



**PHILIPPINE  
COMPETITION  
COMMISSION**

*Ensuring businesses compete and consumers benefit*

# **PHILIPPINE COMPETITION BULLETIN**

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION

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**PHILIPPINE  
COMPETITION BULLETIN**

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION

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# NATIONAL COMPETITION DAY BRINGS STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER TO PROMOTE FAIR MARKETS

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) spearheaded the observation of the first National Competition Day in the country under the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) on December 5, 2016. The event brought together various stakeholders who are committed to promoting fair markets in the country.

PCC led development partners, sector regulators and partner government agencies through a ceremonial signing of pledges of commitment and

declarations of support for competition at the Oakwood Premier Joy-Nostalg Center, Ortigas, Pasig City.

“Let us push for economic growth that is more enduring and more inclusive by fostering a culture of competition in our country,” PCC Chairman Arsenio M. Balisacan said. “The Philippine Competition Act is expected to encourage investment, fuel productivity and drive innovation so that no Filipino is left behind,” he added.

Sector regulators include the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), and the Insurance Commission (IC). Among the partner

government agencies are the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Justice-Office for Competition (DOJ-OFC), and the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG).

Also signifying their commitment as partners for competition are development agencies such as the World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (AUS-DFAT), European Union-Trade Related Technical Assistance (EU-TRTA), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Germany-GIZ), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The National Competition Day was officially declared in 2012, through Proclamation No. 384, as part of the global observation among competition and markets authorities around the world.



**“Let us push for economic growth that is more enduring and more inclusive by fostering a culture of competition in our country.”**



IL BELTRAN  
DOF

CHAIR ARSENIO BALISACAN  
PCC

DEP GOV NESTOR  
ESPENILLA  
BSP

DDG. ROSEMARIE EDILLON  
NEDA

ATTY. BRIAN GALE SIBUYAN  
INSURANCE COMMISSION

# SENATE HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING ON TELCO ISSUES

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) attended a Senate public hearing last December 8, 2016, where it was asked whether the recent acquisition of a 700-megahertz spectrum by two telco companies will have an economic effect on consumers in terms of prices, options, and quality of mobile services.

During the said hearing, PCC Commissioner Johannes R. Bernabe introduced the role of the Commission and its commitment towards ensuring market competition and promoting consumer welfare. He also mentioned that, "The Commission has the mandate to discipline anti-competitive practices and abuse of dominant position in the market."

The hearing was conducted by the Senate Committee on Economic Affairs, led by Senator Sherwin Gatchalian. It included an inquiry on operations and regulation of the telco industry. Senate Resolution No. 213 reads as: "Resolution directing the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, to generate evidentiary data to establish the economic effects upon the consumer in particular, and the national economy in general, on the present model of operation and regulation of the telecommunications industry, to the end in view of

recommending policy to strengthen key economic reforms that are consistent with the country's medium-term development plan and long-term vision and protective of the interests of consumers in a robust economy that is fostered by free competition and inclusive growth."

The other resource persons include PCC Mergers and Acquisitions Director Atty. Krystal Uy-Sia, PCC economist Justin Chan, Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) Senior Research Fellow Erlinda M. Medalla, European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Senior Advocacy Adviser Henry Schumacher, Engr. Pierre Tito Galla of Democracy.Net.PH, Policy Internet Society - PH Chapter VP Mary Grace Mirandilla-Santos, Policy Consultant for Competition Atty. Gigo Alampay, Tonyo Cruz of TXTPower.org Inc., and Ross Cormack of Ooredoo, an international telecommunications company based in Doha, Qatar.



# COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY FRAMEWORK TO LEVEL PLAYING FIELD AMONG ENTERPRISES

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC), in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), held two (2) consultations on competitive neutrality (CN) on December 1-2, 2016 to discuss issues related to privately and publicly owned businesses in the Philippines.

CN is a regulatory framework within which public and private enterprises face the same set of rules and where no contact with the state brings competitive advantage to any market participant (OECD, 2009).<sup>\*</sup> During the two-day consultation, international experts on competition explained the concept of CN and its significance in the implementation of competition law. They also shared the experiences of other competition regimes in dealing with CN issues and provided guidance on CN measures that the PCC can undertake.

