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60 Years of European-Philippine Relations

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H. E. Luc Véron*
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Hon. Alfredo Pascual*
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Leading Innovations and Inclusive Connectivity*

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Editorial

Dear reader,

In its 60th year, the continuing relations between the European Union and the Philippines highlight the strong commitment between both partners. The ECCP has remained at the forefront of advocating for the resumption of the EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This effort began with the first official visit of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to Brussels in December 2022, followed by a visit of DTI Secretary Alfredo Pascual to Brussels in June 2023 and the historic first ever visit of an EU Commission President to the Philippines last July when European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen came to Manila to meet with Philippine Government and European business representatives. And continued until last March, when the Chamber was present in Brussels, represented by ECCP President Paulo Duarte, for key engagements leading to this pivotal moment in EU-PH relations.

In this edition of EuroPH Connect, we focus on the relations between the European Union and the Philippines. On page 6, read our special feature on Ambassador Luc Véron from the Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines as he shares insights on the 60th year of European Union-Philippine relations and the developments regarding the EU-FTA.

We also feature the Department of Trade and Industry Secretary, Alfredo E. Pascual, as he provides updates on trade and the initiatives of the agency. Read more about this on page 8.

We held numerous events, such as the first ECCP Community Connect of the year to welcome new members into the Chamber. This was an opportunity for new members to meet and network with current members, as well as to familiarize themselves with the various business services available through their membership. Head over to page 25 to know more about this event.

In early May, the ECCP, in partnership with the EU-ASEAN Business Council, hosted the 11th European-Philippine Business Dialogue, which was attended by more than 200 participants. This event provided a platform for robust discussions on policy matters and strategic initiatives to enhance the country's competitive edge as an investment destination for European businesses. To cap off the event, we held the European Investors' Night, with Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin representing President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., as our guest of honor.

Another highlight in the first half of 2024 was the Annual General Membership Meeting, where members received an overview of the Chamber's activities and achievements for the past year, and a new Board of Directors was elected. Attended by more than 300 participants, this event was followed by Sunset Socials where members had the opportunity to network. We are grateful to all our partners and friends for their consistent support of this year's AGM; it would not have been possible without you.

These are just some of the many events and activities organized by the ECCP and there is more to come in the upcoming weeks and months. Stay updated by checking our events calendar on page 72 or you may also keep track through our social media channels and our website.



Florian Gottein
ECCP Executive Director

I also invite you to read through the articles from our members. Du-Baladad Law Firm shares a think piece on how the Philippines has agreed to be part of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS. Eastern Communications marks 30 years of Philippine internet and reaffirms its dedication to being a Partner in Progress for every Filipino through its long-standing commitment to providing inclusive and reliable internet connectivity and ICT solutions. Leechiu Property Consultants provide updates on the office property market, highlighting its resilience amid looming concerns from geopolitical risks and persistently high key policy rates.

As for other highlights, take a look at our Advocacy Corner on page 54 and get the latest updates on our various engagements with key government offices, as well as our committee meetings to discuss pressing industry concerns and issues.

We warmly welcome our new members in the New Members Corner, found on page 66. Stay updated on Chamber activities from our branches in Manila, Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Clark, and Iloilo. We have also conducted numerous courtesy visits and meetings with our members and partners to discuss points of collaboration. Read more about this on page 24. Meanwhile, explore the available business opportunities also featured on page 71. Additionally, check out our lineup of events, training programs, and international trade fairs that you might be interested in joining.

As we move into Q3, there will be more to look forward to in the upcoming weeks and months with additional activities and events lined up for our members and partners.

As always, we are grateful for your continued trust and support. I hope you enjoy this issue, and we are excited to see you at one of our activities.

Best regards,
Florian

Interview with the Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of the Philippines

H. E. Luc Véron



Can you provide an overview of the historical milestones in the relationship between the European Union and the Philippines over the past 60 years?

After de facto relations had been established between the Philippines and 15 European countries in 1948, formal diplomatic ties with the then European Economic Community (EEC) started in May 1964 when the first Philippine Ambassador, Vicente Singian, presented credentials in Brussels. Throughout the following decades political and trade relations between the Philippines and the EU grew and deepened. In 1991, a permanent Delegation of the European Communities to the Philippines was established in Manila. Development cooperation became a prominent feature in EEC relations with the Philippines in the 1970s and 1980s. As regards Trade, the Philippines enjoys enhanced trade relations with the European Union under the Generalized Scheme of Preferences plus (GSP+) since December 2014, resulting in more than 6000 Philippine export products to entering the European Union duty-free. Since 2013, the Philippines exports to the EU have almost doubled, thanks to GSP+. Relations also grew gradually in the socio-cultural and academic sector, as showcased by the more than 600 Filipino scholars that have availed of the Erasmus+ scholarship to pursue graduate studies in European Universities since 2004. In 2018, the EU and the Philippines signed a bilateral Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation. A first Joint Committee was held in January 2020 where all those topics were discussed, with follow-up meetings in April 2022 and June 2023. Formal political dialogue on specific topics, such as trade, development and human rights are also regularly held in dedicated subcommittees. In 2023, a new subcommittee was added to focus on maritime affairs. EU-Philippines cooperation also takes place in the regional context, where the Philippines has served as country coordinator for EU-ASEAN dialogue relations between 1991 and 1994, and currently since 2021 until August 2024. A culmination of the positive momentum in the bilateral relations was the first visit ever of an EU Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, to the Philippines. Following this visit, the EU and the Philippines announced the relaunch of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement in March 2024.

How has the EU's approach to diplomatic relations with the Philippines evolved over the years, particularly in light of changing global dynamics?

Bilateral relations between the EU and the Philippines started with a focus on development assistance. However, throughout the years, bilateral relations extended to other areas, culminating with the entry into force of a comprehensive EU-Philippines Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation, covering key areas of mutual interest including, but not limited to, combatting terrorism and transnational crimes, cooperation on human rights, justice and peace, countering proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trade, migration and maritime labour, employment, disaster risk management and health. In an international context marked by conflict and aggression, the European Union and the Philippines stand together in the defense of multilateralism and of international law.

What key achievements have marked the collaboration between the European Union and the Philippines in development?

Key achievements in the development cooperation between the EU and the Philippines include the longstanding partnership on the Mindanao peace process. Currently the EU finances about P8.6 billion of grant investments in Mindanao,

mostly the BARMM, covering a wider range of activities in the areas of institution building, normalisation, livelihoods and socio-economic support – in particular agro value chains. Other priority areas include support to the justice reform process, which started in 2006, and focuses on supporting better coordination and access to justice for vulnerable groups. More recently, the EU has embarked on a strategic partnership with the Philippines to support the twin transition to a green and digital economy (see below on Global Gateway).

What are your views on the recent announcement on the resumption of negotiations for the EU-PH Free Trade Agreement? What opportunities are seen to come along with the successful negotiation of this trade policy?

The resumption of the negotiations for a EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement (FTA) mark a new chapter in our economic relations. The EU aims at an ambitious, balanced, and comprehensive agreement, which provides for new market access opportunities and clear rules across trade and investment-related areas, with sustainability at its core. Such an agreement would open up significant new commercial opportunities for economic operators in the Philippines and in the EU. The general principles of non-discrimination, national treatment, transparency, and fairness, as well as specific regulatory disciplines at the heart of the FTA would create, together with an effective dispute settlement system, a reliable enhanced legal framework for traders and investors. All in all a successful negotiation can boost trade flows to the benefit of both sides and provide significant new incentives for European investors to establish in the Philippines. The current advantages of the GSP+ as well as its high standards on human rights, labour rights and environment would have to be transferred into and be further expanded in an FTA.

What initiatives or projects under the Global Gateway Program have had the most significant impact on fostering bilateral ties between the European Union and the Philippines?

In December 2021, the European Union launched the "Global Gateway" initiative, the European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure connections in digital, energy and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the world. The Global Gateway is a partnership of equals. In the Philippines, as highlighted by President von der Leyen during her visit to Manila last July, the EU's Global Gateway will focus on the twin-transition to a green and digital economy. The P3.62-billion grant Green Economy Program will empower the national government, LGUs and the private sector to lead the way in sustainable green practice, promoting a circular economy, waste reduction and expansion of energy efficiency and renewable energy. From EU Member States we expect about P9 billion of grant investments linked to this Program, plus P12 billion in sovereign loans and more in private sector investments. This will support the Philippine transition to a circular economy, reduce plastic waste and boost renewable energy production.

In the footsteps of the Green Economy Global Gateway program, the EU has started to work with our Philippine counterparts on a Digital Connectivity Global Gateway program. In April this year, we launched the Copernicus program with the European Space Agency and the Philippine Space Agency. It focuses on the use of Sentinel satellite data for disaster risk management, environmental protection and agriculture/forestry. With this new Digital Connectivity Program (about P1.2 billion), the EU aims at supporting the Philippines to become a digital connectivity hub in the region and expand Copernicus in Southeast Asia.

Hon. Alfredo Pascual



How do you characterize the present state of trade and industry connections between the Philippines and Europe, and what factors are primarily propelling this relationship?

The trade and industry relationship between the Philippines and Europe is strong and continues to develop positively. The European Union (EU) remains one of the Philippines' top trading partners, highlighting a dynamic and mutually beneficial economic connection. The continuation of the EU Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) provides the Philippines with duty-free access to the EU market for thousands of products, significantly boosting exports, particularly in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors.

The recent resumption of negotiations for a PH-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) underscores a shared commitment to deepen these economic ties further. This prospective FTA presents a promising opportunity to enhance and broaden the partnership between the two regions, facilitating easier access, reducing trade barriers, and promoting increased bilateral trade and investments.

Overall, these developments signal a healthy and expanding relationship, driven by strategic economic agreements and a strong commitment from both sides to leverage these connections for greater economic growth and cooperation.

Which particular sectors or industries show the highest promise for expanded cooperation and investment between the Philippines and Europe?

The renewable energy sector presents a promising area for collaboration between the Philippines and Europe, leveraging European technology expertise alongside Philippine initiatives to expand renewable energy sources. This partnership is geared towards meeting the Philippines' increasing energy demands and achieving its climate objectives.

The Philippines' wealth in critical green metals such as nickel, copper, and cobalt positions it as a key player in sustainable technologies, crucial for manufacturing batteries for electric vehicles and other green technologies. This resource abundance offers significant investment opportunities for European stakeholders interested in eco-friendly solutions.

Moreover, the Philippines' robust semiconductor and electronics industries, along with its strong ICT sector, are well-suited to support Europe's diversification in semiconductor supply chains and digital services. These industries provide a solid foundation for European tech companies looking to outsource or establish offshore capabilities, particularly in software development and business process outsourcing.

Alongside the agency's efforts to increase trade and commerce, what are the DTI's initiatives to ensure protection for consumers, as well as compliance among business owners?

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in the Philippines champions consumer protection by ensuring the availability of safe, reliable products at fair prices. Through rigorous monitoring and enforcement, both online and in physical stores, the DTI maintains high standards to prevent overpricing and guarantee product quality.

The agency empowers consumers by intensifying education about their rights and responsibilities. This is especially crucial in the digital era where e-commerce is prevalent.

By educating consumers, the DTI enables them to make informed decisions and demand quality service.

Additionally, the DTI provides accessible platforms for filing complaints and seeking redress against unfair business practices. These efforts ensure that consumer grievances are promptly addressed, fostering a fair and transparent marketplace.

Can you discuss any ongoing efforts by the DTI to address trade barriers and regulatory challenges that may hinder seamless trade flow between the Philippines and European markets, ensuring a more conducive environment for bilateral trade and investment?

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in the Philippines is actively negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the European Union to enhance trade flows. This agreement focuses on reducing tariffs, simplifying customs procedures, and eliminating other trade barriers, aiming to create a clearer and more predictable trading environment that facilitates increased trade and investment between the regions.

In addition to the FTA, the DTI supports transformative legislation and policy changes to foster a conducive business environment for foreign investments. Key measures include the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Law, which provides incentives for strategic investments, and the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, which lowers capital requirements for foreign retail investors. Other significant reforms are the liberalization of the Renewable Energy sector and amendments to the Public Services Act, allowing full foreign ownership in crucial sectors.

