



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY

MESSAGE

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Opening Remarks

1st National Convention on

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

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To our Key Note Speaker, Congresswoman Maria Lucille Nava, the Committee Chairperson for House Committee on Population and Family Relations and the District Representative of Lone District of Guimaras; Undersecretary Rosemarie Edillon of the National Economic and Development Authority; Ms. Rikke Munk Hansen, Officer-in-Charge of the Statistics Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; our participants: Consuls and Vice Consuls from our Philippine Foreign Service Posts, city and municipal civil registrars, solemnizing officers, members of the academic community, statisticians, our government agency partners and other stakeholders attending this convention, a pleasant morning.

Today is the start of the remarkable 3-day event for the first ever National Convention on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (1NCCRVS). This major activity is a perfect venue to inform the city and municipal registrars, solemnizing officers, members of the academic community, statisticians, and other stakeholders about the recent developments in civil registration and the vital statistics generated in the country.

Likewise, this event aims to provide the participants knowledge on civil registration concepts, procedures, laws, and policy issuances. It also aims to share the best practices, experiences, and ideas on civil registration; provide knowledge on data appreciation for vital statistics;

and to promote activities for the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade or CRVS Decade.

The convention will also give updates to the Solemnizing Officers specifically the amendment of Administrative Order No. 1 Series of 2007 on the registration of authority to solemnize marriage, as well as updates on Civil Registration System Information Technology Project II (CRS-ITP2) and the PhilSys Registration.

One of the highlights of this convention is the awarding of the outstanding Local Civil Registry Offices for 2020. This will be done on the third day after the session on the sharing of best practices and innovations with selected five Civil Registrars as resource persons.

The 1st National Convention on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics is in preparation for the Second Ministerial Declaration on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics to be held this November 2021.

The Second Ministerial Declaration will review the progress in implementing the Regional Action Framework's goals and targets, identify further actions needed, and discuss how to align the CRVS Decade with the emerging global development context.

I am very happy that despite the restrictions that we are encountering due to the pandemic, the different working groups of the Philippine Statistics Authority, both at Central and Field Offices, successfully pushed through with this big event virtually.

With this, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the members of the different working groups for their bravery and dedication despite the continued threat of COVID-19, especially now with the DELTA variant.

To adapt to the new normal, we made a lot of efforts in improving our civil registration services. We continue to make our processes more convenient and safer for our clients as we explore new and innovative ways to bring our civil registration services and vital statistics more accessible to the public.

The Philippine Statistics Authority revived its partnership last year with PSAHelpline.ph, a third-party provider for the online services for the issuance of civil registry documents.

We are also now implementing the first-ever mode of online payment at the Civil Registration Service Outlets in Metro Manila and select Field Offices for the copy issuance of civil registration documents via PayMaya. Discussion with GCash as another alternative mode for cashless transactions at the CRS Outlets is also ongoing.

My future direction is to push for digitalization of the civil registration processes especially for the online services for petitions. We must not slowdown on our initiatives to upgrade and update our skills by taking advantage of the advancements in information technology.

Both the PSA Field Offices and the Local Civil Registry Offices all over the country have lined-up various activities to raise awareness and to promote the legal, administrative, and statistical values of civil registration, and to campaign the importance of adequate funding for the enforcement and administration of civil registry laws.

Since March 2021, our Field Offices, with the assistance of our Civil Registration Service and Legal Service, conducted the third level trainings for civil registrars, the social workers from the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Provincial, City and Municipal Social Welfare and Development Offices.

This is in preparation for the implementation of Republic Act 11222 or the Simulated Birth Rectification Act (SIBRA). The Philippine Statistics Authority also held consultative forums for the preparation of the draft administrative order on the registration of authority to solemnize marriage.

The PSA is also drafting the latest revision on the guidelines for registration of a person with no known parent/s, formerly known as a “foundling”. This aims to eradicate social discrimination of the foundlings and to address their concerns that affect the claim of their rights to the society.

The Philippines is a signatory to the Ministerial Declaration to “*Get Every One in the Picture*” in Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Action Framework for the CRVS Decade 2015-2024 which contains three (3) Goals and seven (7) Action Areas.

The CRVS Decade in the Philippines was launched on 11 February 2015 and we have adopted “*Get Every Pinoy and Pinay in the Picture*” as our slogan. Additionally, the Office of the Civil Registrar General logo was launched in 2018 and was registered with the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines-Bureau of Trademarks in February 2021. I therefore encourage our Local Civil Registrars to make use of the said logo in our communications and related issuance of civil registry documents.

Meanwhile, the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Jingle entitled “*Masasagot*” was officially launched in 2016 with a full MTV Animation and English sub-titles. The jingle is being used in all CRVS advocacy and related activities.

With the CRVS Decade, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) initiated the setting-up of a national coordination mechanism to oversee the implementation of the Regional Action Framework by establishing an Inter-Agency Committee on CRVS and its terms of reference.

Our Regional Offices established the Inter-Agency Committee on CRVS at sub-national levels to oversee the implementation of CRVS at the regional, provincial, and local levels. The CRVS Decade Work Plan for 2015-2024 was included in the latest updates of the Philippine Statistical Development Plan.

Furthermore, we have conducted mobile registrations and caravans nationwide through our Field Offices and Local Civil Registry Offices.

The PSA team along with the Department of Foreign Affairs went to Sabah, Malaysia in 2019 for a special mission of conducting an on-site civil registration activity which included copy issuance and verification for delayed registration of undocumented Filipino workers at the palm plantation, including their beneficiaries.

The PSA facilitated 9,389 birth certificates for out-of-town registration concept under this collaboration project with the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. We continue to partner with the DFA for the online registration this year to serve to our countrymen who have migrated to Sabah for work.

On the vital statistics side, in the year 2016, the PSA started collaboration with Vital Strategies and the University of Melbourne for the Bloomberg Data for Health Initiative (D4HI) Project. The partnership aims to introduce interventions and trainings with the end goal of improving the quality of birth and death registration in the Philippines, particularly on the causes of death in the country in support of the national CRVS priorities. We have likewise organized and hosted avenues for data dissemination and consultation as well conducted several trainings and workshops on CRVS.

We take pride that in 2020, the PSA released timely and accurate death statistics in response to the urgent need for data of the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Health, and the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases for the monitoring of the COVID-19 mortality in the country.

Our journey to improve the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in the Philippines must continue. We took off with a good start and on the right track. However, the momentum gained must be sustained despite the challenges and the threats. We need to ensure that no Filipino child is born stateless and that every vital event in his or her lifetime is recorded. The city and municipal civil registrars play a vital role to the overall success of the "*Get Every Pinoy and Pinay in Picture*" campaign.

Before I end this message, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to our resource speakers who accepted our invitation despite their busy schedules. Thank you very much for sparing your valuable time and for sharing your knowledge on the different topics that will be discussed.

May this event bear meaningful discussions and may we all have a safe and productive week ahead. Thank you very much.

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