

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL AGAINST TRAFFICKING
Philippines**

**Information on Human Trafficking Efforts of the Government
2014**

I. Advocacy and Prevention

The Philippines is a State party to a number of international binding agreements that require the government to adopt measures to combat Trafficking In Persons (TIP) at the local, national, regional and international level. One of these agreements is the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, and its supplemental protocols namely, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air. The Anti-Trafficking Protocol provides for an internationally accepted definition of TIP. It also requires State Parties to adopt legislative and other measures to combat TIP at the national level.

A. Legislation

Pursuant to its obligations under the said Anti-Trafficking Protocol, the Philippines enacted Republic Act No. 9208, otherwise known as the “Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003” on May 26, 2003. The law lays down policies and procedures for a comprehensive approach to combating TIP. It also adopts the definition under the Protocol and expands it to afford more protection to victims. Further, it created the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT), the body created by law to coordinate and monitor the implementation of Republic Act No. 9208.

The signing into law of Republic Act No. 10364, also known as the “Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012,” on February 6, 2013 gave the government a stronger weapon against human trafficking syndicates. The new law amended certain provisions of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act to account for new situations discovered since the passage of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003. In response to the jurisdictional challenges posed by transnational trafficking, the new law likewise established the extraterritorial application of anti-trafficking laws over offenses committed by citizens or permanent residents of the Philippines and against Philippine citizens. The provision on extraterritorial jurisdiction was enacted to allow the Philippine government and its anti-trafficking partners to assist victims and pursue perpetrators even beyond Philippine shores.

To further enhance the efficiency and continuity in the tasks of the IACAT Secretariat, the amended law provides for a permanent Secretariat to the Council to be headed by an Executive Director, to be appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Justice (DOJ) upon the recommendation of the Council. It provides security of tenure to the Secretariat to (a) increase accountability of officials in monitoring and ensuring that the anti-trafficking efforts of the country are ably documented; (b) to see to it that all duty-bearers are monitored and assisted to ensure optimum delivery of

expectations and accomplishments of anti-trafficking goals. The following summarizes the amendments that were introduced:

- Section 4-A: Attempted Trafficking in Persons.
- Section 4-B: Criminal liability for accomplices.
- Section 5: Additional punishable acts for Acts that promotes trafficking in persons, to wit:
 - To tamper or cause the destruction of evidence or influence or attempt to influence a witnesses in an investigation or prosecution;
 - To destroy, conceal, confiscate or possess actual or purported passport, immigration, travel documents or government documents in order to restrict the persons liberty to move or travel to maintain her or his labor or services; and
 - To utilize his or her office to impede investigation, prosecution or execution of lawful order.
- Section 7: The right to privacy of the accused was deleted.
- Section 11: A higher penalty of 15-years for any person who buys or engages the services of a trafficked person for prostitution.
- Section 16-A: Establishment of an Anti-Trafficking in Persons Database.
- Section 17-B: Proof of past sexual behaviour or the sexual predisposition of a trafficked person is inadmissible in evidence for the purpose of proving consent of the victim to engage in sexual behaviour, or to prove the predisposition, sexual or otherwise, of a trafficked person.
- Section 17-C: The amended law grants service providers immunity from harassment suits.
- Section 22: Extraterritorial jurisdiction over the accused for acts of trafficking committed outside the country.

Republic Act No. 10361, or “An Act Instituting Policies for the Protection and Welfare of the Domestic Workers”, was signed into law by the President on 18 January 2013. The law provided regulatory policies for domestic workers and established standards of protection for their welfare. It requires employers to provide board, lodging and medical aid to their house helpers, among others.

Republic Act No. 10365 amended the Anti-Money Laundering Act to include as predicate crimes “Violations of Sections 4 to 6 of Republic Act No. 9208, otherwise known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003.” This gives us the ability to directly pursue the financial resources of trafficking syndicates and attack them at the most vulnerable part of their operations.