Furthermore, the DTI promotes trade facilitation measures that streamline regulatory procedures and reduce trading costs. Executive Order Nos. 18 and No. 32 have also been implemented to establish green lanes for strategic investments and simplify permitting processes for telecommunications and internet infrastructure, enhancing the overall ease of doing business between the Philippines and Europe.

What are the DTI's aspirations in line with the recent announcement on the resumption of EU-PH Free Trade Agreement Negotiations?

With the resumption of the EU-PH Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in the Philippines is keen on significantly expanding market access for Philippine products and services. This expansion is expected to integrate the Philippines further into European value chains and attract increased European investments in key economic sectors.

The DTI aims to leverage the FTA to modernize the Philippine economy and deepen economic partnerships with Europe. The focus extends beyond enhancing trade and investment flows to include building long-term, strategic collaborations that contribute to economic resilience and innovation.

Moreover, the DTI envisions the FTA as a catalyst for promoting sustainable and inclusive growth. This strategic approach aims to ensure that the economic benefits of increased trade and investments are broadly distributed, supporting a comprehensive economic transformation that positions the Philippines as a competitive and dynamic player in the global market.



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Our clientele is diverse, counting small-scale entrepreneurs to blue-chip corporations. A Large part of our portfolio, however, is composed

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Photo of fiber optic subsea cables transferred in the cable ship of Eastern Communications' most recent joint infrastructure project, the Philippine Domestic Submarine Cable Network (PDSCN)

Eastern Communications Marks 30 Years of Philippine Internet, Leading Innovations and Inclusive Connectivity

Manila, Philippines – As the Philippines marks the 30th anniversary of the Internet in the country, Eastern Communications, a pioneering telecommunications company with a rich 145-year history, proudly celebrates this significant milestone alongside the nation. With a long-standing commitment to providing inclusive and reliable internet connectivity and ICT solutions, Eastern Communications reaffirms its dedication to being a Partner in Progress for every Filipino.

The internet's journey in the Philippines began on March 29, 1994. This significant step into the digital age was made possible through the collaborative efforts of private and government institutions. This groundbreaking achievement laid the groundwork for the Philippines to join the global internet community that transformed communication, education, and businesses across the nation.

Since the internet's inception in the Philippines, Eastern Communications has been at the forefront of technological innovation, ensuring that communities across the nation have access to the tools and resources needed to thrive in a digital age. As we celebrate three decades of internet connectivity, Eastern Communications is more committed than ever to delivering groundbreaking solutions that meet its customers' evolving needs.

"In a world where the internet has become a cornerstone of daily life, Eastern Communications is honored to have played a pivotal role in the digital transformation of the Philippines," said Edsel Paglinawan, Vice President and Head of Product and Innovation of Eastern Communications.

"Our journey over the last 145 years has been marked by a relentless pursuit of excellence and innovation. As we celebrate this milestone, we are excited to continue our mission of connecting Filipinos and empowering communities through advanced and reliable ICT solutions," he added.

Testament to this is the company's continued expansion efforts and the completion of its latest **Philippine Domestic Submarine Cable Network (PDSCN) Express Route**, a joint venture project of Eastern Communications, Globe Telecom, and Infinivan Inc., aimed to bridge the digital divide and foster a more connected society.

Bolstering innovative solutions and sustainable digital transformation nationwide, Eastern has maintained longstanding partnerships with the Philippine Network Operators Group (PHNOG), alongside other digital and carrier organizations.

Additionally, the telco actively engaged with Filipino communities, offering free internet access through the MNLKonek kiosks in Manila, and donating routers to universities and Mayon Volcano evacuees in Albay, Bicol, thus expanding support and connectivity to underserved areas.

"Eastern Communications' vision extends beyond providing superior internet services. We are deeply committed to being an integral part of the nation's progress, ensuring that every Filipino has the opportunity to benefit from the digital revolution," added Paglinawan

As Eastern Communications looks to the future, the company is excited to unveil new technologies and partnerships that will continue to shape the digital landscape of the Philippines. With a steadfast commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and reliability, Eastern Communications is poised to lead the way in creating a more connected and digital Philippines for generations to come.

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Pillar Two in the Philippines

By Atty. Irwin C. Nidea, Jr.
Senior Partner, BDB Law

On October 2023, the Philippines has agreed to be part of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS. Thus, it has committed to adopt the agreed implementing rules of the Two-Pillar solution. Pillar One hopes to address the tax challenges brought about by the digital economy. Pillar Two on the other hand wants to stop all countries from racing to the bottom where tax cuts are introduced to attract investors. To prevent this, Pillar Two mandates that countries must observe a minimum corporate income tax of 15%. They cannot go lower than that.

It is important to note that only MNEs with global revenues above €750 million are required to pay a minimum effective tax rate (ETR) of 15% on income in each country where they operate. If it is determined that the Philippine subsidiary of an MNE has an ETR that is below 15%, the parent company would be paying additional top-up tax in its home country. The top-up tax would depend on how much should be filled in to achieve the minimum tax of 15%.

If the parent entity's home country will impose a top-up tax, it means that the Philippines failed to comply with the minimum tax of 15%. This is a very likely scenario since the Philippines offers tax incentives to attract foreign direct investments. This includes income tax holiday and 5% special corporate income tax (SCIT). Both these incentives are well below the global minimum of 15% and are susceptible to top-up tax.

If an MNE is forced to pay an additional top-up tax anyway, why should it still invest in the Philippines when tax incentives will be practically non-existent?

The Philippines must be able to showcase its other strengths, like sound economic fundamentals, abundant natural resources and skilled people as the primary driving force in making foreign companies believe that the Philippines is the better business destination.

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Strong Start for Office Market

Makati City, April 16, 2024 - The office property market showed resilience amid looming concerns from geopolitical risks and persistently high key policy rates.

Record High Actual Demand: Strong start for transacted leases in 1Q2024, which increased by 25% versus 1Q2023. This is the largest single-quarter demand in the last four years.

Industry Demand: Traditional companies sustained almost half of demand for the quarter, taking up 151,000 sqm of office space, which came primarily from government agencies. IT-BPM companies came in as a close second, signing 125,000 sqm of space. Meanwhile, POGOs signed 55,000 sqm of space despite regulatory changes and issues surrounding the industry.

We note that new leases are more than just relocations, since their newly occupied spaces also accommodate expansions in their operations.

Live Demand: Live demand projections remain promising, giving the market confidence moving

forward. Traditional occupiers comprise bulk of demand within Metro Manila, at 171,000 sqm—excluding demand from government agencies at 79,000 sqm.

Current Vacancy At a Standstill: Vacancy for 1Q2024 in office properties nationwide stands at 3.2 Mn sqm—an 18% vacancy rate. Inside Metro Manila, the highest vacancy rates are in Alabang and Bay Area.

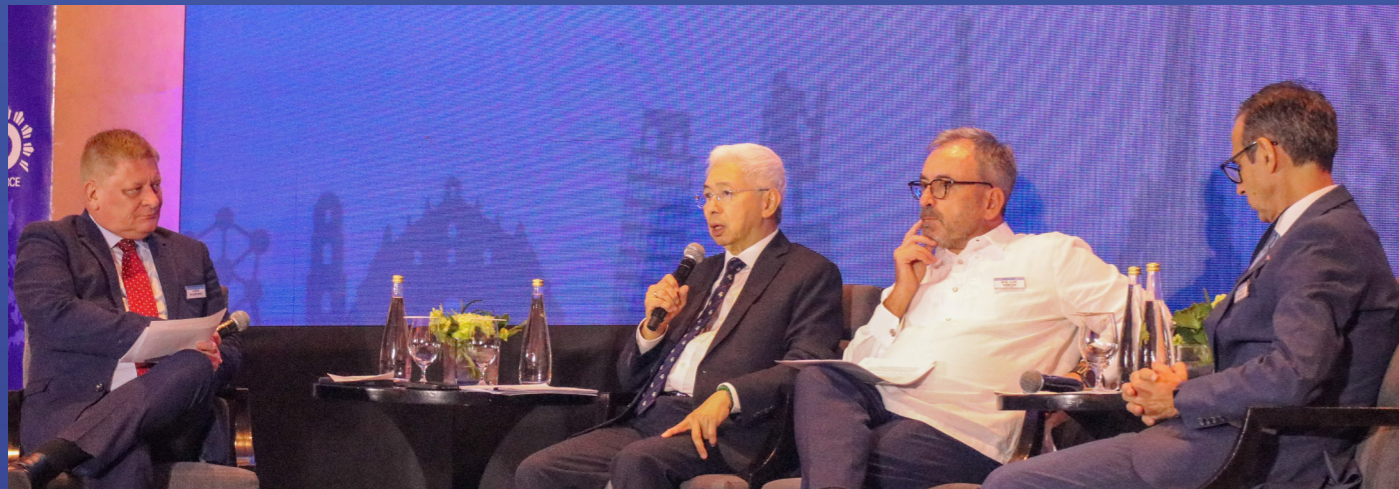
Current Supply: Ninety-thousand sqm of new supply was completed this quarter. Almost half or 48% of current supply consists of buildings aged five years or younger.

Future Outlook: Vacancy remains persistent due to new buildings and contractions, as companies reallocate their office portfolio with 852,000 sqm of office space expected to be completed for the rest of the year. However, we see that pipeline supply will start to taper off by 2025. Single digit vacancies are anticipated starting 2028.

“ It’s not an issue of demand, considering the positive trajectory we’re observing. Rather, it’s a supply challenge that requires time to address. However, we’re confident that single-digit vacancies are on the horizon.

Mikko Barranda
Director of Commercial Leasing

European biz groups to drive economic cooperation between Europe and the Philippines



Makati City, Philippines – As the Philippines emerges as a beacon of economic potential in Asia, there is a growing urgency to attract heightened interest from foreign investors.

In response to this imperative, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) and the EU-ASEAN Business Council convened the 11th European-Philippine Business Dialogue in Makati City on Monday. The event aimed to serve as a platform for robust discussions on policy matters and strategic initiatives to enhance the country's competitive edge as an investment destination, especially for European businesses.

In his opening remarks, ECCP President Paulo Duarte highlighted the pivotal economic trajectory the Philippines is currently experiencing, characterized by significant growth opportunities, notably the negotiations for the EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement set to resume, the extension of the EU Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), and the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of EU-Philippines diplomatic ties.

Early this March, the ECCP celebrated the restart of EU-Philippines FTA negotiations. The Chamber stated that the “renewed interest underscores the attractiveness of the Philippines as a prime business destination for European firms”, emphasizing the mutual benefits of fostering deeper economic ties.

“We are immensely grateful to witness such positive developments, which not only offer substantial economic opportunities but also contribute to our shared vision of fostering a greener, more inclusive, and sustainable future,” said Duarte.

“Furthermore, the economic reforms we have discussed are yielding tangible results. There is heightened interest from European investors in areas such as green energy and digital transformation, among others. We are pleased to see more European firms exploring and entering the market, and we at the ECCP have briefed various European investors based in Europe, ASEAN, and the wider East Asian markets,” he added.

The ECCP, through various initiatives, has actively pursued the advancement of the EU-Philippines trade and investments. Aside from actively advocating for the resumption of FTA negotiations, the Chamber has also released numerous position papers and has engaged in high-level dialogues with policymakers and business representatives on relevant topics such as trade, investment, sustainability and ease of doing business (EODB).

Moreover, the ECCP has lauded the Philippine government's reaffirmed commitment to enhancing the nation's competitiveness and attractiveness to both local and foreign investors, alongside initiatives such as the Judicial Reform Plan 2021-2027 and efforts by the Anti-Red Tape Authority to streamline bureaucratic processes.

“While there are uncertainties and challenges ahead, we remain optimistic that maintaining open and regular dialogues will be mutually beneficial as we jointly navigate our path towards greater success,” concluded Duarte.

The ECCP has also strongly advocated policy measures that will help the Philippines attract more foreign direct investments. During the Dialogue, the Chamber turned over to the Philippine government its 2024 Advocacy Papers highlighting at least 14 ECCP Advocacy Committees' priorities for enhanced economic outcomes.

“Building upon the successes of previous advocacy initiatives, we remain steadfast in pushing for policies that promote sustainable development and leveling the playing field for European and Filipino companies alike,” said ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein.