The first session, a High-Level

Roundtable Discussion with the Philippine Congress on Competitive Neutrality, was held on December 1, 2016. It focused on the impact of government in the market and balancing CN measures with public policy objectives. Legislators present during the consultation were Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; Representative Manuel Zubiri, Vice Chairman of the House Committee on Trade and Industry; Representative Dakila Carlo Cua, Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means; Representative Xavier Jesus Romualdez, Vice Chairperson of the House Committee on Trade and Industry; and Representative Joey Salceda, Vice Chairman of the House Committee on Economic Affairs.

Meanwhile, the Technical Consultation on Competitive Neutrality held on December 2, 2016, focused on raising the awareness and improving the

understanding of selected public agencies on CN matters. Director Johann Carlos Barcena of the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG) presented an overview of the nature of GOCCs and related bodies in the Philippines, and the mechanisms in place to promote or protect CN.

The National Competition Policy Review panel composed of National Scientist for Economics and UP Professor Emeritus Dr. Raul Fabella, former Agriculture Secretary Senen Bacani, and former executive director of the Public-Private Partnership Center (PPPC) Atty. Andre Palacios also participated during the two (2) sessions. Atty. Palacios discussed the results of the preliminary assessment of competition policy and law in the Philippines and discussed eight (8) case studies on Philippine government entities in the context of competitive neutrality.

<sup>\*</sup>OECD (2009). State Owned Enterprises and the Principle of Competitive Neutrality, Policy Roundtables.



# FIRST AMICUS BRIEF FILED BY PCC

The PCC submitted to the Supreme Court its first amicus brief<sup>1</sup> in December 2016, weighing in on the competition issue in the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB)-Manila Water Company Inc. case. This is in line with PCC's mandate to issue advisory opinion on competition matters and review economic and administrative regulations that may adversely affect market competition.

As the implementing arm of the Construction Industry Authority of the Philippines (CIAP), PCAB has the power to issue, suspend, and revoke licenses of construction contractors under R.A. No. 456614 or the "Contractors' License Law." The PCAB introduced in its implementing rules and regulations (IRR) a nationality requirement that became the basis of the classification of contractors applying for licenses (Table 1).

In its amicus brief, the

PCC argued that the said nationality distinction effectively institutes a barrier to the entry of foreign contractors in the construction industry. The scheme fosters an uneven playing field between local and foreign contractors, thereby discouraging potential foreign firms from entering the market. In particular, the said regulation creates a substantial difference in the costs borne by local and foreign contractors in securing licenses. A foreign firm may undertake only one project specified under its special license, while a local firm is granted the authority to engage in multiple projects annually under a regular license. The foreign firm is disadvantaged in that it has to secure a separate license for each project it undertakes.

To illustrate, given an estimated potential cost of a license application of P14,730<sup>2</sup> and an average of 12 projects<sup>3</sup> undertaken by a

contractor in a year, a foreign firm will have to spend 12 times the estimated potential cost for the application process alone to engage in the same level of activity as the local firm.

The PCC asked the Supreme Court to nullify PCAB's nationality requirement in its current licensing

scheme for contractors in the construction industry. The SC ruling on this case is anticipated to make a significant impact on the Philippine construction industry, which could potentially open up and level the playing field for both domestic and foreign contractors.

## CLASSIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS' LICENSE

	Regular license	Special License
Licensee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction firm of Filipino sole proprietorship Partnership/ corporation with at least sixty percent (60%) Filipino equity participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foreign contractor</li> <li>Joint venture (JV) or a consortium</li> <li>For JVs or consortia, foreign contractors are expected to partner with domestic contractors and the constituent firms must both be individually licensed</li> </ul>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction contracting within the field and scope of license</li> <li>Validity is maintained through annual renewal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction contracting of a single specific undertaking/ project</li> <li>Validity is maintained through annual renewal.</li> </ul>

## ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST OF LICENSE APPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL AND FOREIGN CONTRACTORS

Type of License	Type of Contractor	No. of Projects <sup>2</sup>	Total Cost of License Application <sup>1</sup>
Regular License	 Filipino Contractor		 <b>P14,730</b>
Special License	 Foreign contractor		 <b>P176,760</b>

**"The nationality distinction effectively institutes a barrier to the entry of foreign contractors in the construction industry."**

<sup>1</sup> The PCC's intervention as amicus curiae is allowed under Rule 138, Section 36 in relation to Rule 19, Section 1 of the Rules of Court.

