

**Office of the President  
of the Philippines  
Malacañang**

**PRESIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

**MESSAGE**

We join the world in this year's observance of International Human Rights Day and of the 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10.

This year, our government's commitment to protect our people under the direst of circumstances has been put to the test by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, we adopted a whole-of-government approach that is in strict accord with human rights standards.

At the pandemic's onset, the movement of people was contained in accordance with relevant domestic laws and policies on quarantine, disaster risk reduction, and infectious disease control; and international standards on civil and political rights protection, and healthcare management. These human rights standards were also observed in identifying and prioritizing beneficiaries, guaranteeing equal treatment in the enforcement of rules and regulations, demanding accountability and transparency from government institutions and their workers, and ensuring the protection of workers at the frontlines.

Today, the effective implementation of Republic Act (RA) No. 11469 also known as the *Bayanihan to Heal as One Act*, and now of RA No. 11494 or the *Bayanihan to Recover as One Act*, has markedly reduced the impact of the pandemic on our people. Social amelioration programs and humanitarian assistance have characterized our support for marginalized groups, including indigent children and older persons, and families of overseas workers who were rendered out-of-work and are awaiting repatriation.

On the other hand, the National Plan of Action for COVID-19 has spurred the government's efforts to render the country's healthcare system more responsive to the myriad pandemic concerns. Efforts in this regard have resulted in better resilience, prevention of transmission through reduced contacts, shortened infection periods of individuals, and the setting in place of accessible quality hospital and healthcare services.

In all this, the Philippine government has remained focused on accelerating the country's economic recovery while protecting public health. Against the backdrop of a society struggling under the "new normal," infrastructure and social development programs that bear upon food supply chains and which extend temporary relief to many are continuously being pursued.

Indeed, in keeping with the theme for this year's observance of International Human Rights Day, **Recover Better – Stand Up for Human Rights**, these human rights-compliant efforts of the Philippine government will allow our country and our people to recover from the pandemic better, stronger, and with greater resolve to move forward.

Mabuhay!

  
**SALVADOR C. MEDIALDEA**  
Executive Secretary