The 2024 edition of the ECCP's Advocacy Papers acknowledges

the recent successes that have shaped the Philippine business landscape, specifically the enactment of significant reforms such as the Ease of Paying Taxes Act, the Internet Transactions Act, and the passage of the Public-Private Partnership Code of the Philippines.

“As we celebrate these achievements, we must also look ahead and identify what needs to be done to maximise the benefits brought about by these reforms. The ECCP Advocacy Papers delve into these critical areas, providing actionable recommendations to ensure that the momentum of progress is sustained,” added Gottein.

Attended by more than two hundred attendees, including guests comprised of EU and ASEAN member states heads of mission and members of the diplomatic corps, as well as high-level European and ASEAN business executives, the business dialogue featured messages and presentations from speakers H.E. Luc Véron, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines; Hon. Alfredo E. Pascual, Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry; Hon. Ernesto V. Perez, Secretary of the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA); and Secretary Frederick Go, Special Assistant to the President for Investment and Economic Affairs.

The Dialogue also featured esteemed panelists Department of Finance Assistant Secretary Dakila Elteen Napao, IT & Business Process Association of the Philippines President Jack Madrid, ECCP Director Dr. Diana Edralin, Du-Baladad & Associates Founder and CEO Atty. Benedicta Du-Baladad, as well as moderators EU-ASEAN Business Council Executive Director Chris Humphrey, Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation Chief Resilience Officer Mr. Bill Luz, and Foundation of Economic Freedom Trustee Mr. Christopher Ilagan.

The 2024 European-Philippine Business Dialogue is co-organized by the ECCP and the EU-ASEAN Business Council, together with Event Partners the Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines, Embassy of the Republic of Austria, Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium, Embassy of the Kingdom of Denmark, Embassy of the Republic of Finland, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Embassy of Romania, Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden, IT and Business Process Association of the Philippines (IBPAP), and the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Foundation, Inc. (SEIPI).

The event is also supported by Platinum Partner Republic Cement, Gold Partners Ayala Corporation and PRU Life UK, Silver Partners Bosch Philippines, Royal Cargo and Unilever, Bronze Partners Alaska Milk Corporation, HSBC, DIAGEO, and PMFTC, Technology Partner Glue Up, Table Top Partners Kaizen Leadership Asia, Trends and Concepts, Sanofi, Roche Philippines, Charmant Ingredients and Filinvest, Venue Partner Raffles and Fairmont Makati, and Beverage Partner Le Cellier.

Quintin Pastrana, President of WEnergy Power Pilipinas, Archipelago Renewables, and Head of Business Development for WEnergy Global, served as the Master of Ceremonies of the event.

This year marks the 11th run of the European-Philippine Business Dialogue. With the theme “Taking the Philippines Centrestage”, the forum sought to provide a platform for sharing insights and exchanging meaningful discussions on how the Philippines can maximize its competitive advantage as a business destination and bring the country's economy to new heights.

Launched in 2014, the annual event brings together industry experts, government leaders, and relevant stakeholders to celebrate and strengthen European-Philippine economic ties.

ECCP, AsBAA Aviation Summit to spotlight local aviation as prime catalyst for trade and investment

Pasay City, Philippines – Stakeholders in the aviation industry are rallying to spur even more investment opportunities and private sector participation, especially in the critical areas of infrastructure, human capital, and sustainable development, to boost the Philippine aviation sector’s profile as a frontrunner among Asian counterparts by 2028.

This imperative follows the news of growing demand for air travel, the privatized rehabilitation of Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA), as well as successful private sector-led operations to decongest air traffic like that of Clark International Airport.

Recognizing Philippine aviation as a main catalyst for trade and investment, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) and the Asian Business Aviation Association (AsBAA) have announced the launch of the 2024 installment of the Aviation Summit. Building on the success of the inaugural Summit held in 2023, this year’s event aims to focus on aviation’s pivotal role in Philippine economic progress and push for advocacies that foster sustainable development within the sector.

“We are thrilled to co-organize the 2024 Aviation Summit alongside AsBAA and our event partners from both the government and the private sector, building on the momentum generated by the resounding success of the inaugural Summit,” said ECCP President Paulo Duarte. “The aviation sector serves as a catalyst for trade, investment, commerce, and connectivity in the country. Through this year’s installment, we aim to facilitate meaningful discussions that will shape the future of Philippine and regional aviation. We look forward to fruitful dialogue and collaborations.”

Moreover, Duarte also mentioned that the Summit aims to highlight pressing challenges related to pending implementation of legislative reforms that have previously been identified as factors influencing decisions to bypass the Philippines as an investment destination.

“Enacting laws to restructure the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) into a regulatory body, alongside establishing the Philippine Airports Authority and creating the Philippine Transportation Safety Board, will modernize governance frameworks and enhance regulatory oversight in the industry,” emphasized Duarte.

According to AsBAA Vice Chairman Maximilian Motschmann, the 2023 Aviation Summit brought significant awareness of the challenges and opportunities faced by the aviation industry in the Philippines as well as in the region. Aside from civil aviation, the 2024 run will also focus on business aviation and its crucial contribution to economic development and enhanced connectivity.

“This vital aspect will be further explored during the upcoming 2024 Aviation Summit, the second leg of this series, which will leverage this success and chart a way forward for a comprehensive climb to higher heights in the country’s aviation sector,” said Motschmann.

The event is expected to include engaging presentations and panel discussions on the importance of meeting global standards for airport operations, capacity building of Filipino aircraft professionals, technicians, and mechanics through

training, and the role of the private sector and airlines in aviation development.

“Addressing the most pressing issues of the Philippine aviation sector requires concerted efforts and collaboration from all stakeholders involved,” said ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein. “The 2024 Aviation Summit presents an opportunity to highlight the power of partnership in driving progress in the industry and it underscores the commitment of the ECCP and its Aviation Committee to promote growth, sustainability, efficiency, and safety within the sector.”

Emphasizing the role of strategic partnerships, the ECCP and AsBAA had a ceremonial signing during a press conference held in Pasay City on Wednesday. Present as co-signees were Department of Transportation (DOTr) Undersecretary for Aviation and Airports Roberto Lim, Cebu Pacific Chief Strategist Officer Alex Reyes, and Philippine Airlines Vice President for Revenue Management Alex Featherstone.

“We collectively keep on our flight through the waypoints towards sustainable, safe and smart Philippine Aviation. As a sector, we all know we are here for the long-haul. The Aviation Summit is one of these annual waypoints, as One PH Aviation we can only go far if we go forward together,” said DOTr Undersecretary for Aviation and Airports Roberto Lim.

From the private sector, representatives from Philippine Airlines and Cebu Pacific emphasized the role of airlines as drivers of advancements in the aviation industry by fostering growth, implementing innovations, and improving the overall infrastructure and services within the sector.

“Over the years, the private sector has played a pivotal role in advancing the Philippine aviation industry, from infrastructure to air traffic management, safety standards and operational facilities,” said Cebu Pacific Strategy Officer Alex Reyes. “With this, Cebu Pacific is proud to be co-presenting the second Philippine Aviation Summit as we did last year. We are excited to take part in the mission to improve the country’s aviation sector and propel a new era of growth and development.”

“As the post-pandemic recovery in air travel continues, it is critical that the sector’s key stakeholders come together and look to the future, to ensure the long-term success of the industry, and the benefits that it brings to the people and economy of the Philippines,” added Alex Featherstone, Vice President for Revenue Management at Philippine Airlines. “For this reason, Philippine Airlines is proud to be supporting, and participating in, the 2024 Aviation Summit.”

The 2024 Aviation Summit is set to take place on 2-3 October 2024 at the Marriott Hotel Manila in Pasay City. The event promises to be a platform for robust dialogue, collaboration, and action, as industry leaders convene to propel the Philippine aviation sector towards greater heights.

Participants can register for the event by emailing avsummit@eccp.com.

The Aviation Summit is one of the Chamber’s biggest flagship advocacy events organized with its Aviation Committee.



Inside ECCP: Manila

Grit Coaching 20 March 2024

Powering teams through Grit Coaching!

Last March 20, the ECCP Competency Hub held a Face-to-Face training together with Venue Partner Spaces by IWG. The session, which tackled principles of grit coaching and strategies to enhance performance in the long run, was led by Spiderhook Learning President Jen Alava-Francisco.



Czech Business Delegation Courtesy Meeting with ECCP 21 March 2024

On 21 March 2024, a Czech Business Delegation had a Courtesy Meeting with the ECCP at the Makati Commerce Tower, for a discussion on the Philippine business landscape as well as economic prospects, among others. The said delegation is composed of representatives from various industries including agriculture, food and beverage, aviation, and water.

At the said meeting, ECCP President Paulo Duarte introduced ECCP and provided an overview of the business environment, while ING Philippines Senior Economist Nicholas Mapa shared his views on the Philippine Economic Outlook, and Du-Baladad and Associates (BDB Law) Founding Partner and CEO Atty. Benedicta Du-Baladad delivered a presentation on the Philippine Business/Legal Landscape.



ECCP Meeting with the Iloilo City Mayor's Office March 2024

During the 2024 Bacolod-Iloilo Business Mission, the ECCP along with its delegates had the honor of meeting with City of Iloilo Mayor Jerry Treñas.

The productive afternoon centered on lively discussions on new investment opportunities, as well as other areas of development for European companies and organizations.

Thank you for having us, Hon. Jerry P. Treñas!

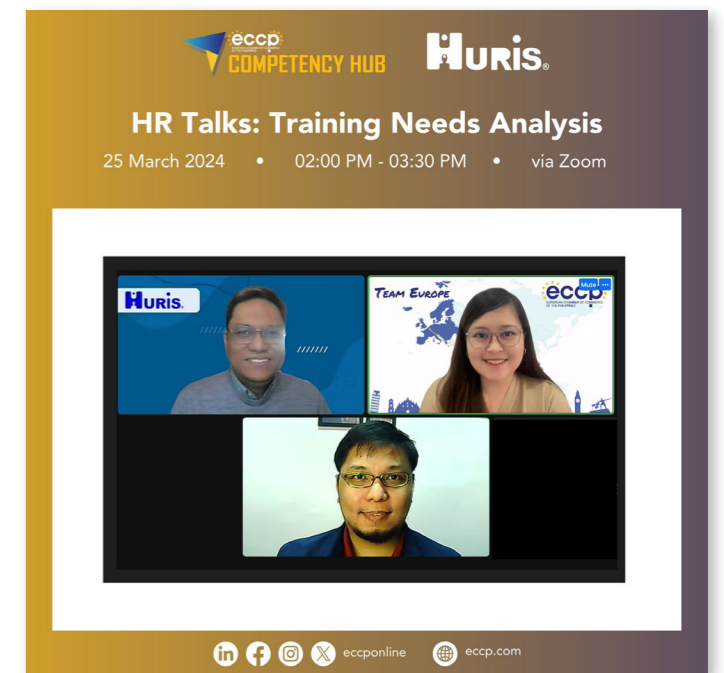


HR Talks: Training Needs Analysis 25 March 2024

How well does your organization implement learning and development?

To help companies and organizations address gaps in performance levels, the ECCP Competency Hub, in partnership with Human Resource Innovations and Solutions Inc. (HURIS Inc.), organized a 90-minute webinar entitled, "HR Talks: Training Needs Analysis".

Led by Allan Allas, AFPM, Consultant at HURIS, Inc., the session provided an overview of the Training Cycle with a special focus on Training Needs Analysis, and discussed the advantages and process of implementing a thorough workforce assessment.



ECCP Community Connect 2 April 2024

Last 02 April 2024, the ECCP held its first Community Connect of the year at Makati Commerce Tower.

Members kickstarted the event with vibrant introductions, which were followed by an insightful overview of the Chamber and its various departments, and the benefits of an ECCP membership.

Our session partners, Kerry Logistics, Phil Ecology Systems Corp., and Colliers Philippines, then shared invaluable insights into their work and respective industries. The event culminated in the presentation of membership certificates to our newest member companies.

The success of this event was made possible through the support of our venue partners Makati Commerce Tower and Colliers Philippines, and generous session partners Intellicare, Century Pacific Food, Inc., Kerry Logistics, LHH, Merck Life Science Philippines, Ocampo & Manalo Law Firm, Phil Ecology Systems Corp., Gardenia Philippines and The Farm at San Benito.

