

Opening remarks of Ombudsman Morales at the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group plenary meeting

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Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales gives her opening remarks at the Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group Plenary Meeting

APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group Plenary Meeting

August 22, 2015

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales

Opening Remarks

Welcome to Cebu City, the Queen City of the South! The Philippines, as host economy, once again warmly welcomes the delegates from the member-economies of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) (<http://apec2015.ph/>) to the Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group (ACTWG) Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM). From the SOM1 meeting in Clark last January in Pampanga as springboard, this gathering in Cebu hopes to consolidate the gains and further advance the agenda on good governance.

The series of meetings, workshops and dialogues shall provide the avenue to hear and discuss the reports and presentations from various member-economies which shall be sharing their anti-corruption initiatives and lessons learned from interesting actual cases. A workshop will be conducted to showcase the best models on prosecuting corruption and money-laundering cases. Moreover, this meeting intends to refine and advance the work of the ACT-NET as a network of anti-corruption authorities and law enforcement agencies. Separate dialogues of anti-corruption authorities and law enforcement are also scheduled to discuss the pressing issues on illicit trade and trafficking of persons. Further, the Experts' Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade is also set to jointly meet with this working group to discuss the various threats to the environment.

Indeed, the Asia-Pacific region is not spared from global challenges. Regional integrated action is not only desirable; it is necessary. The Asia Pacific region ought to be united in vigilantly and courageously combatting corruption. Your valued presence and active participation are clear proof that instilling the virtues of integrity and transparency is on top of the regional agenda.

The real anti-corruption work is not concluded, however, in grand conferences at plush hotels such as this one; it is a continuous struggle wherein the real work is done at the level of our respective member-economies. The importance of this event is in the amalgamation and consolidation of the regional effort that will hopefully “build inclusive economies” which is the highlight of the APEC theme for 2015.

The war against corruption is not only a combat against corrupt forces but also a crusade to uphold public integrity as well as a campaign to enhance public trust. The long and narrow path towards integrity is not easy. Along the way, some people may give up and yield to the tempting allure of easy money. The battle against corruption cannot be won overnight. It cannot be triumphed without determination. Let us, therefore, fight the good fight.

For we are but tiny silhouettes of far greater figures who had hoped to establish a better Asia-Pacific region. In turn, let us pass on the outline of those great figures to the next generation. Our children deserve a well-governed Asia-Pacific region.

And so, I welcome you all to the Third Senior Officials’ Meeting of the APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group. Thank you and Mabuhay.

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