

Declaration

“Ayos na Gamot sa Abotkayang Presyo” (AGAP)

23 May 2006, Nurses’ Home

Philippine General Hospital

PUBLIC HEALTH FIRST!

SHOCKED that the Philippines is the first country in the region to pass a law on generics and yet still has to endure the highest prices of medicines in the region, next only to Japan;

REALIZING that while most Filipinos have difficulty accessing medicines for economic and other reasons, the current laws on intellectual property, along with other restrictive policies on health care, restrict this access even more by allowing the prices of medicines to soar uncontrollably;

CONVINCED of the urgent need to institutionalize the public health flexibilities provided by the TRIPs Agreement under the WTO, which are reiterated in the 2001 Doha Declaration on TRIPs and Public Health, and incorporate these flexibilities as part of the country’s policies and laws on intellectual property and public health;

SUPPORTIVE of the efforts of government agencies such as the Philippine International Trading Corporation and the Bureau of Food and Drugs to avail of such flexibilities like the importation of quality and lower-priced drugs in the name of public health and to facilitate the early processing of drugs whose patents are about to expire;

COGNIZANT of the need to raise the awareness of the Filipinos on the root causes of the high cost of health care, particularly life-saving drugs; and

UNITED on the need to forge a broad alliance of civil society groups, consumers, trade unions, health professionals, public

officials and concerned individuals to assert the PRIMACY OF PUBLIC HEALTH;

WE, PARTICIPANTS GATHERED IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE 'AYOS NA GAMOT SA ABOT-KAYANG PRESYO' COALITION, HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES TO FULLY CAMPAIGN FOR --

1. *an enabling environment where the public can have access to quality, affordable and therapeutically-equivalent life-saving medicines and where the public's right to health is given the highest policy priority;*
2. *amendments to the Intellectual Property Code, taking into account the flexibilities provided by the TRIPS Agreement, as reiterated in the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health,*
3. *Enactment of such legislations in the Senate and the House of Representatives that will incorporate the above reforms and which will promote effective competition in the Philippine Drug market.*
4. *reforms in current national policies to promote the public's right of access to affordable medicines such as, among others, empowering the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) to leverage its resources to reduce the prices of life-saving medicines and effecting changes in pharmaceutical distribution and retail practices that hinder access and availability of generic medicines in all provinces in the Philippines;*
5. *adoption of therapeutically-proven indigenous and community health care products and practices; and*
6. *full implementation of the Generics Act of 1988.*

Finally, we stand united in asserting the primacy of the right of every Filipino to quality and affordable medicines.