A heartfelt thank you to all our esteemed members, both new and longstanding, who graced the event. Here's to many more gatherings that inspire, connect, and propel us forward!



Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace 4 April 2024

Building and nurturing interpersonal relationships, both personally and professionally!

The ECCP Competency Hub held the Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace learning session last April 4 via ZOOM.

Led by Resource Hat Consultant Dr. Emmanuel Zara, Jr., PhD., the session explored Emotional Intelligence (EI) in the Workplace through the lens of Dr. Reuven Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence Framework.

Attended by HR professionals and managers in key leadership roles, participants learned the theory behind EI, and how to nurture its development within the workplace to generate positive results and enhance workplace stakeholder management.

Viral to Victorious: A Modern Guide on Digital Crisis Management 12 April 2024

Crisis management is not just about reacting—it's about strategic preparation and swift, decisive action!

Last April 12, the ECCP Competency Hub and digital marketing agency Black Sheep Digital tackled Digital Crisis Management in its latest Viral to Victorious program.

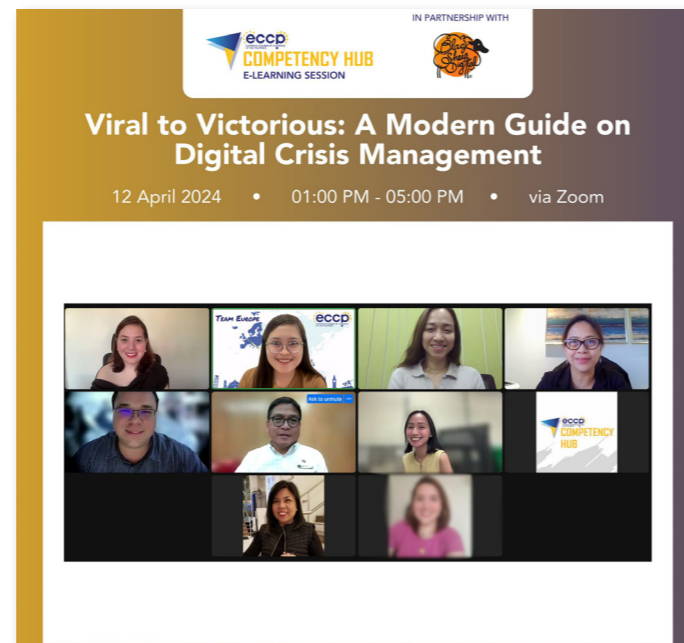
The workshop equipped marketing, communications, and public relations practitioners with the tools and knowledge needed to safeguard the reputation of their brand or organization. Through in-depth discussions, the class explored the nuances of crisis identification, response strategies, and effective communication tactics.

Bootcamp GenAI: Boosting Productivity with ChatGPT and Google's Gemini 16 & 17 April 2024

Last April 16 and 17, the ECCP Competency Hub and Premier Value Provider Inc. held the Bootcamp GenAI: Boosting Productivity with ChatGPT and Google's Gemini e-Learning session.

Guest speakers Jun Malacaman, leading IT expert and GenAI advocate, and Ross Villamil, an expert in leadership and HR consultancy focusing on workplace efficiency, immersed participants in the fundamentals of Generative AI and the capabilities of ChatGPT and Gemini in enhancing workplace productivity.

The Bootcamp course aimed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to leverage ChatGPT and Gemini efficiently in their workplace, and effectively promote a culture centered on innovation, productivity and continuous improvement.



ECCP Courtesy Visit with TMF Philippines 18 April 2024

Last April 18, the ECCP membership team met with TMF Philippines to touch base on current plans and goals and explore mutual opportunities for growth and collaboration.

TMF Group helps global companies expand and invest seamlessly across international borders. Its expert accountants and legal, HR and payroll professionals are located around the world, helping clients to operate their corporate structures, finance vehicles and investments in different locations.



ECCP Luncheon Meeting with the Executive Director for Public-Private Partnership Center, Hon. Ma. Cynthia Hernandez 18 April 2024

On April 18, 2024, the ECCP organized a Luncheon Meeting with the Executive Director for Public-Private Partnership Center, Hon. Ma. Cynthia Hernandez.

During her keynote speech, Executive Director Hernandez provided updates on the PPP Center's plans and priorities for 2024, the newly enacted PPP Code of the Philippines, and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

This was followed by an open forum featuring panelists DivinaLaw Senior Partner Atty. Jose Layug Jr., Manila Water Company Head of Enterprise Regulatory Group for the East Zone Atty. Jo Kristine Celera, and ECCP Director and General Manager of Roche Philippines Dr. Diana Edralin.

Also present to give the welcoming remarks and a message on an EU perspective on PPPs and their impact on the Philippine Development Goals were ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and Minister Counsellor and Head of the Economic and Trade Section of the Delegation of the European Union in the Philippines Philipp Dupuis, respectively.

Our profound gratitude extends to Mikael Zialcita, Multinationals Relationship Manager of HSBC Philippines, for hosting the event. Additionally, we express our appreciation to Michael Arcatomy Guarin, Head of Deal Advisory of KPMG Philippines, for facilitating engaging discussions as our moderator, as well as to all our attendees and guests. We look forward to seeing you again in our upcoming events!



Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) Clark International Mixer

23 April 2024

What a great turnout at the Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) Clark International Mixer!

Held for the first time in Clark at the Clark Marriott Hotel, the Mixer brought together members of different foreign chambers for an evening filled with lively conversations, valuable connections, and exciting possibilities.

We hope everyone had a great time networking!



ECCP Meeting with Ms. Nikki Tang, CEO & Founder of DMark Multisales Corporation

24 April 2024

Last April 24, the ECCP Membership team met with Ms. Nikki Tang of DMark Multisales Corporation, a pioneer and leading distributor of dermocosmetics and health beauty and aesthetic medical devices.

The meeting highlighted shared goals and opportunities for collaboration. We look forward to future endeavors together, especially in the beauty, health and wellness space!



ECCP Meeting with Colliers Philippines

24 April 2024

Thrilled to have visited Colliers Philippines yesterday!

The ECCP Membership team had insightful conversations with Ms. Patricia Cruz, Associate Director for Commercial Real Estate of Colliers Philippines, on shared goals and opportunities for collaboration.

Thank you for always graciously hosting us, Colliers! Looking forward to building an even stronger partnership!



Understanding the Philippine-Business Landscape: A Briefing on Customs Challenges, the Ease of Paying Taxes and CREATE MORE

24 April 2024

On April 24, 2024, the ECCP Competency Hub, together with the Customs and Logistics Committee and Tax & Financial Services Committee, organized the event, "Understanding the Philippine-Business Landscape: A Briefing on Customs Challenges, the Ease of Paying Taxes and CREATE MORE."

The two-hour briefing was led by esteemed speakers from SGV & Co., namely Atty. Cheryl Edeline Ong, Tax Partner, ASEAN Tax Transformation Leader, and Philippine Quantitative Services Leader; Josenilo Mendoza, Tax and GCR Partner; and Atty. Lucil Vicerra, Indirect Tax & Customs Leader.

The event was attended by professionals from diverse backgrounds who gained insights into the Enhanced on Paying Taxes (EOPT) Act, the CREATE MORE Bill's relevant incentives, and tips for effectively navigating customs challenges and issues.

We extend our gratitude to Atty. Alden Labaguis, Vice Chair of the ECCP's Tax and Financial Services Committee, for hosting the event. Our appreciation goes out as well to all participants and guests who contributed to the success of the session!

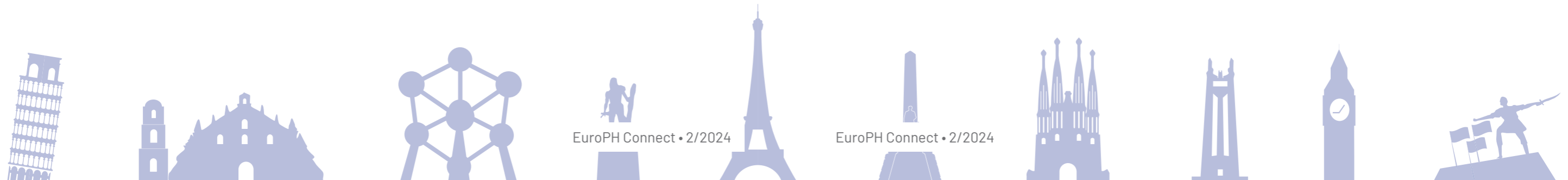


ECCP courtesy visit with GSE Law Firm

29 April 2024

Last April 29, the ECCP Membership team had the privilege of meeting with GSE Law, represented by its Partner Atty. Pia Isabel O. Co. The productive session delved into potential collaborations and explored avenues for mutual growth and partnership.

Stay tuned as we work together to pave the way for new opportunities in the European-Philippine business landscape!



Applied Neuroscience for the Workplace 30 April 2024

Last April 30, the ECCP Competency Hub and training partner Accelerate2Excellence held the Applied Neuroscience for the Workplace full-day program at Dusit Thani Manila.

Designed to boost self-improvement and career development, the session provided participants with the latest knowledge on how the inner workings of the brain can influence behaviour and actions, as well as new skills on how to rewire the brain for more empowered performance and leadership at work.

Leading the session was esteemed speaker Nigel Gordon Kissaun, Management Consultant and Executive Coach at A2E, who provided participants with novel and practical approaches to help leaders, managers, and employees leverage their brain at work.



ECCP Team Meeting with ACEN Renewable Energy Solutions 2 May 2024

Last May 2, the ECCP team met with ACEN Renewable Energy Solutions, a leader in renewable energy innovation under the Ayala Group.

Present from the group were Jose Antonio "Tony" Valdez, Senior VP and Head of Market Transformation, along with Assistant Vice President Shiela Mina, Senior Account Manager for Commercial Operations Patrick Ryan Pondevida, and Account Manager for Commercial Operations Diane Ray Tongco. The discussion centered on potential opportunities in the renewable energy sector, especially considering ACEN RES' vision and goal for a greener, more sustainable future for our planet.

It was truly enlightening to hear about their commitment to sustainability and the transformative impact of their initiatives. Thank you for having us ACEN RES!



European Investors Night 6 May 2024

Exciting times ahead for European-Philippine business relations!

Following the 2024 European-Philippine Business Dialogue, the ECCP and the EU-ASEAN Business Council jointly organized the European Investors' Night with Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin, representing President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., as our guest of honor.

President Marcos, in a message read by Secretary Bersamin, reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening the longstanding relations between Europe and the Philippines, especially for "continued EU investment in key sectors aligned with innovation and sustainability such as in renewable energy, and electronics manufacturing that leverage on the strengths of Philippines' exports."

We extend our special thanks to Secretary Bersamin for gracing our event, to Hon. Frederick Go for introducing Secretary Bersamin, as well as to ECCP President Paulo Duarte and EU-ASEAN Business Council Treasurer Ms. Sharon Toh for their inspiring messages during the event.

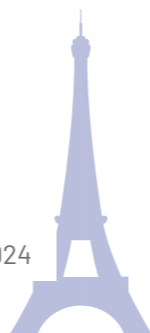
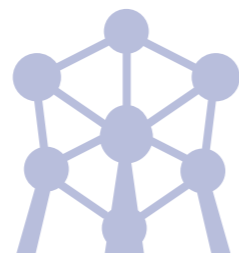
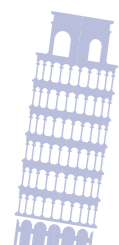


ECCP Meeting with Quasha Law 6 May 2024

We had such an enlightening time at Quasha Law!

Last May 6, the ECCP Membership Team had the privilege of meeting with Quasha Law, one of the oldest and most esteemed law firms in the Philippines. Partners Atty. Nilo B. Peña, Atty. Joel Raymmond R. Ayson, and Atty. Ma Chere Reyes and Senior Associate Atty. Jasmine M. Jimenez graciously welcomed us and shared valuable insights into the firm's practice areas, history, and advocacies.

Quasha Law specializes in a wide range of practice areas including Corporate, Taxation, Commercial Transactions, Investments, Insurance, Banking and Financial Services, Family Law, Contracts, Intellectual Property, Labor and Employment, Immigration, Natural Resources, Litigation, and Appellate.



