

*Climate Change Forum Seminar
Private and Finance Sectors Involvement in NAMAs
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Identifying Meaningful and Achievable Goals and Opportunities of NAMAs

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Our in-coming President will inherit the leadership of a nation that has one of the most vibrant economies in Asia. At the same time, however, he will inherit a very difficult set of problems – domestic and international -- than any of his predecessors since the end of World War II.

President Duterte has a daunting, extraordinary agenda. He will be waging war on many fronts – against insurgency and terrorists, against poverty and crime, against graft and corruption, and against global warming, just to mention a few.

But we see in President Duterte a leader who is determined to re-create a sense of national purpose, a leader who seeks to build up national strength and national resiliency. Today, we play a small part in the drama of national renewal by helping to define potential policies and actions that we may undertake as part of a voluntary commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

For our duty, no less, is to help the new leadership achieve that high purpose, that great strength, and that essential resiliency.

In the arena of climate change, this means that we must devise and promote policies on mitigation, on enhanced adaptive capacity of our communities, on the resiliency of our natural ecosystems, and on the sustainability of our built

environment. Our primary goal is a successful transition to climate-smart development.

We will succeed in this transition by earnestly striving to support the 70% greenhouse gas emissions cut across major economic sectors through Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions, or NAMAs. In this task, we are indebted to the United Nations Environmental Programme, UNEP is supporting the Philippines develop a range of mitigation actions, including policies and projects focused on energy and resource efficiency.

A good example is the first “Buildings Day” held at COP21 on December 3, 2015. This event provided the Philippines an opportunity to launch an alliance of organizations collectively committed to: Helping put the construction sector on the “below 2 °C path” and catalyzing stronger collaboration among builders.

Why buildings? The building sector has an oversized environmental footprint. More than 30 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions are buildings-related, and emissions could double by 2050 if we carry on business as usual in a time of rapid urbanization and explosive demographics.

Another good reason is that the buildings sector offers one of the most cost-effective and economically beneficial paths for reducing energy demand and associated emissions while at the same time supporting adaptation and resilience to climate change.

The economic, health, and social benefits of sustainable buildings are significant. Buildings provide shelter, places to live, work, learn and socialize, directly affecting our daily lives. Providing more than 50 per cent of global wealth, and one of the largest employers at the local level, this sector also offers a path to poverty alleviation.

Buildings include housing which combine to create approximately one-third of all GHG emissions. Thus, in a rapidly developing Asia with a high population growth rate, financing is imperative to attain energy efficiency measures, to promote sustainable building policies, and to pursue technologies and innovative approaches that significantly reduce GHG emissions.

It will be worthwhile for this forum to revisit the National Shelter Program (NSP), a housing initiative undertaken by the national government as early as 1978

– a very long time ago when climate change was not yet a global issue. The objective of that program was to increase the housing stock for the poorest 50% of the population. This program called for the direct production of housing units by government, and the provision of public funds to encourage the private sector to produce “social housing” developments.

Is the NSP being continued today? Is current government housing units being built to climate change standards? Do the community plans include green environment and green infrastructure? We should find out about current public housing projects in order to make them NAMAs-oriented, climate-resilient, and green.

In the Philippines, the social housing and the building sector can be transformed through the NAMA mechanism, which includes both adaptation and mitigation concerns. The social housing sector needs to provide access to low-cost yet resilient homes to ensure security and safety for occupants. The design, construction and operation of today’s houses and buildings need to incorporate and address concerns of adaptation to climate change.

This forum is a child of the Manila Declaration adopted on October 23 last year. It was, and it remains, the Philippine private sectors’ response to the global imperative of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We recognize the importance of engaging the private business community in the housing development of the country. We are willing and eager to sit down with the building sector to find ways and means for the business sector to invest in low-income housing and other green building initiatives.

Our expectation is that this forum will materially result in a broader awareness and commitment from our financial and private sectors in implementing climate change initiatives. In the context of our developing country, Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions will help us to work more effectively toward our sustainable development goals, as well as to foster the economic and social priorities of the new Administration.

Let us have no doubt that NAMAs can work for us to overcome investment barriers. Above all, NAMAs can help us bring about the transformational change we badly need in our own society as we strive – together with our global partners – to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Remember, we “need **1.5** to stay alive.” -- #