

## **Fashion Forever Launch – 8 September 2023**

Good afternoon, magandang hapon.

I would like to greet Mr. Jonjon San Agustin, SM Supermalls' Senior Vice President for Marketing and Mr. Dan Mejia, H&M South Asia's Regional Head of Communications and PR.

I would like to thank SM for being our venue partner, specifically SM Aura, which has been recognized for its initiatives in resource efficiency, green mobility, and green landscapes.

Sweden and the Philippines have had bilateral relations for more than 75 years. With every year, our relationship strengthens and deepens, especially in the area of sustainable socio-economic development and climate action.

The devastating impact of climate change are now seen and felt all over the world, including both in Sweden with a winter climate and in the Philippines with a tropical climate with severe negative effects on flora and fauna, on biodiversity.

There is only one thing we can do to keep this development at bay and start to reverse it and this is to cut emissions of fossil fuel completely to reach zero net emissions.

The demand for sustainable and green industries is increasing, pushing companies towards more circular business models – in energy, transportation, and textile and fashion.

My government has put textiles high on its agenda. Becoming a world leader in sustainable fashion production and consumption is a key part of the national drive to achieve the global sustainable development goals of Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The fashion industry is big polluter and carbon emitter. Far too many textiles end up in trash bins and landfills, regularly thrown away with household waste. Each year, 4.3 million tons of textile waste is deposited or incinerated in the EU.

Upcycling, reusing, and eventually recycling, rather than using up even more virgin resources are some of the ways for the fashion industry to become good for the planet.

To present the innovations and collaborations that we need to promote garment longevity and zero-waste production in textiles, we are launching Fashion Forever.

Through the integrated work of fashion retailers, design schools, and science parks in Sweden, supported by the Swedish government, the fashion industry can continue to be creative, exciting, and lucrative, all while being kinder to the planet and better for the consumer.

For example:

1. Textile & Fashion 2030 is a government-supported initiative led by the University of Borås in collaboration the Swedish School of Textiles, SmartTextiles, Science Park Borås, Research Institute of Sweden. This initiative aims to test and study different techniques of sustainable

fashion settings of small-scale sustainability advancements and how these can be rolled out on the world stage.

2. The Swedish Textile Initiative for Climate Action (STICA) is a network of businesses that collaborate to reduce their climate footprint. Each member's climate impact is measured, and then used to create custom-adapted action plans. STICA was launched in 2018 by the fashion brands H&M, Kappahl and Peak Performance, in collaboration with Sustainable Fashion Academy. More than 40 other brands have since joined the network, including Acne, Filippa K, Fjällräven.

I would also like to mention Filipino examples with a Swedish connection, our exhibitors Zarah Juan and Lily of the Valley by Camille Escudero that utilize local weaves, artisanal skills, and made-to-order processes to avoid excess production. Zarah and Camille are graduates of the Sweden Alumni Network, and so is Anya Lim from Anthill Fabrics.

Speaking of circularity, the majority of the exhibit structures you see today are recycled and reused from previous Swedish embassy events.

We will bring Fashion Forever to other venues in the Philippines, including Cebu Design Week in November. But for now, I invite everyone to take a closer look at the Fashion Forever exhibit and find more ways to be sustainably stylish.

Thank you!