B. Social Media Publicity

The use of new media such as Youtube, Twitter and Facebook pages has increased the reach of IACAT to the public. Materials from its media monitoring activities are posted to the said social networking sites. Awareness of IACAT and its main functions has improved immensely. The iacat.net, official IACAT website was re-launched on the month of July 2012. It contains the basic information regarding the

council and its partners in the public and private sectors. Infused in its homepage are the twitter and facebook page with its real-time updates. To this end, a key implication of this modest increase in the public awareness through new media creates an informed society through free access to a wide range of available information from IACAT's Public Information and Communications Section.

The active presence of IACAT in various platforms of new media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube has been sustained. This has proven to be quite effective in furthering the reach of IACAT, particularly to the critical sector of youth. The official IACAT website [www.iacat.net] with its Public Assistance Corner (I-PAC), where people may send TIP related queries and vital information on TIP activities, is also updated promptly and regularly.

The 1343 Actionline was established by the IACAT as the first telephone hotline dedicated to combat human trafficking and other related cases. The main function of the 1343 Actionline is to receive and immediately respond to requests for assistance, inquiries and referrals from the victims, their families and the public pertaining to Human Trafficking. The service has been expanded to accommodate on-line reporting and text messaging. From April 2014 to January 2015, the 1343 Actionline has assisted 23 alleged human trafficking victims, who are all female. Three (3) were referred to shelters in the Philippine Embassy in Jordan and Lebanon. Three (3) minor victims were assisted. Of the number of victims, seven (7) were victims of sex trafficking, 14 of labor trafficking and two (2) of child trafficking. The said victims were trafficked within the Philippines, Malaysia, Jordan, Singapore, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Five (5) cases were resolved, another five (5) unresolved, and others still pending.

Television stations produced documentaries and infomercials in trafficking in persons, aside from the infomercials produced by IACAT. One of the information dissemination programs supported by IACAT is the installation of the IACAT TV in various government premises where a number of prospective migrants converged. IACAT TV is a three (3) hour television show featuring segments such as documentaries on trafficking, advisories, policies and other IACAT-related concerns in the closed-circuit TV booths of every IACAT-member government agency.

C. International Day Against Trafficking

IACAT celebrated the International Day Against Trafficking (IDAT) and held the following activities: (a.) LRT and MRT poster campaigns; (b.) medical and dental mission; and (c.) Survivor's Day. On 12 December 2014, a team of IACAT and youth volunteers from the University of the Philippines jumpstarted the week-long celebration of the IDAT by distributing flyers and placing posters in all terminals of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 2 and Metro Rail Transit (MRT) stations. LRT-2 serves eleven (11) stations on 13.8 km of the line while the MRT serves thirteen (13) stations on a length of 16.9 km along EDSA. The team distributed flyers containing basic information on the problem of human trafficking and how they can help in its prevention. The team also placed posters (only 2 posters per station for both LRT and MRT were allowed) in strategic areas of the stations mentioned above.

The medical and dental mission was held in Marillac Hills and Haven for Women in Muntinlupa City on 15 December 2014 and involved a total of 387

participants—10 IACAT staff, 35 medical staff, 133 participants from Haven for Women and 209 participants from Marillac Hills. On 16 and 17 December 2014, groups of TIP survivors were treated to a day of leisure and entertainment in Manila Ocean Park. 280 participants from the IACAT, OPCEN, Marillac Hills, Haven Forum, VFFI and Blas Ople joined the event.

D. Roll-out of the 2nd National Strategic Action Plan for 2012-2016

Representatives from the IACAT went to various LGUs, such as Palawan and Isabella, to impart the aforementioned Action Plan to the LGUs and capacitate them to form their own strategic action plan for their respective areas.

E. Seminars

The government has conducted numerous programs, trainings, and fora for government officers to boost the awareness and anti-trafficking expertise of law enforcement and other frontline public officers. These efforts led to a significant increase in the extent of awareness levels of Filipinos on Trafficking in Persons. The rise was attributed to the help of the broadcast, print and the social media in delivering core messages on the ills of human trafficking.

F. Interception of Potential Victims

To prevent potential TIP victims from being brought to the sites where they will be exploited, the IACAT has placed anti-trafficking task forces in airports, seaports, trafficking recruitment areas and other strategic locations that would, among other tasks, identify likely trafficking victims. At international points of entry, this involves the strict evaluation of travel, employment, and financial documents to determine if persons are leaving the Philippines for bona fide purposes.

