

**Philippine Country Statement**

**92<sup>nd</sup> Session of the IOM**

November 30, 2006

O1 In behalf of the Philippine Government, we congratulate the IOM on its 92<sup>nd</sup> session. We express our sincere gratitude too, to the Organization for caring for the Filipino migrants and the migrants of the world, and for the focus that you have given migration in the past 55 years.

O2 We are a nation with 8 million overseas workers with thousands of our people entering the circular migration process daily. As a labor sending state, we have installed our own human capital development programmes; we regulate the movement of our nationals to foreign lands and ensure that they enjoy equitable terms of employment; we ease the tension of migration by promoting their welfare and their integration in the destination states; and we provide options when they return through a wholistic reintegration mechanism. It is important to us and we ensure in every way possible that our people serve as valuable assets to their respective host countries.

03 The IOM has been there with us for most of our 32 years of managed migration; our mutual cooperation has resulted in many successful joint ventures in the service of Filipino migrants. Gender-centered information programs and a pilot program for our displaced workers from Japan are only some of the cooperative activities we have done together. Within this year, the best example of effective IOM presence was the assistance rendered to us in Lebanon in the evacuation of our nationals. The IOM sponsored 11 flights that saw the transport of almost 4 thousand of our people from Damascus, Syria to Manila. We particularly value this experience because it came at a time of our acute need and was thus a very quick, timely and meaningful response.

04 Partnership, cooperation, participation and reciprocity define our country's relationship with the IOM. We refer particularly to partnership and cooperation in undertakings that benefit our migrants; participation in IOM-sponsored international programs; and reciprocal assistance by welcoming IOM-sponsored missions within our shores.

05 The Philippine Government shall continue to look up to IOM for assistance and support, and we pledge to work together with the

international community in fostering an orderly migration that takes the interests of all stakeholders into account. From our Lebanon and Gulf War experiences, we now see a manifest need to establish a permanent and renewable emergency evacuation fund to help IOM member states in need of emergency evacuation assistance. We declare ourselves as a State supportive of this move. To us, this is a real service that the IOM and the IOM community can provide to the migrants of this world.

06 Thank you for this opportunity to speak before you today.