<sup>2</sup> Excluding registration fees. Estimated using the average 30-day duration of an application process and daily minimum wage rate of P491 in NCR as of 29 November 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Average computed based on 2015 data on registered contractors (10,526 firms) and total number of construction projects (132,006 projects).



# COMPETITION LAW AND POLICY SEMINAR CONDUCTED FOR BUSINESS JOURNALISTS

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) conducted its first media seminar organized for business journalists on November 26-27, 2016

The Communications and Knowledge Management Office (CKMO), headed by Director Clarissa C. David, spearheaded the 2-day seminar that shared the basics of competition law and policy to reporters and producers from different news organizations.

PCC officials and staff explained basic economic concepts on competition starting with the topic "Why Competition Matters," which highlighted the functions of the agency and the benefits of competition to Filipino consumers. It was followed by lectures on "Economic Studies about Competition" and the "Relevant Market" by Aubren Prado and Justin Rainier Chan of PCC's Economics Office (EO).

The discussion peaked during

the presentation on mergers and acquisitions by Atty. Ivy Medina of the Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) and anti-competitive agreements by Director Orlando Polinar and Director Ferdinand Redulla of the Competition Enforcement Office (CEO).

After the presentations, an open forum was held, where questions by reporters were addressed by Commissioner Johannes Benjamin R. Bernabe, via teleconference, as well as by PCC Spokesperson Atty. Leni Papa, and Legal Chief Gian Camacho. The session opened with a freewheeling interaction with the journalists.

"The seminar is a good learning opportunity for us, journalists," said one of the participants, Victor Cabuenas of GMA News Online.

"This is good. The seminar is similar to what BSP [Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas] does for the business reporters," added Chrisee Dela Paz of Rappler.

Given the Commission's relative infancy, the PCC is not yet considered a separate "beat" covered by journalists regularly. Most of the journalists who attended were those familiar with the PCC already because of their early interactions with PCC starting August 2016.

Moving forward, the media seminar program intends to create an appetite for news on competition policies and cases, equipping reporters with high levels of technical knowledge.

Other attendees included Lorenz Marasigan of Business Mirror, Cris Larano of Dow Jones/Wall Street Journal, Jun Ebias of Bloomberg Philippines TV, Bruce Rodriguez of ANC and Verlie Retulin of VeraFiles. Event partner USAID Trade Project also sent Irish Almeida as its official representative.



# ASIAN LEGAL BUSINESS ORGANIZES PHILIPPINE COMPETITION LAW FORUM

A brighter future awaits Filipinos as the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) promises to lead the country in leveraging business competition towards a more inclusive economic growth.

This is according to PCC Chairman Arsenio M. Balisacan who delivered his keynote address before an audience of mostly business lawyers and compliance experts at the Asian Legal Business (ALB) Philippine Competition Law Forum last Nov. 15, 2016 in Makati City. Topics focused on the provisions of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA) and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR), latest developments in merger controls, strategies in improving compliance programs, and other issues about the investigation, enforcement, and adjudication processes ensuring full security for businesses in the Philippines.

Chairman Balisacan said that the PCA is a landmark law that realizes the “decades-long legislative struggle for comprehensive competition reform”. The PCA was enacted into law in July 2015.

PCC Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) Director Atty. Krystal Uy-Sia discussed PCC’s mandate and the role of the Commission in the Philippine competition environment. Atty. Andre Palacios, member of the National Competition Policy Review, facilitated a panel on how the PCA can help develop a more inclusive Philippine economy. Panelists included Professor Edmund Tayao of the University of Sto. Tomas, European Chamber of Commerce Senior Advocacy Adviser Henry J. Schumacher, PCC National Competition Policy Review Panel Head Dr. Raul Fabella, and Minimal Government Thinkers President Bienvenido “Nonoy” Oplas Jr.