ECCP Meeting with Mondelēz Philippines 8 May 2024

On May 8, the ECCP membership team paid a courtesy visit to Global snacking company Mondelēz Philippines at their head office in Parañaque City. The team was welcomed by Corporate and Government Affairs lead Caitlin Punzalan.

The meeting served as grounds for exciting discussions on potential ventures within the dynamic food and beverage sector. Cheers to growing partnerships that are sure to drive growth and success in the European-Philippine business community!

Mondelēz Philippines Inc. has been providing consumers with delicious snack products for the past 58 years - since 1963.



Legal Essentials: Applying the Labor Code in Employee Discipline (2nd Run) 10 May 2024

The ECCP Competency Hub held the much-awaited 2nd run of the Legal Essentials: Applying the Labor Code in Employee Discipline e-Learning program.

Together with HURIS Inc. consultants Edgardo "Jun" Mendoza, Jr. and Albert Entao, Jr., the session delved into the foundational principles of the Philippine Labor Code and its application in the disciplinary process.

From workplace standards to employee rights and termination protocols, the class also provided insights to fostering compliant and harmonious work environments.



ECCP Courtesy Visit to P&A Grant Thornton 13 May 2024

The ECCP membership team had a courtesy visit to P&A Grant Thornton to engage in fruitful discussions on exploring opportunities for collaboration. Both organizations identified common goals and potential areas where their combined expertise could lead to positive outcomes for the European-Philippine business community.

During the visit, the ECCP met with Ms. Rina Rodriguez, Business Development Supervisor, and Ms. Marose Anatalio, Business Development Director.

Since 1988, P&A Grant Thornton has been establishing corporate milestones with its loyal clients, which has helped assert itself as a leading professional services firm in the country.



ECCP MOU Signing with National University Laguna as Advocacy Partner for Race to Net Zero Philippines 14 May 2024

In a significant move to combat climate change in the country, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) has entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National University Laguna (NUL). This collaboration marks a crucial development in the "Race to Net Zero Philippines" campaign, with the aim of accelerating the global Race to Zero initiative through local efforts.

The MOU signing event, held at the NUL Inspire Academy Lounge, featured key figures from both organizations. Representing NUL were Dr. Narro R. Navarro, Assistant Director for Academe-Industry Linkage; Dr. Josefina G. San Miguel, Senior Academic Director; Benjamin F. Uichico, Managing Director; and Jose Ricardo SA. Ocampo, Senior Director for Administration. ECCP was represented by Executive Director Florian Gottein and Dawn Cabigon, General Manager of Fairs and More Inc. The event also welcomed participation from NUL student scholars.

In his message, Mr. Florian Gottein emphasized the significance of this new partnership and its role in helping create an enabling environment for net-zero implementation. "Today marks the beginning of a synergistic relationship that propels us toward a common objective: the Race to Net Zero. This initiative represents an investment in our future, aligning academia and industry to address the pressing challenge of climate change," he said.

The "Race to Net Zero Philippines," led by ECCP, aims to amplify the global Race to Zero campaign. It focuses on building support, encouraging participation, and enhancing the capacity of local actors to drive meaningful change toward net-zero emissions, in line with efforts to halve emissions by 2030 and contribute to a healthier, fairer, and net-zero world.



2024 Aviation Summit Press Conference 15 May 2024

On May 15, the ECCP and the Asian Business Aviation Association (AsBAA) jointly organized the 2024 Aviation Summit Press Conference at the Manila Ballroom, Marriott Hotel Manila, Pasay City.

The conference brought together industry leaders and key partners of the Chamber to officially announce the launch of the 2024 installment of the Aviation Summit. Building on the success of the inaugural Summit held in 2023, this year's event aims to focus on aviation's pivotal role in Philippine economic progress and push for advocacies that foster sustainable development within the sector.

The speakers in attendance were DOTr Undersecretary for Aviation and Airports Hon. Roberto Lim, Cebu Pacific Chief Strategy Officer Mr. Alex Reyes, Philippine Airlines Vice President for Revenue Management Alex Featherstone, and AsBAA Vice Chairperson Mr. Maximilian Motschmann. The event was moderated by ECCP Aviation Committee Co-Chairperson Atty. Manolito "Mannix" Manalo, with Atty. Marvin Masangkay, Co-Chairperson of the ECCP Aviation Committee, serving as the master of ceremonies.



Emphasizing the role of strategic partnerships, the ECCP and AsBAA had a ceremonial signing with representatives from the DOTr, Cebu Pacific and Philippine Airlines.

"We collectively keep on our flight through the waypoints towards sustainable, safe and smart Philippine Aviation. As a sector, we all know we are here for the long-haul. The Aviation Summit is one of these annual waypoints, as One PH Aviation we can only go far if we go forward together," said DOTr Undersecretary for Aviation and Airports Roberto Lim.

Stay tuned as we release more updates on the 2024 Aviation Summit. Visit <https://eccp.glueup.com/event/2024-aviation-summit-107877/> to learn more.

7th ECCP Board Meeting 16 May 2024

The ECCP Board of Directors recently convened for the 7th ECCP Board Meeting of 2024 to facilitate discussions on key industry updates and chamber plans. Topics covered included the upcoming Annual General Membership Meeting, updates on Chamber activities across the regions, and strategic initiatives for the year.

Hosted by Premium Member Republic Cement, the meeting provided a platform for robust dialogue and strategic planning to drive the European-Philippine business community forward.

In attendance (from L-R) were ECCP Director for Projects, Events, and Training Gerry Constantino, Michael Page Philippines Regional Director & Country Head Albert Perez, Republic Cement Services, Inc.



CEO and ECCP Vice President Roman Menz, Roche Philippines General Manager Dr. Diana Edralin, Bosch Philippines Inc. Managing Director and ECCP President Paulo Duarte, ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein, HSBC Philippines Director and Head of Multinationals and International Subsidiaries Banking and ECCP Treasurer Jonathan Webster, and Associate Director for Strategic Partnerships and Communications Gen Anaquita.

ECCP Courtesy Visit to the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines 16 May 2024

Underscoring our commitment to fostering strong relationships and mutual cooperation with our international partners, the ECCP paid a courtesy visit to the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines.

During the catch-up meeting, the parties discussed recent events, and ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein presented a copy of the ECCP's 2024 Advocacy Papers to Celine Fürst, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines.

Also in attendance were Kent Marjun Primor, Head of Economic and Trade Advisory, and Gen Anaquita, ECCP Associate Director for Strategic Partnerships and Communications.



Effective Business Writing 17 May 2024

Mastering the art of effective professional communication!

The ECCP Competency Hub is thrilled to share the success of its e-Learning session, "Effective Business Writing: Professionalizing Your Communication Skills," held last 17 May 2024 via ZOOM.

The event navigated the key approaches for effective business and aided participants in improving and refining their professional writing skills. The session also highlighted key aspects of effective business writing such as grammar, redundancy, sentence unity, and uniformity.



ECCP Courtesy Visit to the Embassy of the Netherlands in the Philippines 20 May 2024

The ECCP paid a courtesy visit to the Embassy of the Netherlands in the Philippines on 20 May 2024.

In the recent meeting, ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and ECCP Treasurer Jonathan Webster presented a copy of the ECCP's 2024 Advocacy Papers to the Dutch delegation, led by Her Excellency Marielle Geraedts. The meeting also focused on potential opportunities to enhance cooperation and bilateral relations between the Philippines and the Kingdom of Netherlands.



2024 ECCP Annual General Membership Meeting

22 May 2024

And that's a wrap! The 2024 ECCP Annual General Membership Meeting and Sunset Socials held last 22 May 2024 at Ascott BGC, celebrated another milestone of collective achievements, innovative partnerships, and economic growth.

The European-Philippine business community's leadership and members came together for a productive afternoon to discuss the past year and celebrate another year of business relations and strong partnerships. Celebrating past successes, the event projected an active path to thrive for future wins, nurturing strong ties and shaping business development and investment.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed guest keynote speaker, Hon. Tereso O. Panga, Director-General of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) for gracing the event.

ECCP Meeting with Development Bank of the Philippines

23 May 2024

ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and ECCP Southern Mindanao Business Council Chairperson Tony Peralta recently met with Development Bank of the Philippines' President and CEO Michael De Jesus on 23 May 2024.

During the meeting, the parties discussed possible partnership opportunities, recognized common goals, and identified potential areas for collaboration. They also highlighted shared interests and areas where the business communities in the Philippines and Europe can mutually benefit.



To view the photos, please visit this link: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBrDE9>

Photos courtesy of our friends from Eastern Communications.

Cheers to another year of partnership and shared successes between the European and Philippine business communities!



THAIFEX-Anuga Asia

28 May - 1 June 2024

Exciting times at THAIFEX-Anuga Asia in Bangkok!

ECCP's subsidiary FMI - Fairs & More, Inc. General Manager Dawn Cabigon and International Trade Fairs Associate Naomi Rivera proudly represented the Philippines in Thaixex Anuga Asia 2024 alongside PHILFOODEX, Department of Trade & Industry (DTI), and the Department of Agriculture (DA). With the presence of H.E. Millicent Cruz Paredes and other distinguished guests, they also celebrated the 75th Anniversary of PH-TH Diplomatic Relations.

In the ribbon cutting ceremony, invited guests gave their short messages for the Philippines' participation in Thaixex. Invited guests who shared their messages are Mr. Philip Young (Special Assistant to the Secretary for Agro Export Development) who represented Hon. Francisco Tiu Laurel (Secretary, DA), Jr., Usec. Ma. Cristina Roque representing Hon. Alfredo E. Pascual (Secretary of DTI), H.E. Millicent Cruz Paredes (Ambassador, Embassy of the Philippines to the Kingdom of Thailand), and Mr. Ruben See (President, PHILFOODEX Inc.).



On the tradeshow floor, 25 companies under the Country Pavilion and Six exhibitors are joining in their respective sectors of organic food, beverages, and fine food to represent the Philippines in the international stage, including brands such as Marigold Manufacturing Corporation, Innovative Packaging Industry Corporation, Pacific Synergy Food & Beverage Corp, International Market Brands, Prime Global Corporation, and Miesto International Foods Corporation.

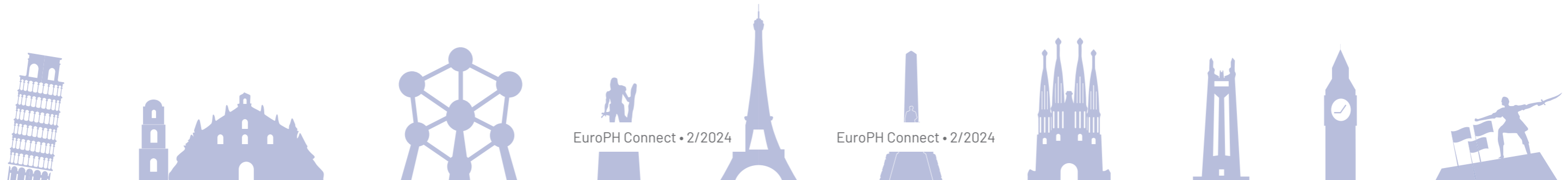
ECCP Courtesy Visit with Willis Towers Watson

29 May 2024

ECCP once again reaffirmed its commitment to fostering partnerships through a courtesy visit to the Willis Towers Watson last 29 May 2024. ECCP met with Ms. Marian Albano, Sales Operations Lead Associate.

Representatives from both parties engaged in discussions on recent events and identified areas of common ground and potential avenues for collaboration. This visit underscores the ECCP's dedication to building connections that drive business growth and collaboration.

Founded in 2016, Willis Towers Watson offers risk, insurance, and consulting solutions to multinational companies, government and non-government institutions and private individuals globally.



ECCP Meeting with Quisumbing Torres Law Firm
29 May 2024

Underscoring the value of partnerships in building a stronger European-Philippine business environment, ECCP had a productive meeting with Quisumbing Torres Law Firm last 29 May 2024.

Both parties discussed common goals and areas where their expertise can create a more supportive environment for foreign businesses in the Philippines.

