a wide range of financial products and services aligned with the Shari'ah principles.

We are, of course, grateful to the President for his full support in achieving economic transformation for BARMM. So allow me to share his beautiful message during the 17th IGRB Meeting held last February here in Manila: *"Bagong Pilipinas is incomplete without a Bagong Bangsamoro rising along and within it."*

### **Closing**

As you can see, while I am Budget Secretary, we are doing much more than just crunching numbers for the National Expenditure Program. That is because I believe in having a whole-of-government approach to achieving our vision for the nation.

In fact, beyond using a whole-of-government approach, we should have a whole-of-nation approach. And this is where the Rotary International District 3800 can come in. We need strong support and participation from the private sector, including our dear Rotary members who believe that we have a shared responsibility to take action on our most persistent challenges.

So allow me to take this opportunity to call on each of you to be our partners in pursuing our Agenda for Prosperity as we march on toward *Bagong Pilipinas*—a Philippines of new and better opportunities—with an inclusive, future-proof, and sustainable economy where no Filipino is left behind.

Together, let us pursue sustainable, far-reaching, and meaningful socio-civic projects that uplift the lives of our fellow Filipinos. Rest assured that the DBM—and the Philippine government—are one with you in the realization of your vision. Together, let us achieve our shared dreams for our nation.

*Mabuhay ang Rotary District 3800! Mabuhay ang DBM! Mabuhay ang Pilipinas.*

Thank you.

*Wabillahi Tawfiq Wal Hidaya, Wasalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.*







*“Each of us is a force that creates ripples of change  
— one employee, one office, and one institution at a time.  
Collectively, these ripples will become waves  
of transformational change for the nation and our fellow Filipinos.”*

SECRETARY AMENAH F. PANGANDAMAN