The Guidelines on the Departure Formalities for International Bound Passengers in All Airports and Seaports in the Country, which provides for definite parameters to the enforcement of immigration departure formalities intended for the prevention of trafficking in persons and other related offenses, is presently undergoing revision by the IACAT to provide a clearer and more exact rules in the inspection and offloading of international bound passengers.

G. Asset Forfeiture Proceedings in Trafficking Cases

As noted above, Republic Act No. 10365 amended the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001 and included the acts committed in violation of R.A. No. 9808 as a predicate offense or those unlawful activities which can give rise to the crime of money laundering. As a result of the amendment, the remedies of bank inquiry, freezing, and civil forfeiture of monetary instrument or property representing, involving or relating to acts which constitutes trafficking in persons may now be pursued by the government notwithstanding the lack of conviction or even the absence of a pending criminal action against the traffickers.

H. Yolanda (Haiyan)/IACAT Disaster Rapid Response Task Force

The natural and man-made disasters that wreaked havoc on the lives of Filipinos living in the Visayas and Mindanao in 2013 have prompted the IACAT to create the **Yolanda (Haiyan)/IACAT Disaster Rapid Response Task Force**. The task force is composed of representatives from each member agencies of the IACAT and was formed for the purpose of creating a coordinating body within the IACAT that will ensure that existing anti-TIP programs are strengthened especially in the identified priority areas and to assess, plan and implement programs to combat, prevent and suppress trafficking and illegal recruitment among survivors of recent natural and man-made calamities.

Several members of the taskforce composed of representatives of member-agencies including the DOJ, IACAT Secretariat, DSWD, and PNP, went to the following areas:

- a. Ormoc City, Leyte in Region VIII
- b. Province of Aklan in Region VI
- c. Tagbilaran City, Bohol in Region VII

The teams conducted seminars to familiarize local officials of provinces recently hit by natural disasters on the law on trafficking in persons and the proper handling of TIP victims. A discussion was also held with the officials on the establishment of 'help desks' on TIP in local ports in their respective localities.

II. Protection, Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

A. Shelters

There are sixty six (66) shelters being maintained by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); and temporary shelters are provided by NGO partners that specialize in the case of trafficking victims and by the DOJ through the IACAT Operations Center. From April 2014 up to January 2015, a total of 1,101 clients were served in 14 Haven for Women and Haven for Women and Girls and 821 clients in Home for Girls and Marillac Hills nationwide

Like the Witness Protection Program (WPP), these shelters and safe houses provide not only security and protection to these victims but also economic assistance thru livelihood programs and skills trainings; and to strengthen their responsiveness to victims' needs, the DSWD established the National Recovery and Reintegration Database to continually monitor their safety and condition. Suspected trafficking and illegal recruitment victims intercepted at ports, airports and border control areas receive a two-step evaluation process subject to careful safeguards that protect their rights and dignity; and those rescued by task force operatives are immediately turned over to Government agencies like the DSWD and its partner NGOs to receive temporary shelter, food, security, and medical and psychological assistance.

The DSWD is currently implementing the Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons (RRPTP), which ensures the provision of adequate recovery services for trafficked persons, including livelihood assistance, financial assistance, and sheltering services. Its beneficiaries are trafficking victims, families and relatives

of victims, and communities with a high incidence of trafficking.

In addition to the shelters operated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development and NGOs, the IACAT Operation Center established a temporary shelter for witnesses and trafficking victims.

The IACAT is also in the process of constructing a Victim Processing Center in Mandaluyong City which, once built and becomes operational, will serve as a one-stop-shop for rescued TIP victims from around the National Capital Region where they may be interviewed and their statements obtained by law enforcement authorities and where they can temporarily stay while their cases are being investigated. This project is partly funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and a ground breaking ceremony took place on 11 February 2014.