The meeting participants (from L-R) were Ms. Myrene Mallari, Proposal, Experience & Publications Manager; Ms. Gen Anaquita, ECCP Associate Director for Strategic Partnerships and Communications; Atty. Ma. Luisa Fernandez-Guina, Partner; Ms. Canela Reilo, ECCP Member Relations Associate; Ms. Ma. Therese Reyes, Business Development & Marketing and Communications Manager; and Ms. Andrea Manalac, Senior Coordinator for Business Development, Marketing and Communications.

Established in 1963, Quisumbing Torres has a long-standing reputation for advising successful businesses both in the Philippines and internationally.



ECCP Courtesy Visit to the Asian Institute of Management
30 May 2024

ECCP made a courtesy visit to the Asian Institute of Management last 30 May 2024.

Representatives of both sides discussed recent developments and points for cooperation, upholding ECCP's mission of promoting business growth and collaboration.

Present at the meeting (from L-R) were Ms. Claire Angeline Cruz, AIM Relationship Manager; Ms. Gen Anaquita, ECCP Associate Director for Strategic Partnerships & Communications; Ms. Canela Reilo, Member Relations Associate, and Mr. Patrick Lian Esplana, AIM Associate.

Asian Institute of Management was founded in 1968 with the mission of developing professional managers who could lead businesses and organizations in Asia.



Inside ECCP: Cebu

ISO/TS 22002 Prerequisite Programmes (PRPs) on Food Safety Awareness Training and Understanding & Implementing Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Training
28 February - 1 March 2024

Recognizing the need to equip organizations in the food industry with the tools and expertise to ensure safety and quality food products, the ECCP Competency Hub and ECCP Cebu held the ISO/TS 22002 Prerequisite Programmes (PRPs) on Food Safety Awareness Training and Understanding & Implementing Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Training at the Bellevue Resort in Panglao last February 28 to March 1.

The session, which placed a crucial emphasis on achieving excellence in food safety, was organized in partnership with Bureau Veritas Philippines, and Bottega 8920 Architectural Studio.

During the three-day workshop, attending participants not only gained a deep understanding of essential prerequisite programs (PRPs) related to food safety, but also acquired the knowledge and skills to implement hazard control measures effectively.



SEC Capital Formation with MSMEs and Startups
7 March 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), in collaboration with the Securities and Exchange Commission Philippines (SEC), held the Tagbilaran Roadshow on Capital Formation for MSMEs and Startups on March 7, 2024, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Bohol Tropics Resorts in Tagbilaran City. The event aimed to empower Micro-, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups by disseminating valuable knowledge and fostering access to diverse capital market financing options. Spearheaded by the SEC's Office for the Advancement of Strategic Investments in SMEs (OASIS), the roadshow offered insightful plenary and breakout sessions featuring esteemed speakers from Investree Philippines, Round One, the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), and the Investment & Capital Corporation of the Philippines (ICCP).



Melt and Freeze: The Secrets to Sustainable Mindset Change in the Philippines

19 March 2024

On March 19, the ECCP Cebu in partnership with Kaizen Leadership Asia organized the Melt and Freeze: The Secrets to Sustainable Mindset Change in the Philippines pocket learning session at the Golden Prince Hotel, Cebu City.

During the workshop, esteemed speakers Mike Grogan and Angela Schloer shared their expertise on the topic by offering practical solutions and inspiring anecdotes on how to relinquish outdated workplace beliefs and instead embrace more sustainable practices.

From unraveling the cultural intricacies impeding business growth in the Philippines to unveiling stories of resilience and innovation, every moment was a testament to our collective commitment to progress.



Complete Warehouse Management Course

20-22 March 2024

From March 20-22, the ECCP Cebu and ECCP Competency Hub, in collaboration with Bureau Veritas Philippines, held insightful sessions on the world of warehouse management.

Featuring speaker Jaime Pacheco Agapor, MBA, the event tackled topics spanning fundamental warehouse roles to advanced strategies. Attendees also gained insights into warehouse technology, safety, inventory, and cost management.

This comprehensive course equipped participants with essential skills within their operations and fostered dedication to warehouse management excellence!



How to Develop an Impactful and Sustainable Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy for Business Success (Session 2)

26 March 2024

The ECCP Cebu and the ECCP Competency Hub, in collaboration with I-AM Consulting, recently concluded the second session of its "How to Develop an Impactful and Sustainable Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy for Business Success (Session 2)" workshop last 26 March 2024 via Zoom.

Led by Ms. Maria Wilvenna Añora, the training equipped attendees with the essential tools and insights needed to create a comprehensive CSR strategy that not only aligns with business goals but also contributes meaningfully to the global SDGs.

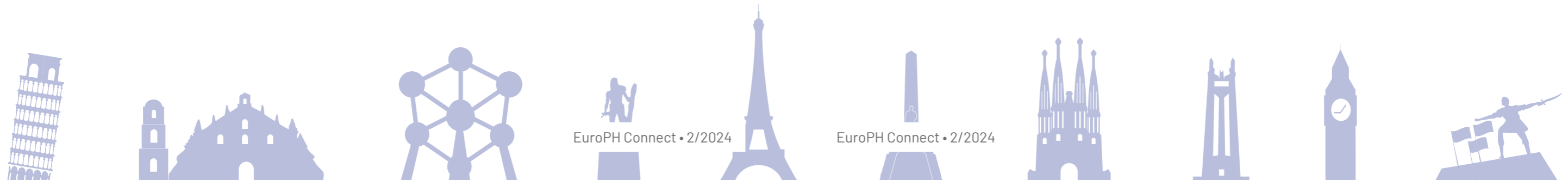
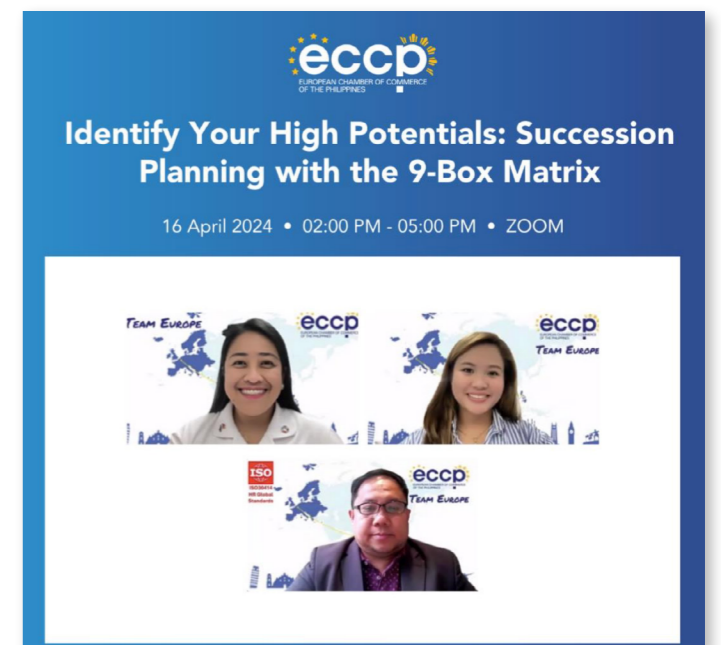


Identify for High Potential: Succession Planning with 9-Box Matrix

16 April 2024

On April 16, the ECCP Cebu organized the Identify for High Potential: Succession Planning with 9-Box Matrix webinar with key speaker, Mr. Juan Paolo Arao.

The session facilitated a discussion on how companies and employers can fully utilize the 9-box framework in assessing and developing employee performance and potential. The webinar also highlighted actionable steps and strategies to retain employees, such as mentorship, leadership development programs, and creating clear career paths for future leaders.



Empowering Your Financial Wellbeing: A Deep Dive into Employee Benefits

30 April 2024

To celebrate National Labor Day, the ECCP Cebu organized the Empowering Your Financial Wellbeing: A Deep Dive into Employee Benefits webinar, featuring a keynote speech on the importance of Filipino workers from DOLE Secretary Bienvenido E. Laguesma, last April 30 via Zoom.

Through engaging discussions, participants gained a better understanding of their employee benefits, healthcare, and retirement plans, as well as various employee perks and strategies impacting their financial well-being. The session left attendees feeling empowered to make sound and informed decisions and guide them toward financial stability and prosperity.

Our esteemed speakers from different industry experts also emphasized the significance of supporting employees in understanding their full benefits package and leveraging it for long-term financial security. They discussed the intricacies of employee benefits, including healthcare plans, retirement options, stocks, and other perks.



European Chamber of Commerce Strengthens Collaboration with Cebu City Government

20 May 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Cebu Chapter, led by Executive Director Florian Gottein and ECCP Cebu Business Council Co-Chairperson Marc Cools, recently conducted a courtesy visit with Acting Cebu City Mayor Atty. Raymond Alvin Garcia at the Cebu City Legislative Hall.

This productive meeting served a multifaceted purpose. Firstly, it facilitated the introduction of the newly appointed ECCP Cebu Business Council Leaders. Secondly, it provided a comprehensive overview of the Chamber's offerings, including its suite of services, upcoming events, and key advocacy initiatives. Finally, the meeting fostered dialogue and exploration of potential areas for collaborative efforts between the ECCP and the Cebu City government.

Discussions centered on aligning with Cebu City's vision of becoming a smart city and the Chamber's



commitment to fostering a business environment that attracts both European and local investors. This positive engagement signifies a strengthened partnership between the ECCP Cebu and the Cebu City government. The collaboration paves the way for future initiatives that will benefit the business community and contribute to Cebu City's continued economic development.

ECCP Cebu had a courtesy visit with the JEG Realty Corp, Maternelle Academy, and Former Presidential Assistant for the Visayas of the Philippines Mr. Michael Lloyd Dino

20 & 21 May 2024

On May 20, 2024, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Cebu led by ECCP Executive Director Mr. Florian Gottein, conducted a courtesy visit to Maternelle Academy. Representing Maternelle Academy were School Director Mr. Ramon Sanchez-Cui, PhD, and French Language Director Ms. Valerie Vergine Cui, PhD.

The productive discussions centered on the ECCP's value proposition for potential members. Mr. Gottein provided an overview of the chamber's membership offerings, extensive business network, upcoming events, and key advocacy initiatives. The visit explored the potential for a mutually beneficial partnership between the ECCP and Maternelle Academy which highlights valuable opportunities for community integration and growth, particularly in the area of foreign language training and development.

Further enriching the discussion was the presence of University President Engr. Bernard Nicolas Villamor, PECE, EMBA, representing the Cebu Institute of Technology - University. This broader participation highlights the potential for collaboration across various sectors within the Cebu business community.

In a move that signifies a significant step towards a more sustainable Cebu, the ECCP Cebu Business Council met with representatives from JEG Realty Corp. on May 21st for a productive courtesy visit. Discussions centered around potential collaborative efforts to propel green building initiatives within the city.

JEG Realty Corp., renowned for its dedication to sustainable development practices, seeks to further solidify its role in advocating for environmentally responsible construction methods. This recent visit paves the way for a strategic partnership that will integrate JEG Realty Corp.'s green building expertise with Cebu's overarching sustainability objectives. Through this collaborative approach, both parties aim to foster a future of environmentally responsible urban development in Cebu.

In a continuation of efforts to strengthen community engagement and explore collaborative pathways, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Cebu Team, led by Co-Chairman Mr. Marc Cools, convened with Mr. Michael Lloyd Dino, former Presidential Assistant for the Visayas. The discussions centered on fostering potential membership within



the ECCP and identifying synergistic opportunities that would contribute to Cebu's economic growth, bolster tourism development, and ensure strong alignment with the community's overall development plans. This meeting exemplifies Mr. Dino's unwavering commitment to driving positive change and prosperity in Cebu and the surrounding islands.

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) fosters a strong network of stakeholders, enabling it to provide exceptional support to its member companies. ECCP achieves this by facilitating market access and advocating for a balanced business environment that benefits both European and Filipino companies. We are deeply appreciative of our successful member companies who actively contribute to initiatives that enhance market access for European businesses, ultimately promoting long-term economic prosperity for the Philippines.

ECCP Cebu and Spring Rain Global discuss future collaborations

20 May 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) had a productive dialogue with Spring Rain Global last May 20, 2024. ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and Cebu Branch Officer Jillian Sitchon engaged in meaningful discussions with Spring Rain Global CEO, Dr. Glenda Miro Antonio which marks a pivotal step towards advancing mutual goals of sustainable development and philanthropy. The discussion also highlighted ECCP's and Spring Rain's commitment to promoting environmental sustainability, corporate social responsibility, and community development programs.



