**PHILIPPINES**

Sixth Session of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group for the Elaboration

Of an International Legally Binding Instrument on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with respect to human rights

Monday, 26 Oct (AM)

10.00 to 13.00

**General Statement**

Thank you, Chair.

The Philippines thanks Ecuador, as Chair of the Open- Ended Intergovernmental Working Group, for shepherding this process of elaborating a draft Legally Binding Instrument to regulate in international law the activities of TNCs and OBEs.

As one of the 20 countries that voted in favor of HRC resolution 26/9 of June 2014 which established the Working Group and its mandate, the Philippines remains strongly committed to this process of continuing our inclusive discussions on a draft LBI.

Our commitment to this process is consistent with our pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Filipino’s long-term vision and aspirations set forth in Our Ambition 2040, and the developmental objectives espoused in the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 which mainstreams the protection of human rights and equality and justice in its strategies.

With respect to the mandate of the Working Group, the Philippines recalls HRC resolution 26/9 which expressly limits the scope of the LBI to the activities of TNCs and OBEs, and in this regard we underline our position on the need to revert or limit the scope of the LBI strictly to the activities of TNCs and OBEs, consistent with the original mandate.

Further, we highlight the need to preserve policy space on the grant of incentives and discretion by states on exemption of certain small and medium-sized enterprises from obligations with the aim of minimizing additional administrative burdens to this sector.

We recognize the importance of addressing the long-term socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as highlighted by the Ecuadorian Foreign Minister, Amb. Luis Gallegos. In this regard, we highlight our view that the LBI should address the needs of workers in TNCs and OBEs for human rights protection, particularly in emergencies of international concern, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The LBI must recognize the need to protect human rights, particularly the observance of health and sanitation protocols, provision of assistance in terms of social amelioration, employment, and livelihood continuity as well as protection from human rights abuses against those who have tested positive and undergoing treatment and those who may become victims of discrimination in the work place.

The Philippines underscores the need for our discussions on the LBI to continue to be inclusive and, as such, provide opportunity for different sectors of the civil society including the academe, religious groups, and civil society organizations to be involved in the discussions toward harmonizing and establishing consensus. We should also ensure that the provisions of the LBI on providing safeguards against all forms of discrimination apply across different vulnerable and marginalized groups.

We wish to assure the Chair of the Philippines’ continued constructive engagement in this process.

Thank you, Chair.