The Government strengthened the witness protection program in relation to witnesses in trafficking cases. The Witness Protection Program (WPP) spent the total amount of Seven Million Eight Hundred Seventeen Thousand, Four Hundred Forty Five Pesos (Php 7,817,445.00) for financial assistance, security and protection of thirty (30) TIP witnesses, sourced mainly from the budget of the WPP under the Office of the Secretary of Justice for its implementation of the same. To give the witnesses enhanced medical care, the Government enrolled them in its public insurance program, which is administered by Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), and accorded them preferential treatment in its flagship medical center, the Philippine General Hospital (PGH). The Government also leased several farmlands and developed them into “witness colonies,” where witnesses learn farming, poultry, cattle raising and other livelihood skills that tangibly increase their economic self-sufficiency and improve their psychological well-being.

As a support center, the IACAT Operation Center (OPCEN) assists in investigation, protection of victims, and prosecution.

In investigations, for the period of April to December 2014, OPCEN, as the primary receiving and processing center of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Illegal Recruitment (IR) complaints, received and processed a total of thirty two (32) walk-in complaints for TIP, 30 of which also involved illegal recruitment. OPCEN also received a total fifty seven (57) referral of cases for initial assessment and investigation of possible Illegal Recruitment (IR) and Trafficking in Persons (TIP) from Department of Foreign Affairs – Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Worker’s Affair (DFA-OUMWA), Bureau of Immigration (BI), Department of Labor and Employment, IACAT Secretariat, and other non-government agencies. Finding the walk-in complaints and referrals meritorious, the same were thereafter referred to National Bureau of Investigation-Anti Human Trafficking Division (NBI-AHTRAD) for proper disposition and action. OPCEN operatives conducted nine (9) surveillance operations, and in support to the operations of IACAT Task Forces, NBI and PNP, the OPCEN operatives assisted in twenty six (26) rescue and entrapment operations in various clubs and other private establishments that resulted to the apprehension of ninety one (91) suspected human traffickers and illegal recruiters and the rescued a total of three hundred six (306) victims, including seventy (70) minors.

On protection of victims, OPCEN served as a temporary holding area for the rescued victims who were eventually turned over to the DSWD for the provision of

protection services. They likewise made referrals to other agencies for the provision of financial/livelihood assistance, capacity building, and other trainings.

OPCEN also greatly contributed to the prosecution of TIP cases. From April to December 2014 alone, in compliance with requests from various IACAT task forces and prosecutors, OPCEN operatives located and persuaded a total of eighty eight (88) victims/witnesses in different areas in the country and escorted them to attend their respective court hearings. In a particular case, two (2) witnesses/victims were located in Balagtas, Bulacan and brought to Zamboanga City. As a result of their testimony, the court denied the Petition for Bail filed by the accused.

In addition to locating witnesses, OPCEN also rendered security services to a total of ninety four (94) witnesses/victims and ensured their attendance to case conferences and court trials for the aforementioned period.

III. Prosecution and Law Enforcement

A. Conviction

From the time of the effectivity of R.A. 9208 in 2003 to 15 June 2015, a total of 187 human trafficking convictions involving 209 perpetrators have been handed down. More than two-thirds of this number occurred in the Aquino Government starting from July 2010.

The significant increase in convictions was accompanied by an array of institutional reforms in law enforcement. First, the Philippines increased the training of police and other officers that enforce the law against trafficking in persons. The Philippine National Police (PNP) conducted various trainings to PNP Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD) officers from all over the Philippines, to improve their investigative skills and ensure their success in the filing of appropriate criminal cases. Likewise, police and other law enforcement officers underwent training in case build-up, gender sensitivity, advocacy, effective communication, and values formation. The IACAT also organized anti-trafficking seminars for intelligence agents, immigration officers, policemen, servicepersons in the Philippine Marines, judicial officers, other government employees, and members of the Non-Government and Civil Society Organizations.

Furthermore, the Government pursued an active drive against corruption in the agencies that stand at the front-line of the campaign against trafficking. It promptly investigates all employees reported to be involved in acts of trafficking, and imposes the fitting administrative penalty on those who are found liable after due process of law. In furtherance of this objective, up to 598 administrative cases have been filed against 893 government employees for their alleged involvement in human trafficking.

