



## **STATEMENTS 2011**

### **Message at the International Youth Day 2011 Kabataan Jobs and Alternatives to Migration**

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On behalf of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, “Alternatives to Migration: Decent Jobs for Filipino Youth”, thank you for joining us for the International Youth Day celebration in the Philippines.

Kabataan: Jobs and Alternatives to Migration or KA JAM marks the beginning, and not the end of strong efforts of the administration, social partners and the international community, to support decent and productive work opportunities for young people.

We believe in the energy, talent and creativity the youth can bring. However, the ILO’s 2010 Global Employment Trends for Youth warned of a possible “lost generation”. Globally, youth unemployment reached 81 million in 2009 and could rise given recent global events.

With that said, we are gathered here because we believe in the youth and their desire for a better life, which includes decent and productive work.

Of the 18.2 million Filipinos, aged 15-24, there are:

- 1.5 million unemployed youth striving to find employment opportunities after investing in their skills and education that may not be in demand at home or abroad, and
- 2.3 million vulnerably employed youth often unable to invest in their education which forces them into forms of vulnerable employment.

Vulnerably employed youth are often left with little choice but to accept or create whatever work they can find, just so they and their loved ones can survive another day. Vulnerable employment is often characterized by inadequate earnings, poor work conditions, lack of social protection such as Social Security or Philippine Health Insurance, and social dialogue.

I believe we are all aware; youth unemployment is only the tip of the iceberg. The quality of work available is as important as the quantity of work when it comes to poverty reduction. Without access to education, skills development, and apprenticeship opportunities, young people find themselves trapped in vulnerable forms of employment and poverty.

During my tenure as Country Director, I have witnessed the government and social partners work together to reap the benefits of its investments in education as they strive to reduce skills shortages and jobs mismatch.

For example, the report of the 2007 National Human Resource Conference highlighted an oversupply of nurses. However, there is acknowledgement with short-term training; jobs of equal value are available in other health care occupations.

We are gathered here to support the next generation, so they are not forced to mortgage their future which impacts their families, communities and the nations.

Young people are key drivers of economic development. Through the Joint Programme, we stand ready to guide and promote policy coherence for youth, employment and migration.

Indeed, we need to work together and invest in the Filipino youth. Let me thank the Government of Spain for their support in our work here in the Philippines.

We recognize the Philippine government's efforts to invest in young people, but we also realize our role of supporting the country to achieve inclusive growth.

This is a requirement and not just a moral obligation. A generation without hope for decent and productive work can be a problem for families, the economy and the society.

In closing, I would like to thank His Excellency President Aquino for gracing this event. His support together with the DOLE led by Secretary Baldoz, underscores the importance of young people to the Philippine government.

Again, thank you for being part of the KA JAM which gives an opportunity for young people to speak and for us to listen.

Thank you and Mabuhay!