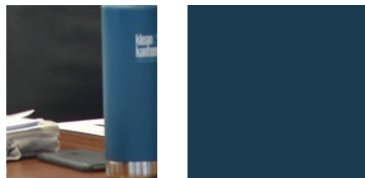
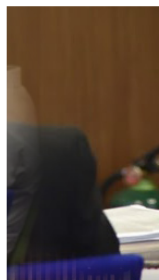
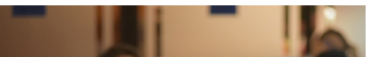
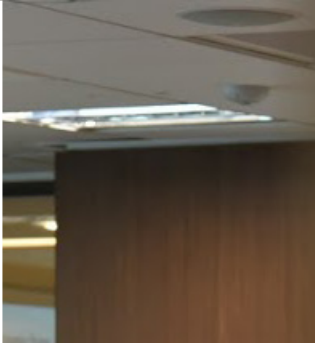
A panel discussion on identifying global best practices for competitiveness closed the event. Panelists included founder and CEO of LaunchGarage Jay Fajardo, Dr. Gregory Tangonan, former

DOJ Office for Competition Head Atty. Geronimo Sy, and Asian Development Bank Senior Counsel Julian Chenoweth. Internet Society-Philippine Chapter Chairman Winthrop Yu served as the panel moderator.

Other notable presenters, panelists, and moderators include Atty. Alain Charles Veloso, Senior Associate of Quisumbing Torres Law Office, ACCRALAW Senior Partner and SharePhil President Atty. Francisco Lim, SM Investments Senior Vice President and Legal Head Marianne Guerrero, Bank of the Philippine Islands Chief Compliance Officer Marita Socorro Gayares, and Philippine Stock Exchange Chief Operations Officer Roel Refran.

The Asian Legal Business (ALB) is owned by Thomson Reuters. ALB provides insights, networking and business development opportunities to legal professionals throughout the Asia-Pacific and the Middle East regions.





# CAPACITY BUILDING

# WORLD BANK GROUP HOLDS WORKSHOP WITH PCC IN ADDRESSING MARKET DISTORTIONS

A two-day workshop entitled “Competition Assessment: Tools to Address Market Distortions” was organized by the World Bank (WB) group, in partnership with the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC), on December 12-13, 2016.

WB’s Senior Competition Specialist Graciela Miralles Murciego started the workshop by sharing how the Markets and Competition Policy Assessment Toolkit (MCPAT) works in assessing market dynamics and regulations that restrict competition.

Murciego spoke at length about the use of MCPAT for “impactful and feasible competition interventions” in the markets of many countries. Commissioners Stella Quimbo and El Cid Butuyan, however, emphasized the need for adjustments and nuances that reflect the realities of developing markets in using the MCPAT, as opposed to mature markets.

Sara Nyman, WB’s Economist, talked about the balance of markets and

how restrictive regulations can impact competition.

With the combined decades-long experience and depth of analyses from the speakers, many of the examples given during the talk were high profile cases in economies similar to the Philippines, such as Colombia.

Juan Pablo Herrera Saavedra, Head of the Group of Economic Studies in Colombia’s Superintendence of Industry and Commerce, gave a talk on anti-competitive conduct inside of the Colombian cement market and an advocacy strategy for the telco market. Nyman also elaborated on the cement markets across countries, tying in analyses through a comparative approach.

Lawyers from the Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) and Competition Enforcement Office (CEO) teamed up with the policy research officers and economists of the Economics Office (EO) for simulation exercises as part of the workshop.



## INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES ON LENIENCY EYED BY PCC

As part of its commitment towards a more effective enforcement of competition policy in the country, the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) participated in a seminar on the implementation of leniency programs, organized by the Office for Competition of the Department of Justice (DOJ-OFC) on December 15, 2016 at the Bayleaf Hotel, Intramuros, Manila.

The seminar presented the current landscape of leniency programs being implemented in the United States and Europe, and assessed their relevance to the development of a leniency program

in the Philippines. A leniency program may grant an entity immunity from suit or deduction in penalties in exchange for voluntary disclosure of information about any illegal anti-competitive activity, as stated in Republic Act No. 10667 or the Philippine Competition Act (PCA).

Atty. Andrea Filippio Gagliardi of the European Union, Trade Related Technical Assistance Project 3 (EU-TRTA3) Competition Policy Development, explained how leniency programs are applied abroad, particularly on cases covered by the

United States and European Union antitrust laws, and how such policies can be implemented in the country under the PCA.

Atty. Ferdinand Redulla, Assistant Director of PCC’s Competition Enforcement Office (CEO), together with PCC CEO lawyers Atty. James Daniel Donato and Atty. Marielle Delfin, served as representatives of PCC.