B. Task Forces Against Trafficking

The DOJ persisted in ensuring the prosecution of persons for violations of R.A. 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking Act of 2003 as amended by R.A. 10364 or the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. Pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations

(IRR) of the said law, the IACAT established Law Enforcement Task Forces Against Trafficking in Persons and Quick-Reaction Teams (QRT), composed of prosecutors (DOJ), law enforcement investigators (NBI/PNP), welfare officers (DSWD), and non-government organizations (NGOs), in 11 seaports, airports and land terminals all over the country. The Task Forces were established, trained and are all fully operational. The Department remained steadfast in prioritizing the investigation, case build up and prosecution of trafficking in persons cases by establishing and maintaining these specialized anti-trafficking task forces in the critical regions of the country, namely:

A. Inter-Agency/ Port-Based Task Forces

a. National

- National Inter-Agency Task Force Against Trafficking/Quick Reaction Team (NIATFAT/QRT) based in Metro Manila, National Capital Region (NCR)

b. Port-Based

- Manila Harbor Task Force Against Trafficking based in Manila North Harbor, Manila
- Ninoy Aquino International Airport Task Force (NAIATFAT) Against Trafficking based in Terminals 1, 2, 3, in Pasay City
- Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) Task Force Against Trafficking in Cebu
- Clark International Airport (CIA) Task Force Against Trafficking based in DMIA, Clark, Pampanga
- Zamboanga Sea-Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force (SBATTF) based in Zamboanga City
- Aklan Port-Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force

B. Prosecutorial Task Forces

a. National

- DOJ Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (TFATIP) based in DOJ Main Office, Manila

b. Regional

- Manila Anti-Trafficking Task Force (MATTF)
- Palawan Anti-Trafficking Task Force Against Trafficking based in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region I (RATTF1) based in San Fernando City
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region II (RATTF2) based in Tuguegarao City, Cagayan
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region III (RATTF3) based in Cabanatuan City
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region IV (RATTF4) based in San Pablo City, Laguna
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region V (RATTF5) based in Legaspi City, Albay
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region VI

(RATTF6)

- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region VII (RATTF7) based in Cebu City, Cebu
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region VIII (RATTF8) based in Tacloban City, Leyte
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region IX (RATTF9)
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region X (RATTF10)
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region XI (RATTF11) based in Davao City, Davao Oriental
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region XII (RATTF12)
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force – Region XIII (RATTF13) based in Surigao City

This brings the total number of task forces across the country to twenty-three (23), all of which take an indispensable part in the rescue operations, case build-up and prosecution of traffickers. The task forces are established in strategic locations considering critical entry/exit points in the country and the place of origin or source area of TIP victims. These task forces spearhead the preventive initiatives and activities designed to minimize illegal entry/exit of the recruited victims. They are created to enhance the local operative's enforcement of the law particularly, in surveillance/rescue operations and build-up of TIP cases. Thus, they ensure that the incidents are reported, referred and filed in the local prosecutor's office acquiring jurisdiction thereof.

The Department of Justice completely supports the operational and administrative management of the 23 task forces all over the country. They are monitored and evaluated by way of the accomplishment reports centering, *but not limited to*, rescue/surveillance operations conducted, cases initiated, handled and monitored and the trainings and capacity building seminar organized.

C. Database

In order to put in place a comprehensive database of all the TIP cases, the DOJ-IACAT case monitoring team is continuously complying with its mandate to monitor and make an inventory of cases filed before the Regional Trial Courts (RTC) of the country.

With the completion of the case audit project, a more comprehensive case monitoring matrix was developed to fill the gaps of information in the database. The said matrix provides information on victims' and traffickers' profile, types of trafficking (i.e. sex, cyber-sex, labor, etc.), and aging and status of cases. To date, the IACAT has encoded a total 2,464 cases. The IACAT has already accomplished a significant percentage of the required fields of the database. It is also working on a system focusing on the effective use and management of information, particularly on the prosecution of TIP cases and at the same time addressing the challenge of gathering data in a reliable and timely manner.

D. Capacity-building Activities

The IACAT continues to spearhead the capacity development of members of law enforcement, prosecution, judiciary, civil service and non-government organizations by holding seminars and training workshops to strengthen anti-trafficking approaches and responses in their respective areas of jurisdiction. The activities aforementioned are in addition to other seminars and workshops initiated and organized by individual member agencies of the IACAT such as the Roll-Out Trainings on the Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons of the DSWD and the Anti-Illegal Recruitment/Trafficking in Persons Seminars of the POEA and the PNP.

