
PRESS RELEASE **18 January 2017**

PCC welcomes 2 top lawyers as new Commissioner and Executive Director

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) welcomes two top legal experts to join the highest ranks of the country's antitrust body.

Chairman Arsenio Balisacan led the oath-taking of Commissioner Amabelle C. Asuncion and Executive Director Gwen Grecia-De Vera as part of the Commission's pioneer set of officials at the Philippine Competition Commission on Monday.

"Commissioner Asuncion and Executive Director De Vera's previous experience in both the public and private sectors add to their edge in balancing boardroom concerns and consumer welfare in implementing the Philippine Competition Act," Chairman Balisacan said.

Atty. Amabelle C. Asuncion is the fourth Commissioner of the PCC, completing the roster of the decision-making panel of the Commission. She replaced erstwhile Commissioner Menardo Guevarra who now serves as Senior Deputy Executive Secretary under the Office of the President.

Commissioner Asuncion boasts extensive experience in both commercial and corporate practice within the context of private and public sector issues. She has handled different business sectors, as well as dealt with various regulatory compliance and policy reforms.

Atty. Asuncion has served in various capacities, including as advocacy adviser, director for legal and regulatory affairs, legislative officer, adjudication chief, as well as a law professor.

She received her law degree from the University of the Philippines College of Law and her Master of Laws with distinction from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington. She was also editor of the Philippine Law Journal and has published works in local and international journals.

As for incoming Executive Director Gwen Grecia-De Vera, her vast legal experience and practice likewise straddle private and public sector concerns.



She joins the PCC straight from her post as Dean of the Manuel L. Quezon University Law School and faculty of the University of the Philippines College of Law. She also served as counsel on different media, pharmaceutical, and intellectual property law issues, as well as alternative dispute resolution.

She is a legal expert in Constitutional Law and Commercial Law, including the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines, the E-Commerce Act, the Consumer Act of the Philippines and the Universally Accessible Cheaper and Quality Medicines Act. She previously served as the alternate Director on an Advisory Board to the National Telecommunications Commission and is an accredited arbitrator of the Philippine Dispute Resolution Center Inc.

She graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Law and ranked 7th in the bar examinations.

The appointments of Asuncion and De Vera come at an opportune time, as PCC sets the countdown to the end of the transitory period of the Philippine Competition Act (PCA).

Arsenio Balicasan as PCC Chairman is serving a term of seven (7) years, along with pioneer Commissioners Johannes Bernabe and Stella Alabastro-Quimbo. Commissioner El Cid Butuyan will hold office for a term of five (5) years, and Commissioner Amabelle Asuncion will hold office for the remainder of former Commissioner Guevarra's term.

The PCC sets the agenda in exercising the broad powers of the Philippine Competition Act, with primary and original jurisdiction on competition issues. Chairman Balisacan and the four (4) Commissioners are tasked to decide on the different market competition issues that come within PCC's jurisdiction.

PCC is mandated to enforce the PCA and implement the national competition policy. It can conduct administrative inquiries, as well as institute appropriate civil or criminal proceedings, for anti-competitive agreements, abuses of dominance, and anti-competitive mergers and acquisitions.

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