



SOLIDARITY MESSAGE

Office of the Vice President

Assalaamu alaikum.

It is an honor and Privilege to greet everyone at the 3rd Asian Convergence Initiative in Bangkok, Thailand.

As a passionate advocate for sustainable development and inclusive education, I deeply value this gathering. I am thrilled to see the participation of civic and NGO leaders, business executives, elected officials, local government leaders, educators, youth activists, and sustainable development experts.

This event reassures us that we are united in our journey towards achieving the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It highlights our collective commitment to fostering sustained growth for our Asian community, now and into the future.

We all play different roles in this vital mission. Whether our contributions are big or small, they are all essential in delivering real, tangible results for those at the grassroots level and in underserved communities. Every action counts, and together, our efforts can create a powerful force for positive change.

Let us continue to leverage our diverse strengths and collaborate on our initiatives. By doing so, we can transform the idea of sustainable development into reality, improving the lives of our people.

Let us remain steadfast in our mission to build a stronger, more inclusive, and sustainably progressive Asian region.

Ang lahat ng ating ginagawa ay para sa Diyos, sa bayan, at bawat Pamilyang Pilipino

Shukran.



SARA Z. DUTERTE

*Vice President of the Philippines
Secretary of the Department of Education*



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Office of the House Speaker House of Representative 19TH Congress

Blessed greetings to all participants of the 3rd Asian Convergence Initiative. It is my honor and privilege to extend my heartfelt solidarity and congratulations to everyone gathered for this significant event, "The Multisectoral Forum in Understanding ASEAN at the Crossroads of Progress and Development."

This forum, with the theme "Sustaining Asian Growth Through Achieving Sustainable Development Goals," comes at a crucial time as we collectively strive to build a resilient and prosperous future for our region.



**FERDINAND MARTIN G.
ROMUALDEZ**
SPEAKER

The Asian Convergence Initiative is a vital platform for bringing together diverse stakeholders from various sectors, including government, academia, business and civil society. This convergence is essential for fostering collaboration, sharing best practices, and generating innovative solutions to today's complex challenges.

By working together, we can create a holistic approach to sustainable development that benefits all members of our communities.

In the context of nation-building, the role of government as a key stakeholder cannot be overstated. Governments are responsible for creating and implementing policies that promote sustainable development, economic growth and social equity. Through initiatives like this forum, we can ensure that these policies are informed by the latest research, driven by stakeholder input and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the most pressing global issues, from poverty and inequality to climate change and environmental degradation. Achieving these goals requires concerted effort and collaboration across all sectors of society. The insights and partnerships formed during this forum will be instrumental in driving progress toward these goals, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Furthermore, understanding the intricacies of ASEAN at the crossroads of progress and development is critical for sustaining growth in our region. ASEAN's unique geopolitical and economic landscape offers both opportunities and challenges that must be navigated with care and foresight. By deepening our understanding and cooperation, we can harness the full potential of ASEAN to promote regional stability, economic integration, and sustainable development.

This multisectoral approach is particularly important as we face unprecedented global challenges, including the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and geopolitical tensions. By uniting our efforts and leveraging the strengths of each sector, we can build a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable future for all. Your participation in this forum is a testament to your commitment to this shared vision.

As we move forward, let us continue to foster a spirit of collaboration and mutual support. Together, we can achieve remarkable progress and build a better future for generations to come. I commend each of you for your dedication to this endeavor and look forward to the positive outcomes that will emerge from this important gathering.

Mabuhay po kayong lahat!



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National Economic and Development Authority

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Philippines' premier socioeconomic planning agency, consistently upholds the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. These goals have been integrated into the country's Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028—the guiding roadmap that serves as the nation's socioeconomic development blueprint in the medium term. Local governments and government agencies are continuously encouraged to align their local and sectoral plans with the SDGs, a move that not only contributes to the global sustainability agenda but also brings numerous benefits to our local communities and sectors.

Amid emerging developments such as the rise of artificial intelligence and newfound challenges such as ongoing geopolitical tensions, the need to intensify our efforts toward sustainable and inclusive development becomes ever more urgent. The Asian Convergence Initiative addresses this need by proactively enabling the collaboration and integration of plans of concerned stakeholders across Southeast Asia toward this shared goal. By joining leaders together in a united effort, there is hope that we will achieve the SDGs by 2030 and effectively execute our plans for ensuring inclusive and sustainable growth throughout Asia.

NEDA wishes for the success of the 3rd Asian Convergence Initiative. May its stakeholders seize this opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships, forge new ones, and share best practices for Asia's sustainable and inclusive development and the rest of the world.



ARSENIO M. BALISACAN, PhD
*Secretary, National Economic and
Development Authority*

