

September 15, 1994

JOINT DECLARATION ON SOCIAL SECURITY COOPERATION

WHEREAS, the President of the Republic of the Philippines, H.E. Fidel V. Ramos, on the occasion of his official visit to the Kingdom of Belgium on 15 September 1994, stressed during his talks with Belgian officials the high priority of social security for their respective nationals;

WHEREAS, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium recognize the significant role and contributions of their respective nationals who reside and work in the country of the other party;

WHEREAS, both Governments express the wish to extend protection to said workers and their families in recognition of the workers' loyal and dedicated service which consequently redound to the benefit of the host country;

WHEREAS, social security protection is one form of protection which ensures the promotion of welfare and well-being of said workers and their families;

WHEREAS, there exists a genuine desire on the part of the Governments of the two countries to extend social security benefits and protection, which have to be defined in a bilateral agreement, to workers who are nationals of their countries;

WHEREAS, the parties are aware that there are considerable differences in their social security schemes;

WHEREAS, there is a wish to enter into negotiations to conclude a bilateral agreement to coordinate and facilitate the extension of social security benefits and protection provided for under social security legislations of the Republic of the Philippines and the Kingdom of Belgium for the mutual benefit and protection of the nationals of both countries;

WHEREAS, the proposed bilateral agreement could include principles such as (1) Equality of Treatment; (2) Totalization or adding up of periods of membership under both social security programs to qualify for benefits; (3) Pro-rata sharing of benefits in case totalization is applied; (4) Assurance of payment even when beneficiaries reside in another country; and (5) Administrative assistance in the filing of claims.

NOW THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the foregoing premises, the Governments hereby agree to enter into negotiations to conclude a bilateral agreement on Social Security Cooperation. The Governments further agree that their representatives will start negotiations as soon as possible, alternately in Manila and Brussels but starting in Brussels, on the details of the proposed bilateral agreement.

Signed in Brussels this 15th day of September 1994.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

(Sgd.) ROBERTO R. ROMULO

(Sgd.) WILLY CLAES,