

GMA to reaffirm commitment to MDG goals

NEW YORK – President Arroyo will reaffirm the Philippines' commitments to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015 when she delivers here Thursday morning the Country Report on the progress made to eliminate poverty.

The special MDG meeting of heads of states, representatives of the private sector and civil society at the United Nations headquarters will be convened by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Specific ways to energize the efforts of all UN-member nations in achieving the MDG will be discussed at the high level MDG event.

This year marks the halfway point of the MDG.

As she did in her address during the opening session of the 63rd UN General Assem-

bly last Tuesday, the President is expected to set concrete plans and practical actions to be taken by the Philippines to ensure the country's compliance with the MDG target date.

In her address before the opening session of the 2008 General Assembly, the President enumerated specific actions that the Philippine government has taken and continues to take to weather the high prices of oil and food in the global market.

The high-level MDG meeting will also review the progress, identify gaps, and commit to concrete efforts, resources and mechanisms to bridge the gaps.

The President is expected to report on the highlights of the progress made by the Philippines in achieving the goal

since the October 2007 midterm report on the MDG.

The midterm report, prepared by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), stated that the Philippines "has made considerable progress particularly in poverty reduction, nutrition, reducing child mortality, combating AIDS and HIV, malaria and other diseases and access to safe drinking water and sanitary toilet facilities."

However, the report said that the Philippines needs to work harder on targets concerning universal access to education, maternal mortality and access to reproductive health services.

The Philippines is a signatory to the 2000 Millennium Declaration that rolled out the time-bound MDGs as a global agenda for development by

2015.

The eight MDGs are: halve poverty and hunger; universal primary education; gender equality; reduce child mortality; improved women's health; stop and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases; environmental sustainability; and global partnerships for aid, trade and debt relief.

The Millennium Declaration was signed by 189 member states, including the Philippines.

The President yesterday attended the Women Leaders Meeting at the Waldorf Hotel where she had a brief one-on-one meeting with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Press Secretary Jesus Dureza said.

The President will return to Manila on Saturday morning.