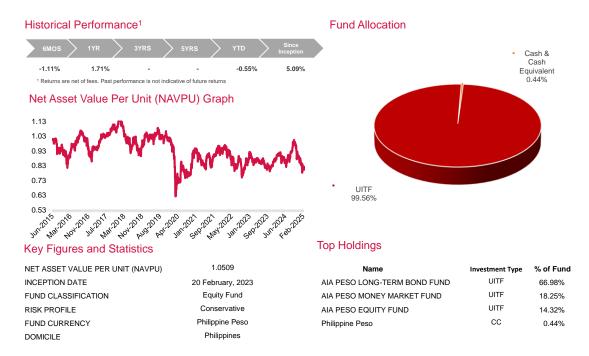


# **Fund Description**

The AIA Peso COnservative Fund (the "Fund") is a Philippine peso-denominated fund created for peso variable life insurance contracts issued by AIA Philippines Life and General Insurance Company Inc., (formerly The Philippine American Life and General Insurance Company). The Fund seeks to achieve long-term total return, which is a combination of income and capital growth with conservative risk and at the same time minimize capital risk by investing in a portfolio comprising primarily of bonds and money market instruments. The Fund will invest in shares of Collective Investment Schemes established by AIA including Unit Investment Trust Funds (UITFs) that are managed by either AIA Investment Management and Trust Corporation Philippines (AIAIM PH) or reputable third-party investment managers.



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# February 28, 2025

# **Commentary:**

## Macro Update

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) surprised the financial markets by keeping policy rates unchanged at 5.75%. The move goes against expectations of a 0.25% cut after tepid growth and continued disinflation momentum.

BSP Governor Remolona deemed the move to be prudent amid uncertainty on global policy. Instead, BSP reached deeper in their tool kit by cutting tis reserve requirement ratio by 2% to 5% effective March 28 effectively injecting additional liquidity of about Php 300Bn in the system.

Headline inflation in February settled at annual pace of 2.1%, slower than consensus estimate of 2.6% and January print of 2.9%. Food and non-alcoholic basket slowed to 2.6% in February from 3.8% in the month prior, led by the deceleration of rice prices. Meanwhile, housing and utilities also contributed to the downtrend with a slower annual increase of 1.6% in February from 2.2% in January. The softer than expected CPI print creates a more favorable environment for the BSP to cut rates in April. They also raised risk-adjusted inflation forecasts to 3.5% from 3.4% for 2025 and maintained at 3.7% for 2026.

### Bond Market Update

In February, peso bond yields were mixed and the curve flattened as benchmark yields in the 2-year closed at 5.82% (up by 0.03%), 5-year at 5.92% (down by 0.07%), 10-year at 6.12% (down by 0.10%), and 20-year at 6.35% (down by 0.03%).

### Equity Market Update

The PSEi bounced by as much as 7.14% in early February following the previous month's sharp sell-off, but gains were trimmed on the back of expected global uncertainties and foreign outflows due to MSCI rebalancing. Month-on-month, the PSEi ended with slight gain (+2.3%) at 5,997.97

• With BSP Gov. Remolona citing uncertainties on the inflation and growth outlook, the central bank held the key policy rate steady at 5.75% in February, defying market's expectation for a 25-bp cut.

• MSCI rebalancing came-in effective February 28, 2025, where we saw a net foreign outflow of USD59million.

• For the whole month of February, foreign investors were net sellers of worth USD145million.

## Positioning, Outlook, and Strategy

Performance: The AIA Peso Conservative Fund gained 0.92% gross of fees in February. It outpaced its benchmark by 0.09% due to its higher exposure in the underlying equity fund which outperformed during the period. The outperformance was largely driven by its overweight in Financial and Consumer Discretionary sectors.

Positioning, Outlook, and Strategy: Stable inflation and resilient economy provide a positive backdrop for fixed income. Inflation is expected to stay well-anchored to the central bank target of 2% and 4%, with the BSP likely to continue cutting rates this year to help boost the economy. However, volatility is expected to persist as risks to the outlook remain amid higher wages, utility rates, and uncertainty on US policies.

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