



Ring the Bell for Gender Equality



Philippine Stock Exchange “Rings the Bell” to Advance Gender Equality

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For Immediate Release



The Philippine Stock Exchange rang the bell for gender equality as part of the global campaign held at more than 70 exchanges worldwide this year. In the picture from left to right: Yayu Javier, Chair of the UN Global Compact Local Network Philippines; Stephanie Carette, Attaché and Gender Focal Person, EU Delegation to the Philippines; Katherine Mulville, Director of Partnerships, Investing in Women; Ma. Rosalyn Mesina, WeEmpowerAsia Philippines Country Programme Manager, UN Women; Aurora Garcia, Chair of PhilWEN, H.E. Bita Rasoulain, Ambassador of Austria to the Philippines and EU Gender Champion; Jose Pardo, Chair of the Philippine Stock Exchange; Ma. Amor Iliscupidez, Director, Philippine Stock Exchange; Roberto Lim, Director, Philippine Stock Exchange; Ma. Vivian Yuchengco, Director, Philippine Stock Exchange; Ramon Monzon, CEO and President of the Philippine Stock Exchange; Edgar Lacson, Director, Philippine Stock Exchange; Daisy Arce, President of CITIC Corporation; Roel Refran, COO of the Philippine Stock Exchange, Cynthia Arce, Executive Director, UN Global Compact Local Network Philippines; Omelita Tiangco, Treasurer, Philippine Stock Exchange; and Aissa Encarnacion, Corporate Secretary, Philippine Stock Exchange.

Taguig City, Philippines – The Philippine Stock Exchange, in partnership with the joint European Union-UN Women programme ‘WeEmpowerAsia’ and UN Global Compact local network, held a “Ring the Bell for Gender Equality” ceremony today to promote business practices that give women greater equality and leadership in listed companies.

Jose T. Pardo, Chair of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), led business leaders in ringing the gender bell at the closing of the afternoon trading session, and announced the signing of the [Women’s Empowerment Principles](#) (WEPs), a set of seven principles to guide business on how to empower

women in the workplace, marketplace and community. It was the 4th time PSE had participated in the annual global campaign, timed with International Women's Day (8 March).

“This is meaningful and relevant for PSE as over 60 per cent of the company's employees are women,” said Pardo. “I am optimistic that with PSE being a signatory of the WEPs, our stakeholders will adopt more policies and practices that promote the welfare of women in the workplace while at the same time support gender equality through the WeEmpowerAsia programme.”

Ramon Monzon, President and CEO of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) said: “We are committed to ensuring that all employees have equal access to training and development programmes offered by the Exchange, which include skills-building and leadership training opportunities. This underscores our support for women's economic empowerment and gender-inclusive policies.”

Ma. Rosalyn Mesina, WeEmpowerAsia Philippines Country Programme Manager, UN Women, emphasized the importance of adopting these actions to both improve working conditions and increase productivity. “It's time we recognize the value of women's economic contribution. Their leadership and skills allow for better returns and gender-inclusive business. We thank the Philippine Stock Exchange for its commitment to the WEPs and for inspiring listed companies to do the same.”

H.E. Bitra Rasoulia, Ambassador of Austria to the Philippines and EU Gender Champion, endorsed the commitment: “The European Union strongly believes that gender equality will contribute to faster growing economies. I would like to thank the Philippine Stock Exchange for having agreed to sign the Women's Empowerment Principles, which highlight that empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential.”

Support for the WEPs, which this year marks its 10th anniversary, has gathered increasing momentum in the Philippines as more private-sector businesses signal the commitment to gender-inclusive business practices.

According to Grant Thornton International's 2020 Women in Business Survey, the Philippines ranks 1st from 32 countries surveyed; women hold 43 per cent of the country's top business jobs, such as Chief Finance Officer, Human Resources Director and Chief Operations Officer – the highest since 2016. Yet, survey figures had suggested that women continue to face gender prejudices, which led to gaps in CEO and Managing Director positions.

After the bell ringing ceremony, delegates discussed priority action areas to advance gender equality in their markets, including ways the programme 'WeEmpowerAsia' can support them. The EU-funded initiative, implemented by UN Women, promotes women in private sector businesses around Asia.

The regional bell ringing initiative of UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in partnership with the European Union, contributes to the United Nations' broader efforts to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 on Gender Equality, which is identified as one of the four SDGs stock exchanges are best positioned to support.

About WeEmpowerAsia

“WeEmpowerAsia” is a joint programme of the European Union and UN Women aiming to increase more women who lead and participate in private-sector businesses in China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, thereby advancing inclusive and sustainable growth along with stronger links between European and Asian markets through gender-sensitive trade and supply chains. The programme

is strongly anchored in the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) and contributes to seven United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDGs 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 17.

About UN Women

UN Women is the United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, the organization was established in 2010 to accelerate progress on women's rights worldwide. UN Women's efforts are based on the fundamental belief that every woman has the right to live a life free from violence, poverty, and discrimination, and that gender equality is a prerequisite to achieving global development.

About the European Union

The European Union is made up of 27 member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development while maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

About United Nations Global Compact

As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the United Nations Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with ten universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Launched in 2000, the mandate of the UN Global Compact is to guide and support the global business community in advancing UN goals and values through responsible corporate practices. With more than 9,500 companies and 3,000 non-business signatories based in over 160 countries, and more than 70 Local Networks, it is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world.

About Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)

The Women's Empowerment Principles - Equality Means Business is a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact. The Principles outline seven steps for business on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. The Principles highlight that empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential to build strong economies; establish more stable and just societies; achieve internationally agreed goals for development, sustainability, and human rights; improve quality of life for women, men, families and communities; and propel business' operations and goals.

About Ring the Bell for Gender Equality

"Ring the Bell for Gender Equality" initiative is aimed to raise awareness about the business case for women's economic empowerment and the opportunities for the private sector to advance gender equality and sustainable development. The theme for International Women's Day this year is, "I Am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights," aligned with UN Women's new multigenerational campaign, Generation Equality, which marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, the Beijing Platform for Action is recognized as the most progressive roadmap for the empowerment of women and girls, everywhere.

As part of the events, participants are encouraged to make commitments to improve gender equality in their markets, such as signing the Women's Empowerment Principles, improving diversity in senior management and on the boards of directors, developing more gender-friendly policies, developing a gender-themed investment product, or improving transparency on gender policies and practices.

Follow the hashtag #WeEmpowerAsia for live updates on our social media channels.

The official hashtags of the Ring the Bell events are: #GenderBell #IWD2020 #GenerationEquality #InternationalWomensDay

For more information, please contact:

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