European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Cebu Chapter, Strengthens Ties with Cebu Provincial Government

21 May 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Cebu (ECCP Cebu), recently held a productive meeting with the Honorable Glenn Soco, Provincial Board Member of Cebu and Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Commerce.

This courtesy visit served to solidify existing relationships and explore potential avenues for collaboration between ECCP Cebu and the Provincial Government. Led by ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein, the chamber presented a detailed overview of its newly appointed business council leadership, established business network, upcoming events, and successful advocacy initiatives.

The discussions fostered a valuable exchange of ideas and insights, focusing on key areas such as investment



promotion within the province and streamlining business operations in Cebu. This paves the way for potential future collaborations between ECCP Cebu and the Provincial Board, aiming to create a more favorable environment for both foreign and local businesses in the region.

ECCP Cebu Strengthens Collaboration with Office of the Presidential Assistant for the Visayas

21 May 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Cebu recently undertook a productive visit to the Office of the Presidential Assistant for the Visayas (OPAV). The delegation, led by ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein, met with Assistant Secretary Antonio J. Veloso, Jr. to explore collaborative efforts and identify areas of synergy in their advocacy initiatives.

Discussions centered on fostering a more conducive business environment throughout the Visayas region. The ECCP Cebu delegation expressed their commitment to promoting not only an easier operating landscape for European companies but also for local businesses, with the aim of establishing a truly inclusive economic ecosystem. The delegation also presented their recent advocacy achievements and shared updates on the chamber's activities over the past quarter.



This underscored their unwavering dedication to driving positive economic and business developments within the Visayas.

This courtesy visit signifies a positive step towards a strengthened partnership between the ECCP Cebu and the OPAV, paving the way for collaborative efforts that will ultimately benefit the Visayan business community.

European Chamber and Mactan-Cebu Airport Authority Forge Strategic Partnership to Drive Cebu's Economic Growth and Sustainable Development

21 May 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) and the Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority (MCI AA) recently solidified their commitment to a collaborative partnership focused on propelling Cebu's economic development and solidifying its position as a premier tourist destination.

During a courtesy visit on May 21, 2024, the ECCP Cebu Business Council led by Executive Director Florian Gottein to MCI AA General Manager Julius Neri, discussions centered on leveraging ECCP's extensive network of European companies. This collaboration aims to introduce and implement innovative, eco-friendly technologies within MCI AA's operations. This strategic partnership has the potential to significantly reduce the airport's environmental impact by minimizing its carbon footprint and energy consumption, fostering a more sustainable business environment within the aviation sector. By embracing these practices, MCI AA can set a compelling benchmark for other industries and airports across the region.



The collaboration between ECCP and MCI AA is also poised to strengthen connectivity between the Philippines and Europe. Improved air linkages will not only encourage trade but also generate a significant increase in passenger and cargo traffic, thereby bolstering the local economy.

This collaborative effort between ECCP and MCI AA signifies a significant step towards a more prosperous and environmentally responsible future for Cebu. By working together, these organizations can ensure that Cebu not only thrives economically but also emerges as a leader in sustainable tourism practices.



Inside ECCP: CDO

ECCP Pays Courtesy Visit to the PHIVIDEC-IA Administrator

14 April 2024

Last April 15, 2024 – ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and ECCP Northern Mindanao Business Council Chairman Jaime Rafael Paguio visited Atty. Joseph J. Bernedo, Administrator/CEO of PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority (PHIVIDEC-IA). The meeting, attended by ECCP Northern Mindanao CDO Branch Officer Joanne Natindim and PHIVIDEC-IA Business Development Division Manager A. Hyessa S. Suegay, focused on bolstering partnerships between PHIVIDEC-IA and ECCP. They discussed strategies to attract more investors to the estate, capitalizing on the promising business landscape of Misamis Oriental and conveying the message that Mindanao, indeed, is a promising and safe place for global investments. Atty. Bernedo's recent appointment as the ECCP Northern Mindanao Business Council Vice-Chairman for Membership and Development underscores the commitment to expanding membership and promoting development initiatives in the region.



ECCP Membership Rounds to St. Michael's College of Iligan City

16 April 2024

On April 16, ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and ECCP Northern Mindanao Branch Officer Joanne Natindim visited St. Michael's College in Iligan City for talks on the status of EU-Philippine relations, employment trends, and prospects for Filipino graduates in Europe. The discussion also explored future collaborations and possible areas of partnership to enhance global education initiatives across Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Mindanao.



Connections & Canapés: Leveraging Opportunities in ECCP

15 April 2024

Held last April 15 at Don Pacifico Events Place in Cagayan de Oro City, the Connections & Canapés: Leveraging Opportunities in ECCP networking socials brought together professionals from various sectors to connect, exchanged perspectives, and cultivated meaningful relationships. The event served not only as a platform for networking but also as an avenue for individuals to discover and delve into possibilities within the vibrant European-Philippine business landscape. The evening underscored the strengthening bond of ECCP in the area, reflecting a positive advancement grounded on trust, mutual regard, and a shared aspiration for Mindanao and the country's prosperity!

The sponsors also played a crucial role in making the event a success: First Community Cooperative and the PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority as the Gold Partners, Eastern Communications as the Silver Partner, Converge ICT Solutions Inc. as the Bronze Partner, Radeberger Pilsner, Schöfferhofer and San Miguel Beer as the Beverage Partners, and JM Sheng Photography as the Coverage Partner.



ECCP Northern Mindanao Membership Rounds to Iligan City LGU

16 April 2024

ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein and ECCP Northern Mindanao Branch Officer Joanne Natindim visited the Iligan City LGU last April 16, 2024, to engage with the City Administration officials handling its Internal and International Linkages Section, and the Iligan Investments Incentives and Promotions Center. Known as the "City of Majestic Waterfalls" and the industrial powerhouse of Mindanao, Iligan offers a promising environment for business and investment in Northern Mindanao. With the proactive leadership under Mayor Frederick Siao, the city is emphasizing digitalization and attracting foreign investments. The City is currently enhancing its digital infrastructure and connectivity to draw more businesses, showcasing incentives such as up to 9 years of Tax Holidays on Real Property Taxes and Business Taxes for new and existing enterprises. Furthermore, in July 2024, the Iligan LGU and ECCP Northern Mindanao will collaborate on an Investment Expo to highlight Iligan's economic potential.



ECCP Northern Mindanao Conducts Another Forum on Education Advancement and Internationalization

10 May 2024

Last May 10, 2024, the ECCP Northern Mindanao organized the Education Advancement: Integrating Strategies in Developing Internationalization. The lineup of speakers were Ms. Sherryl J. Urdaneta, Head of the Center for Linkages, Internationalization & Language Studies of the Holy Cross of Davao College, Dr. Korsiney Cabasis, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs of St. Michael's College, Dr. Shiella Balbutin, the Office of the International Cooperation Networking Director of Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan and Dr. Lory Bulay-og, the Vice-President for Global Engagement and Quality Assurance of the University of Science and Technology of the Southern Philippines. All esteemed speakers provided insightful presentations eager to



be of contribution to the aspiring HEIs who is about to elevate their internationalization efforts. From best practices to key recommendations, the event was the suitable platform for integrating fruitful exchanges and knowledge sharing.

The event was hosted by ECCP Northern Mindanao member – St. Michael's College.

ECCP Takes Part in DOT's Philippine Experience Program

23 - 25 May 2024

The ECCP NorthMin had the pleasure of participating into the 3-day culture, heritage and arts caravan called the Philippine Experience Program which stands as a flagship event under the current administration orchestrated by the Department of Tourism (DOT), symbolizing a significant convergence of cultures, tourism economy, and opportunities.

The 8th leg which took place in Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon, was graced by the presence of Philippine Tourism Secretary Maria Christina Frasco, the Provincial Governor, members of the Congress, LGU, DOT Officials from across regions, local and national tour operators, and members of the diplomatic corps: Malaysian Embassy and the Consulate Offices of Austria and Finland in Mindanao.

Through the Philippine Experience Program, participants are afforded a unique opportunity to be re-introduced to the country's promising destination sites and delve into the heart and soul of the Philippines, this time Northern Mindanao, uncovering its hidden treasures, unlocking its vast potential, and forging enduring partnerships that transcend borders and boundaries.



ECCP with Department of Tourism Region 10 Director Marie Elaine Unchuan, Delegation of Malaysian Embassy and Brgy. Captain posed with the iconic Love the Philippines hand gesture



The participants posed with the Bukidnon dancers featuring the majestic background of Lake Apo in Valencia City, Bukidnon

Inside ECCP: Davao

Mindanao Business Dialogue: Agriculture, Energy & Logistics

19 April 2024

Going beyond business as usual in shaping the future economic landscape of Mindanao! Held last 19 April 2024, the ECCP Mindanao organized the Mindanao Business Dialogue to discuss and address Mindanao's major concerns in the energy, logistics, and agriculture sectors, especially on certification struggles, power outages, customs issues, and digital transformation. Mr. Antonio Peralta, Chairman of the Southern Mindanao Business Council, opened the conference. He was joined by resource speakers, Mr. Zamzamin L. Ampatuan from the Department of Agriculture - Philippines, Director Michael Sinocruz from the Department of Energy Philippines, Mr. Jalaine M. Indol from the Bureau of Customs - Port of Davao and Ms. Analee Aguila of Philippine Ports Authority Davao to discuss the region's economic development challenges and opportunities. Concluding the event was ECCP Northern Mindanao Business Council Chairman Mr. Jaime Rafael Paguio. In a region rich full of diversity and potential, the dialogue catalyzed innovation and sustainable development. Our appreciation goes out to our speakers and participants for making this a truly insightful dialogue!



Sunset Jazz Networking Socials

30 April 2024

Hosted by ECCP Davao, the presence of the members truly made the Sunset Jazz Networking Socials a special gathering, rain or shine! We want to extend our sincere gratitude for everyone's participation. Here's to many more firsts and unforgettable gatherings ahead! This event wouldn't be made possible without our event partners: Gold Partner: VFS Global Philippines, Bronze Partners: Harbor Star Shipping Services, Inc., Alveo Land Corp., Abreeza Corporate Center, Kapatagan Banana Growers Marketing Cooperative, Raffle Partners: Pluxee Philippines, dusitD2 Davao, Seda Abreeza, Davao, Venue Partner: Malagos Homegrown by Malagos Garden Resort Davao. A special mention to Mr. Mark Sia and the Altered Reality Band for jazzing up the night! Here's to forging new partnerships and celebrating the success of our socials.



The ECCP Davao participates in PHILBEX & TLEX 2024 in Davao City 9-12 May 2024

The ECCP Davao participates in PHILBEX & TLEX 2024 in Davao City. Presented by Worldbex Services International, the Philippine Building Expo and Travel and Leisure Expo this year ran from May 9 to 12 at the SMX Convention Center Davao, SM Lanang, Davao City. The opening ceremony of this premier expo was attended by Mr. Tony Peralta, Southern Mindanao Business Council Chairman, and Mr. Gerry Constantino, ECCP Director for Projects, Events, and Training.

The ECCP booth showcased products from members, including Bukidnon Giant Bamboo, and featured collaterals from Promate and WCTI Solar Services. Additionally, this event provided an opportunity to highlight the development of the BAEP CRESCENT Project. The fair was also well-attended which attracted stakeholders from the infrastructure, development, tourism, and hospitality industries. The next leg of the expo is scheduled to take place in Iloilo in July.

Mindanao Coffee Mornings 28 May 2024

The ECCP Davao hosted the Mindanao Coffee Mornings last Tuesday, 28 May 2024 at Bec & Geri's Ecolounge, Ecoland, Davao City, Philippines. The session focused on sustainable ventures for the circular economy, the meeting was attended by esteemed members and guests of the Southern Mindanao Business Community, who engaged in sessions tackling various aspects of sustainability.

