

**Philippine Statement for the Resumed 7th
Session of the Implementation Review Group Agenda Item 3
Performance of the Mechanism for the Review of the United Nations
Convention against Corruption
14-16 November 2016**

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you for chairing this meeting. I am confident that with your guidance and leadership, this meeting will successfully attain its objectives.

The Philippines has intensified its efforts to curb corruption in order to strengthen the people's faith and trust in their government. As such, we view this implementation review group meeting as an important opportunity to exchange information with and learn from fellow Member-States about their good practices that are in line with their government's thrust to build a culture of integrity throughout the bureaucracy.

In view of the importance given by the Philippines to its obligations under the Convention, a Presidential UNCAC Inter-agency Committee was created under Executive Order No. 171, series of 2014. The said committee is headed by the Executive Secretary and is co-chaired by the Secretary of Justice and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. The committee's main function is to oversee the review and implementation of the UNCAC in the Philippines.

Since the publication of the Philippines' Country Review Report for the First Cycle Review and Executive Summary, several inter-agency consultation meetings

have been organized by the Office of the President, in cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman.

During the said consultation meetings, attended by representatives from both the public and private sectors, certain provisions of the Convention are grouped according to subject matter and are assigned to a cluster of experts, who assess the country's level of compliance.

To date, the Philippines has conducted two (2) inter-agency follow-up activities on Chapters III and IV based on the Country Review Report for the first cycle. Since then, a number of measures to improve compliance with the UNCAC have also been implemented by the Philippines, such as the enactment of Republic Act No. 10910 in July 2016, which lengthened period to prosecute violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, from 15 years to 20 years.

Also, the President recently issued Executive Order No. 2, series of 2016, entitled *Operationalizing in the Executive Branch the People's Constitutional Right to Information and the State Policies to Full Public Disclosure and Transparency in the Public Service and Providing Guidelines Therefor*. Said issuance is more commonly referred to as the President's Executive Order on Freedom of Information.

As to the Second Cycle Review, the Philippines has been conducting preliminary assessment sessions since 2014 and has already started assessing its preliminary findings vis-à-vis the Revised Self-Assessment Checklist which was finalized last June.

Even as the Philippines has been drawn as one of the countries to be reviewed in 2018, six (6) consultation meetings on Chapters II and V of the Convention have already been conducted, and the list of governmental experts is already being finalized, in anticipation of our being drawn as a reviewing state for the Second Cycle Review.

Consistent with Article 9 of the UNCAC on Public Procurement, the *2016 Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Philippine Government Procurement Reform Act*, which was drafted by the Government Procurement Policy Board, took effect last month.

Moreover, pursuant to Article 5, the Philippines also closely monitors implementation of the government's programs on transparency and accountability. In particular, the Integrity Management Program, which is the national corruption prevention program of the government, expanded its coverage from the initial five (5) pilot agencies to around thirty (30) agencies presently. The said program is directly run by the Office of the President and the Office of the Ombudsman.

In 2015, the Philippines had the honor of hosting officials from the Government Inspectorate of Vietnam in July, and representatives from the Government of Zambia in August, wherein we had the opportunity to meet fellow anti-corruption advocates from the said nations. In both events we discussed our good practices, challenges and experiences in running our corruption prevention programs.

The Philippines recognizes that partnering with various stakeholders, such as civil society organizations and the private sector, greatly contributes to the success of

the government's efforts to combat corruption. Thus, we put premium on having an informed and involved citizenry by striving to have a transparent and accountable government.

With the opening of a new Congress last July, legislative measures relative to matters that will further the Philippines' compliance with the UNCAC have been reviewed and assessed with the goal of having them enacted at the soonest time possible.

Lastly, as part of its efforts to validate compliance with the UNCAC, the Philippines has been holding an annual UNCAC State Conference every month of December since 2013, wherein the heads of all branches of the government, constitutional commissions, officials from other government agencies, development partners and the private sector, come together to share information on the initiatives and reform measures of their respective offices and organizations.

This year, the 4th State Conference on the UNCAC Implementation and Review is scheduled in Manila on 07 December 2016, pursuant to Republic Act No. 10589 declaring December of every year as Anti-Corruption Month.

All the foregoing clearly indicate our country's commitment to its obligations under the Convention in order to prevent and eradicate corruption in whatever form it may be found.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.