The IACAT Secretariat and the Task Forces conducted a total of 99 trainings involving 4,952 participants from the government and 9,791 participants from the private sector. In the aftermath of super typhoon Haiyan, which led to an increased vulnerability to human trafficking in the disaster-stricken areas, the IACAT Secretariat prioritized its anti-TIP trainings in the affected areas of Regions 6, 7 and 8. Together with its partners, namely the International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the IACAT conducted five (5) trainings in the aforesaid regions to capacitate the regional service providers and local government officials in responding to TIP cases. The IACAT, in cooperation with its partners, noted the importance of expanding existing cooperation efforts to give additional focus on displaced persons in humanitarian crisis situations arising from devastating weather systems and man-made crisis situations, including localized armed conflict. Thus, a number of initiatives to further increase public information and awareness on human trafficking in disaster and conflict-affected areas were conducted, including the aforementioned trainings and capacity-building of frontline service providers, establishment of anti-trafficking and anti-illegal recruitment help desks and distribution of IEC materials.

E. Manual On The Labor Exploitation Dimensions Of Trafficking In Persons

The IACAT developed a manual on the Labor Dimensions of Trafficking in Persons, A Manual for Investigators, Prosecutors, Labor Inspectors and Service Providers which is designed to establish conceptual clarity on forced labor, recommend special investigative techniques, distinguish acts of trafficking for labor exploitation from other penal laws, expound other legal options covered by civil, labor, migration and administrative law regimes, and outline the legal protection and other forms of assistance to victims and survivors of trafficking for labor exploitation as well as the roles and responsibilities of agencies and institutions.

IV. Partnership and Networking

The IACAT has been enthusiastic in finding and collaborating with new partners in the campaign against trafficking in persons. The influential Catholic Bishops of the Philippines (CBCP) was invited to attend the regular monthly meeting of the IACAT. Dialogues with other faith-based organizations on TIP are also being planned. Partnership with student and youth organizations such as the Association of Law Students of the Philippines are also being pursued. The IACAT likewise partnered with the Student Council Alliance of the Philippines (SCAP) for seminars held in

various schools and colleges to raise awareness to students about the danger of human trafficking.

The Philippines has consistently recognized that international collaboration is vital to avert the threat of TIP. Accordingly, the Philippines, through the IACAT and the individual member-agencies, undertook efforts to strengthen its ties with the international community.

In 9 April 2014, Undersecretary Felizardo Serapio of the Philippine Center for Transnational Crime, accompanied by a lawyer of the IACAT Secretariat, participated in the International Conference Against Trafficking held at the Vatican City State. Undersecretary Serapio signed a pledge of commitment that established the San Marta Group, an international network of law enforcement agencies tasked to cooperate on trafficking. The San Marta Group will have a meeting in the United Kingdom in November 2014.

The Philippine Government, recognizing the trans-national characteristic of trafficking in persons and the need for ASEAN Member States to have a united front in combating the same, took a leading part in the discussion on the proposed ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP) and the Regional Plan of Action (RPA) on Trafficking in Persons in the recent Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC). The working drafts of the ACTIP and RPA were formally presented at the 9th ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Transnational Crimes (AMMTC) held in Vientiane, Laos last September 16 to 18, 2013.

In accordance with the mandate given by the Leaders at the 2011 ASEAN Summit in Bali to accelerate the consideration of an ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP), the 6th Experts Working Group (EWG) Meeting on the ACTIP and Regional Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (RPA) convened on 3 to 5 June 2014 at Yangon, Myanmar to continue deliberations on the two instruments.

The Philippines, as the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Lead Shepherd on Trafficking in Persons, chaired the 6th EWG Meeting through Assistant Secretary Ma. Joji V. Aragon of the Department of Labor and Employment. All ASEAN Member States were represented at the Meeting.