## COMPETITION AGENCIES SHARE EXPERIENCE AND BEST PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING COMPETITION POLICY

PCC participated in the “High-Level Bilateral Exchange on Competition Law and Economics” on November 14-16, 2016 in London, UK. The event was attended by Chairman Arsenio M. Balisacan, Commissioner Stella Luz A. Quimbo, Commissioner Johannes Benjamin R. Bernabe, Atty. Ma. Leonila Papa, and Atty. Graciela D. Base. The event involved a series of lectures and discussions with the Law Society of England and Wales, the Competition Markets Authority, and other UK agencies to share information on UK competition enforcement and best practices on competition policy and implementation.



## COMPETITION ISSUES INVOLVING INFORMATION EXCHANGE TACKLED DURING WORKSHOP

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) organized a competition workshop on “Information Exchange: Efficiency Enhancing or Cartel in Disguise?” in Seoul, Korea on December 6-8, 2016. PCC lawyer Atty. Alyssa Carmelli Castillo of the Competition Enforcement Office (CEO), represented the Philippines during the workshop, which tackled the different forms and cases involving information exchange. Resource speakers from competition authorities in the United States, Singapore, Korea, Japan, Pakistan, UK, and Chinese Taipei shared their knowledge and expertise on the subject matter.



## SEMINAR ON GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT PROCESS HELD AT PCC

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) held a two-day seminar on the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act, on Nov. 23-24, 2016. The seminar was attended by PCC officials and employees, who learned about the different methods, procedures, and processes in bidding goods for consulting services and infrastructure projects in government procurement. Speakers included PCC Administrative Officer Mr. Josue Mirabite and Atty. Dofel Ferrer of the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB).

## DIR. REDULLA SHARES LEARNINGS ON CARTEL INVESTIGATION DURING BROWNBAG SESSION

Atty. Ferdinand Redulla, Director of PCC’s Competition Enforcement Office (CEO), helps boost capacity of PCC colleagues on cartel investigation as part of the regular brownbag sessions of PCC. Held on November 11, 2016, Dir. Redulla shared learnings from the intensive Cartel Investigation Workshop organized by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission on October 11-13, 2016 in Bali, Indonesia. The event was attended by Dir. Redulla and other PCC officials and employees.

## PLANNING CONFERENCE FIRMS UP PCC WORKPLAN FOR 2017

PCC conducted its planning conference on December 7-9, 2016 to firm up the Commission’s priorities and thrusts for the year 2017. The conference was attended by PCC executives, from the level of commissioners to division chiefs. The event also provided an avenue for PCC to reflect on what it has accomplished and what needs to be done to address prevalent issues in Philippine market competition.



# ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

## OECD GATHERS ANTITRUST AUTHORITIES DURING GLOBAL FORUM ON COMPETITION

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) conducted a Global Forum on Competition (GFC) on December 1-2, 2016 in Paris. High-level competition officials from more than 100 delegations came together to discuss the promotion of competition and human rights, the role of market studies as a tool for promoting competition, and sanctions involving antitrust cases. The Philippine delegation included Chairman Arsenio M. Balisacan and Amos Mikhail Adriano of the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC).

## PEMC AND NGCP ORGANIZE PHILIPPINE ELECTRICITY SUMMIT

Commissioner Johannes R. Bernabe of the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) was one of the discussants in the Philippine Electricity Summit for the session Philippine Energy Plan: Transformative Change in the Philippine Energy Sector (2016-2030). Held at the Marco Polo Plaza in Davao City on December 2, 2016, around 200 individuals from the energy sector attended the event. The summit was organized by the Philippine Electricity Market Corporation (PEMC) and the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP).

## 12TH ANNUAL ASIAN COMPETITION FORUM HELD IN HONG KONG

Commissioner Johannes Bernabe attended the 12th Annual Asian Competition Forum held at the United Centre, Admiralty in Hong Kong on December 5-6, 2016. Academic lecturers, large technology companies and lawyers took part in discussing abuse of market dominance, intellectual property rights in relation to competition law, and regulations on technology which have the effect of stifling competition.

## DOJ-OFC HOLDS PHILIPPINE TELECOMMS SECTOR FORUM

Economists and lawyers of the PCC participated in the "Forum on the Legislative and Institutional Set-Up in the Philippine Telecommunications Sector" held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ortigas on December 14, 2016. Key findings from the telecommunication mapping mission were presented by Atty. Andrea Filippo Gagliardi, a key expert of the Trade Related Technical Assistance Project 3 (TRTA3) Competition Policy Component. The forum was organized by the Department of Justice – Office for Competition (DOJ-OFC) and TRTA 3.

