

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY NEW ZEALAND
PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT FORUM
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New Zealand is pleased to participate in this Philippine Development Forum and extends its thanks to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the World Bank for the excellent meeting preparations and arrangements. The year 2006 marks the fortieth anniversary of diplomatic ties between New Zealand and the Philippines. In her first ever state visit to the country in March, New Zealand's Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Helen Clark, together with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, underscored the value both countries placed on its long-term sustainable development partnership.

New Zealand continues to support the Philippines' efforts to eliminate poverty and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) targets by 2015. An increase in NZAID's allocation for its Philippine programme of 21 percent to NZ\$4 million took effect in 2005. NZAID's Philippine five year country strategy (2003/04-2007/8), agreed with the Government of the Philippines (GOP) and focusing on three primary themes – natural resource management, indigenous people and governance – with a number of “cross-cutting” programmes: Human Resource Development, Peace and Development work in Mindanao and the Small Projects Scheme (SPS), is now fully in place. A review of the programme strategy is scheduled in 2008.

In the area of natural resources management, the Post-Project Evaluation of the Bukidnon Forests Incorporated (BFI), a sustainable forest plantation and NZAID's flagship project in the Philippines until it ended in 2003, was completed in September 2005. The report contains generally positive evaluation findings and recommendations to help ensure BFI's sustainability over the long term. The NZAID-assisted Philippine National Ecotourism Programme is now in its second phase and focuses on mainstreaming ecotourism in protected areas. Support for a coastal resources management programme in

Camiguin remains subject to the outcome of a design study expected to be finalised in early 2006.

With respect to indigenous peoples, we are now in the first stages of implementation with the UNDP and the Philippine Department of Agrarian Reform, of a three year Integrated Programme for the Empowerment of Indigenous Peoples (IP) and Sustainable Development of Ancestral Domains. This is a follow-up programme to a similar project we co-funded with UNDP two years ago. This successor programme will build on the previous project's accomplishments especially in the area of assisting IP communities formulate and implement their Ancestral Domain Sustainable and Development and Protection Plans (ADSDPPs). Through UNICEF, we have renewed our commitment to support the Child Friendly Movement (CFM) in Mountain Province, one of the Philippines' poorest provinces with a large IP population. The CFM has provided significant support to the province in improving its service delivery in health, nutrition, early childhood care, basic education and child protection. It has also had substantive accomplishments in the area of child-friendly governance and child protection. For 2005-2007, the CFM's focus will be on the most disadvantaged children and communities of Mountain Province. It will accelerate expansion of its interventions to ensure that disparities on the child indicators of the province are significantly narrowed against the national status.

Under the governance theme of our country strategy, we are supporting the Local Government Unit Management Training Programme or LGUMT in CARAGA, the aim of which is to strengthen the capabilities of local government unit (LGU) staff in programme and project development and management.

In 2005, all NZAID funded scholarships were amalgamated into a single New Zealand Development Scholarships (NZDS) scheme. Study awards for postgraduate courses in New Zealand is currently the single largest component of NZAID's Human Resource Development (HRD) programme in the Philippines. A tracer study and a subsequent effectiveness review to ascertain the impact of NZAID's and GOP's investment in postgraduate education (1994-2004) is expected to get underway in 2006. While postgraduate scholarships for New Zealand based study will continue to be a major

feature of our HRD programme, we are now exploring with GRP's full support, the possibility of providing in-country tertiary awards. We have also been approached by NEDA to consider funding a training programme aimed at developing project appraisal skills of NEDA staff in their Central and Regional Offices.

Mindanao continues to be a priority geographic area for NZAID. The recent Philippine Human Development Report reveals that out of the bottom ten provinces in the country in terms of the Human Development Index (HDI), seven are located in Mindanao. Together with AusAID, we are supporting a UNDP-led "Action for Conflict Transformation (ACT) for Peace Programme". ACT is the successor phase of the Philippines/UN Multi Donor programme (MDP) for Peace and Development in Mindanao, of which NZAID has been a consistent supporter. NZAID has also signed an agreement with the World Bank (WB) to support Phase 1 (Capacity Building) of the Mindanao Trust Fund or MTF, a programme it is spearheading to help fund reconstruction and development in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front or MILF conflict-affected areas of Mindanao.

During Prime Minister Helen Clark's recent state visit to the Philippines, she announced New Zealand was providing NZ\$525,000 to the Philippines to help ensure the country is prepared for any possible outbreak of avian influenza. This grant, which will be coursed through the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, will help to enhance and strengthen the country's veterinary services capacity especially in field and diagnostic surveillance of Avian Influenza and other diseases that may emerge in the future. Project components include the conduct of a poultry population census nationwide, the conduct of targeted surveillance studies, the conduct of laboratory tests, the maintenance of an information management system and the conduct of research-based public awareness activities.

In addition to the bilateral programme, the Philippines also draws on potential support available under contestable, non-bilateral programmes implemented by NZAID. This includes the Voluntary Agencies Support Scheme (VASS) and the Asia Development Assistance Facility (ADAF). Substantial assistance is currently being provided to the Philippines from these programmes. Taking all these

sources into account, New Zealand aid flows to the Philippines from all sources are estimated at approximately US\$ 3.5 million for 2006.

New Zealand is a small, strategic niche player in the Philippines. To maximise impact and within the context of NZAID's wider commitment to better development results and fewer, deeper, longer and larger engagements, the likely future direction of the Philippine country programme, particularly in the period after the current strategy, would be to streamline even further, focussing in areas where New Zealand has particular expertise and experience and of course where the Philippine Government expresses a need for support.

Thank you.