The Philippines, as the lead shepherd on trafficking in persons of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime, successfully concluded negotiations with its ASEAN counterparts of the draft ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP) and its corresponding Regional Plan of Action (RPA), and thus met the mandated deadline of December 2014. These legally-binding and action-oriented instruments will be endorsed for ratification of the ASEAN Leaders during the Leaders' Summit in November 2015, thus ensuring increased protection for Filipinos and other ASEAN nationals from the scourge of human trafficking in the region.

The IACAT is also an active participant in cooperative international investigations on trafficking, as enumerated below:

- a. CIDG Flagship Projects "OPLAN SAGIP ANGHEL and "OPLAN NENA"

In December 2011, five (5) females, including a minor, were rescued in Xiamen, China through coordination of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Task Force (NIATFAT); the Philippine Consulate in Xiamen, China; the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA); the Bureau of Immigration (BI) and the PNP-CIDG/NCR. In July 2012, the Chinese recruiter was convicted in China while the case against the local recruiters is pending trial before the Regional Trial Court of the City of Manila.

b. Joint Rescue Operation of Four (4) TIP Victims in Johor Baru, Malaysia

In March 2012, the Blas Ople Center, the IACAT, the DFA, the PNP and NCB Manila coordinated with the Anti-Human Trafficking Section of the Royal Malaysia Police for the rescue of four (4) victims. The victims were turned over to a shelter managed by Malaysian Welfare authorities pending the arrest and eventual prosecution of the Malaysian recruiter who evaded his arrest.

c. "Operation LUZVIMINDA": A Joint Rescue Mission of IACAT/PNP, INTERPOL – Kuala Lumpur and the Special Branch, Royal Malaysia Police, Federal Territory of Labuan, Malaysia

In July 2012, the local television show "BITAG" referred to IACAT the case of two (2) female victims who were recruited in Nueva Ecija, transported to Zamboanga City and Tawi-Tawi, and finally smuggled to Labuan, Malaysia, where they were forced to work as prostitutes in a bar allegedly owned by a certain Benedict Xian Lim. Utilizing INTERPOL resources, the IACAT coordinated with NCB Kuala Lumpur for the rescue of two (2) victims in Labuan, Malaysia. After referral to the Special Branch, Royal Malaysia Police in the Federal Territory of Labuan, a joint operation was conducted, leading to the recovery and repatriation of the two victims. A follow-up mission was conducted in Tawi-Tawi to positively identify the suspects, who were members of an organized syndicate involved in human trafficking operations in Northern Luzon, Metro Manila, Zamboanga and Tawi-Tawi.

In September 2012, formal charges were filed against Asaha Adin, who was also employed as a Fire Officer in the Bureau of Fire Protection, and eight (8) others for violation of R.A. No. 9208 as well as other related offenses. The case is pending preliminary investigation before the City Prosecutor of Zamboanga City.

d. Rescue of a TIP Victim in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

On 21 October 2013, the IACAT coordinated with the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs (OUMWA) for the rescue of a victim in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. By 18 November 2013, the victim had been rescued and was staying in the Shelter Home for Women 3 in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Further, the Malaysian Court granted the application for Protection Order (PO) of the Deputy Public Prosecutor on behalf of the victim, who served as a witness for the prosecution.

- e. Arrest of Alleged Recruiter Danny Esmade Sanrojo and Rescue of 13 Potential TIP Victims (28 January 2014)

On 28 January 2014, the Philippine Center for Transnational Crime (PCTC), the IACAT Sea Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force (SBATTF), the Philippine Coast Guard and the Visayan Forum Foundation, in coordination with the Presidential Anti Organized Crime Commission (PAOCC), intercepted thirteen (13) potential TIP victims and arrested Danny Esmade Sanrojo, a suspected recruiter, in the Zamboanga City Port. Sanrojo allegedly offered the victims, who are mostly from Zamboanga Sibugay, jobs as restaurant and palm oil plantation workers in Sandakan, Sabah. Sanrojo was referred for inquest by CIDG IX while the victims were turned over to the DSWD.