## CHARTER CHANGE REVIEW ON THE LOOKOUT FOR ANTI-COMPETITIVE PROVISIONS

The House of Representatives-Committee on Constitutional Amendments held a consultation meeting on November 16, 2016 to discuss the possibility of amending the 1987 Constitution to make it relevant to the times and more responsive to people's needs.

The congressional committee requested the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) to provide technical and legal expertise in reviewing the economic provisions of the 1987 Constitution and recommending amendments for anti-competitive provisions.

Director Krystal Uy-Sia of the Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO) and Ms. Bela Villamil of the Economics Office (EO) expressed their views on potentially anti-competitive provisions. "We are currently working on reviewing the 1987 Constitution in order to identify which provisions have an impact on competition," according to Director Uy-Sia.

The consultation was attended by representatives from national government agencies, the academe, and political parties.

## PCC CHAIRS COMPETITION POLICY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ASEAN AND FREE TRADE PARTNER-STATES

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) led the negotiations on competition policy between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and six (6) partner states during the 16th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) -Trade Negotiation Committee meeting on December 5-8, 2016 in Tangerang, Indonesia.

Economist Bela Villamil, chief of PCC's Economics Office (EO), chaired the 12th meeting of the RCEP Working Group on Competition (WGC). "To take advantage of increased market access, businesses must be able to compete on a level playing field," she said.

The WGC aimed to finalize the provisions of the competition chapter in the RCEP between ASEAN and partner states composed of Australia, New Zealand, China, India, South Korea and Japan. "The chapter on competition is crucial to prevent the benefits of the free trade agreement from being undermined," Villamil further emphasized.

Initially launched in 2012, the RCEP negotiations seek to achieve a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement that will cover trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement and other issues.

# INQUIRER GETS TO KNOW PCC IN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Continuing its rounds in the media circuit, the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) organized a roundtable discussion with editors and reporters from the Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) on November 9, 2016.

"It's a healthy exchange of insights and expectations given our relative infancy as an institution. We are proud to say that the Commission has gained much ground in carrying out the mandate of the Philippine Competition Act or PCA, which has truly been a game-changer in the country's business environment," PCC Chairman Arsenio M. Balisacan said.

Most of the questions raised during the open forum revealed that there is strong appetite for news on mergers, acquisitions, market studies and even

on cartel cases.

The journalists were keen on finding out the capacity of the Commission to carry out its mandate and were informed that more than half of the staff positions have been filled. Other questions thrown their way were aptly answered by the PCC officials, with Commissioner Stella A. Quimbo focusing on the economic aspects of certain cases, and Commissioner Johannes R. Bernabe zeroing in on the legal concerns.

Chairman Balisacan, Commissioners Quimbo and Bernabe, were joined by Director Krystal Uy-Sia of the Mergers and Acquisitions Office (MAO), and Director Clarissa David of the Communications and Knowledge Management Office (CKMO) in

engaging the business journalists during a discussion of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA), the PCC and its flagship projects.

The roundtable discussion was attended by the PDI business section editor Raul Marcelo, section assistant editor Corrie Salientes-Narisma, news editor Artemio Engracia, desk editor Ira Pedrasa, and reporters Daxim Lucas, Doris Dumlao-Abadilla, Miguel Camus, Amy Remo, and Ben de Vera. It was also covered by Inquirer.Net's social media editor Dennis Maliwanag and multimedia reporters Anthony Esguerra, Margareth Barahan, and Karl Angelica Ocampo, who brought the discussion online live and garnered a total of 15,000 views.

# COMPETITION LAW AND POLICY DISCUSSED IN PES ANNUAL MEETING

The Philippine Competition Commission organized a panel discussion on Competition Policy on November 8, 2016, as part of the Philippine Economic Society's (PES) 54th Annual Meeting.

The discussion revolved around the provisions of Republic Act 10667 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations;

the role of the PCC and the challenges moving forward; and the formulation of a National Competition Policy in a developing country, including a baseline assessment of competition and possible approaches that can be undertaken to promote competition throughout the economy.

The panel members were Chairman

Arsenio M. Balisacan, Commissiones Johannes R. Bernabe, National Scientist Raul Fabella, Mr. Senen Bacani, and Atty. Andre Palacios. Commissioner Stella A. Quimbo served as the moderator of the discussion.





*Ensuring businesses compete and consumers benefit*

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