- f. Arrest of Hadji Arraji Jammang Kamman, a Notorious Human Trafficker, in Zamboanga City (29 January 2014)

On 29 January 2014, the IACAT Sea Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force (SBATTF), composed of representatives from the DOJ, PCTC, CSWD, DSWD, the Visayan Forum, CIDG, PCG, NISG and the Zamboanga City Police, coordinated with PAOCC for the apprehension of Hadji Arraji Jammang Kamman, a notorious human trafficker operating in Zamboanga City. Kamman was the owner of Salwa Hotel and the Wendelyn motor vessel. He was finally arrested in a remote area at Talabaan, Mercedes, Zamboanga City. A follow-up operation was thereafter conducted for the possible rescue of more TIP victims.

- g. Rescue of a TIP Victim in Sarawak, Malaysia (15 February 2014)

In December 2013, MIGRANTE International, an NGO, referred to IACAT the case of Monica Carinea, who was trafficked in Sarawak, Malaysia in September 2013. She made to work as an entertainer in Pub Beach Club, where she was forced to have intercourse with customers.

On 27 January 2014, the IACAT coordinated with the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs (OUMWA), DFA for her rescue. On 6 February 2014, the DFA informed the IACAT that the Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur had endorsed the case to the Malaysian Anti-Trafficking in Persons Council.

On 15 February 2014, she was finally repatriated to the Philippines. The IACAT is currently coordinating with her and MIGRANTE International for the filing of a criminal case against her local recruiter.

- h. Arrest of Peter Scully (20 February 2015)

For the reporting period, NBI coordinated with the National Police of Netherlands, the DOJ-Office of Cybercrime (DOJ-OCC), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the PNP for the arrest of Peter Scully, an Australian national, in Cagayan De Oro City last 20 February 2015 for violation of R.A. No. 9208, as amended by R.A. No. 10364, R.A. No. 8353,

R.A. No. 7610 and Article 248 of the Revised Penal Code. Scully is the one of the perpetrators of the “Destruction of Daisy” videos, which contain grave sexual abuses and the physical torture of Filipino children.

In 2014, the IACAT, through its member NGOs, organized three NGO Summits in Manila, Iloilo and Davao. The summits were again held to gather various NGOs representing the sectors of women, children and OFWs, to synergize their anti-trafficking efforts and to formulate a common action plan in combating the same in accordance with the National Strategic Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons.

The IACAT also hosted the five day visit of a high-level mission from the Kingdom of the Netherlands last February 2014. The visit was made to strengthen the partnership between the anti-trafficking agencies of the two countries and establish a framework that will facilitate the processing of requests for legal assistance on trafficking cases between the Philippines and the Netherlands.

Further, the IACAT strengthened its partnership with other countries such as the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, which sent a high level mission last 23 to 27 June 2014 to learn from the best practices of the IACAT and its member agencies in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking in persons. Further, the IACAT remained a strong collaborator with its national and international partners, particularly in advocacy and in the conduct of trainings.

The Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP) is also partnering with the IACAT to conduct a workshop which shall identify IACAT projects on the criminal justice response against trafficking which can be supported by the four year program.

As a result of the continued and coordinated efforts of public servants, government organizations, local government units, NGO partners, faith-based organizations, and other groups who contribute to the overall efforts of the country in fighting human trafficking, the Philippines was recognized in the 2014 edition of the Global Slavery Index among countries “making comparatively strong efforts with limited resources” in the campaign against human trafficking. The second edition of the Index ranked the Philippines as number one in Asia, number three in the Asia-Pacific and number 29 out of 167 countries globally in terms of the government’s efforts and programs, especially on the response of the criminal justice system against human trafficking.

The said Index provides a scientific approximation, country by country, of the number of people currently living in modern slavery. Based on the report, the Philippines acquired a high government response rating (BB), noting the significant steps the government has taken to fight human trafficking. These include short-term victim support services, a criminal justice framework that criminalizes some forms of modern-day slavery, a body to coordinate the response, and protection for vulnerable sectors.

Finally, on 18 March 2015, the IACAT and the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) seeking to institutionalize TIP awareness, education and prevention campaigns of the Government. The MOA escalates the public awareness and call-to-arms campaign,

with the goal of transforming the informed citizenry into vigilant anti-TIP advocates, by paving the way for the widest dissemination of anti-human trafficking advertorials in cinemas, radio and television stations.

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