With key discussions on sustainability through upcycling food waste by LimaDOL, plant-based ventures by Bec & Geri's, green architecture and urban planning by Palafox Associates, and applied through real estate and infrastructure by Alveo, the session highlighted the shared commitment of the members to contributing to the growing circular economy movement of Mindanao. Moreover, Engr. Liza Villora, Chief of Ambient Monitoring and Technical Services Section of the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources Environmental Management Bureau Region 11, simplified the basics of the circular economy and highlighted how the private sector can engage with existing government policies.

Advancing towards sustainability and the green economy, we take one step at a time, continually moving forward.



From L-R: Dr. Peter Faistauer (Honorary Consul of Austria), Tony Peralta (ECCP SMBC Chairman), Gerry Constantino (ECCP BAEP CRESCENT Project Manager), Sam Gura (ECCP Davao Branch Officer)



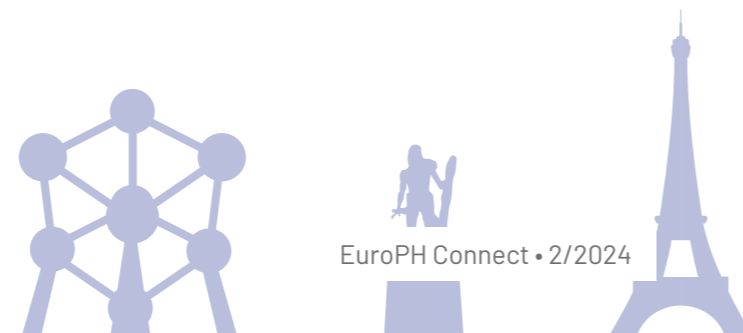
Inside ECCP: Iloilo

Powering Up the Future: Western Visayas Ignites a Sustainable Energy Dialogue 22 March 2024

On March 22, 2024, the event "Power Up Western Visayas: Continuing Conversation for Sustainable Energy Future" conducted in collaboration of the ECCP Western Visayas and the Iloilo Business Club, was held at Ann Margaret Hall by Diversion 21 Hotel. The event set forth a forum which served as the benchmark to opening the dialogue among stakeholders on the growing concern of energy sustainability, and affordability among energy industries in the region.

As a rising concern, the region's energy capabilities are also emerging; this influenced the predominant question shared among participants and guest speakers who sought answers as to how the energy sector in the region could maximize the potential of providing sustainable energy within Western Visayas.

Gaining a deeper insight on the topic, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines - Western Visayas and the Iloilo Business Club invited experts in the aforementioned fields to present their perspectives about the untapped potentials of the region. Sec. Arsenio M. Balicasan delivered keynote addresses, followed by presentations from fifteen distinguished resource speakers. The forum also featured a panel discussion with representatives from various organizations including the Department of Energy, National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, Energy Regulatory Commission, Department of Trade and Industry, Independent Electricity Market Operator of the Philippines, More Electric and Power Corp., Meralco PowerGen Corp., ACEN Energy Corporation, Ganubis Renewable Energy, Inc., Green Forum Panay Guimaras, Inc., and NEDA-VI.



Expanding Horizons: ECCP's Bacolod-Iloilo Business Mission 2024 Opens Doors for Strategic Partnerships

21 March 2024

On March 21, 2024, the Bacolod-Iloilo Business Mission 2024, organized by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) Western Visayas, successfully concluded in both Bacolod and Iloilo cities, marked a pivotal milestone in fostering closer ties between Filipinos as well as European businesses.

The Business Mission aimed to bring together companies with shared interests in investing in Bacolod and Iloilo cities, which have emerged as thriving economic hubs in Western Visayas, experiencing significant growth in business activity and prosperity.

Participants gained valuable insights into market opportunities and investment incentives, equipping them to explore new markets, expand their business presence, and leverage on emerging trends in both Bacolod and Iloilo Cities while also expanding the scope of influence on the surrounding region. The exchange of knowledge and dissemination of best practices further enhanced participants' understanding of the industry dynamics, regulatory frameworks, and strategies for market entry, enabling them to make informed decisions and drive business growth. The mission provided a platform for one of the strong attributes of the chamber which is nurturing and strengthening relationships between European and Filipino enterprises through fostering trust, collaboration, and enduring partnerships for mutual prosperity.

Moreover, the ECCP Western Visayas invited keynote speakers from Bacolod City, Iloilo City, Iloilo Province, Roxas City, and as well as Capiz Province, to share their insights on the potential of their respective areas. These presentations offered comprehensive perspectives on the economic landscape, investment climate, and growth opportunities within each locality, enriching participants' understanding of the region's diverse potential and opportunities that are yet to explore and develop.



The productive and enlightening events in both cities were further enriched by interactive discussion, and networking sessions focused on industry-specific challenges and opportunities. These engagements facilitated the exchange of ideas, best practices, and innovative solutions among participants, fostering a collaborative environment conducive to sustainable business growth.

The mission's success was underscored by the vibrant atmosphere of the two social gatherings titled Sunset Sips, where participants had the opportunity to further network, forge new connections, and strengthen existing partnerships in a relaxed and convivial setting. These social events provided a valuable platform for informal discussions, relationship-building, and the cultivation of camaraderie among participants, contributing to the overall success and impact of the Bacolod-Iloilo Business Mission 2024.

ECCP Connects Iloilo Businesses with Polish Opportunities at Networking Event

28 March 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) actively participated in the Poland in Iloilo Networking Event held last May 28th, 2024, at Flour Bakery and Brunch Cafe. This event served as a valuable platform for Iloilo business owners and professionals to connect with the Polish Investment and Trade Agency.

With trade between the Philippines and Poland on the rise, the networking event focused on exploring the immense potential for establishing business relationships between the two countries. Attendees gained insights into the benefits of working with Polish enterprises and the chance to access cutting-edge European products and technologies.

The ECCP's participation in this event reflects its commitment to fostering international trade relations and promoting opportunities for businesses Western Visayas. By connecting Iloilo's dynamic business community with Polish companies, this event paves the way for stronger economic ties and potential joint ventures in the future.



Advocacy Corner

PATHWAY Management Meeting and National Event 2-4 April 2024

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) was represented by Ms. Sophia Ordon, Associate Director for Government and International Affairs, and Ms. Katrina Baligod, Manager for Industry and Government Affairs, at the PATHWAY project management meeting. Held at the Pangasinan State University - Golden Lion Hotel, this meeting facilitated updates from project partners regarding various work packages.

Meanwhile, on 3-4 April was the PATHWAY National Conference, "PATHWAYS to Success: Expanding Opportunities for Higher Education Graduates through Entrepreneurship and Employability". This event was aimed at providing a platform for discussions on enhancing opportunities for higher education graduates, particularly in entrepreneurship and employability, and was joined by representatives from the academe, as well as government, such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Tourism (DOT), and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

At this event, Ms. Helen Grace Baisa, ECCP Vice President, delivered a speech on skills and competency requirements of the industry. Emphasizing ECCP's



commitment, she highlighted the Chamber's efforts through its Human Capital and Education Committees. These efforts include advocating for policy instruments in both public and private sectors, aimed at skills reinforcement, capability development, seamless professional exchange, and fostering holistic working environments.

Ms. Baisa likewise actively participated in a panel discussion alongside representatives from the DOT and DOLE. The discussion centered around employment trends and entrepreneurship opportunities, shedding light on critical insights and strategies to address challenges.

ECCP Automotive Committee Meeting with DTI-BPS 3 April 2024

Co-Chaired by ECCP President Paulo Duarte and Willy Tee Ten, the ECCP Automotive Committee met with Bureau of Philippine Standards of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI-BPS) on 3 April 2024 at the DTI-BPS office in Makati City for a discussion on market access issues in the automotive sector. The session serves as a further dialogue between the Committee and the Bureau following the clarificatory meeting with the Anti-Red Tape Authority last 19 February.

Joining the meeting were DTI-BPS Director Neil Catajay; Product Testing Division Chief Jay Illescas; Standard Development Division Chief Ma. Teresita Del Rosario; Standard Conformity Division Chief Leah Ann Arella; and Standard Conformity Division



Assistant Chief Maricel A. Reduca. Also present at the meeting were EU Delegation Trade Officer Therese Yosucio; IMI Global Business Development Manager Sherwin Chang; Michelin Philippines Office Admin Manager Bernadette Avendano; MACC Head of Marketing Marvelou Constantino; and ECCP Advocacy Officer Chienie Nethercott.

5th Meeting of the NEDA Stakeholders' Chamber 3 April 2024

The ECCP was represented at the 5th Meeting of the NEDA Stakeholders' Chamber at Pasig City. At the said gathering, the NEDA Secretariat and its members talked about matters arising from the previous meetings, action plans from each technical working group, and updates from the Stakeholder Partnership Accelerator for Convergence and Engagement (SPACE) Web Application. Additionally, NEDA shared information on the United Nations Summit of the Future in September 2024, and the group discussed the details for a Forum which aims to assess the progress towards SDGs, in preparation for the aforementioned SDG Summit.



ECCP Meeting with the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) 4 April 2024

On 04 April 2024, the ECCP had a courtesy meeting with the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), to have an exchange on the recent priorities and energy sector developments.

The said engagement also marked the signing of an NGCP-ECCP Cooperation Agreement, which signifies and solidifies the two parties' joint efforts in furthering efforts to strengthen the country's energy landscape, particularly in exchange of knowledge and experience in generation and transmission operations, as well as advancing ease of doing business initiatives.

Present at this engagement were NGCP President Anthony Almeda and Assistant Vice President for Public Relations Atty. Cynthia Perez-Alabanza, ECCP President Paulo Duarte and Executive Director Florian Gottein. Also joining were ECCP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Committee Co-Chairpersons, Ruth Yu-Owen and Atty. Jay Layug.



ECCP Meeting with BOC Acting Chief Port Operations Coordination Division Atty. Ferdinand T. Pauig
11 April 2024

The ECCP met with the Bureau of Customs Acting Chief Port Operations Coordination Division Atty. Ferdinand T. Pauig last 11 April 2024 for a discussion on the Agency's priorities and policies on customs and trade facilitation, as well as efforts on digitalization and ease of doing business. The group also raised several questions from the private sector, including the concerns on Customs Memorandum Order No. 12-2021 and Customs Administrative Order No. 01-2020, among others. Co-chaired by Atty. Mark Tamayo and Mr. Michael Raeuber, the meeting was also joined by representatives from the ECCP Customs and Logistics, Tax and Financial Services, and Food and Beverage Committees.



FDA Center for Food Regulation and Research (CFRR) Kapihan Sessio
15 April 2024

On April 15, ECCP attended the FDA Kapihan session to discuss various topics, including the allowable exhaustion period, ticketing system updates (suspended since 1 March), and e-portal enhancements such as the migration of food product registration to FDA eServices targeted for deployment by 28 May 2024. The agenda covered discussions on CFRR issues and concerns as well as addressing specific concerns with the FDA Action Center, Cashier, and Information and Communication Technology Management Division. This meeting was attended by Ms. Helen Grace Baisa, ECCP Vice President and Food and Beverage Committee Chairperson, and Ms. Sophia Ordon, ECCP Associate Director for Government and International Affairs.



ECCP Aviation Committee Meeting with PEZA Director General Tereso Panga
17 April 2024

On 17 April 2024, the ECCP and its Aviation Committee had the opportunity to meet with Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) Director General Tereso O. Panga at the PEZA Office in Pasay City. The session served as an avenue for the Committee to share its policy recommendations as well as industry concerns on certain provisions of the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Law. Moreover, PEZA presented updates on ecozone locator investments, with focus on aviation and aerospace, as well as updates on CREATE to Maximize Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy (CREATE MORE) bill.

Joining the meeting were PEZA Deputy Director General for Policy and Planning Joy Alguso; Enterprise Regulations and Support Services Group Manager Atty. Ross Sy; and Executive Assistant IV Atty. Katrishna Kok. ECCP Florian Gottein as well as Aviation Committee Co-Chairpersons Ms. Lourdes Cariño-



Angeles, Atty. Marvin Masangkay, and Atty. Manolito Manalo likewise took part in the session. Also present at the engagement were ECCP Tax and Financial Services Vice Chairperson Atty. Alden Labagu; Airbus Sales Manager Camille Quebec; AsBAA Vice Chairperson Max Motschmann; Berthaphil Corporate Treasury Grace Montecillo; Berthaphil Comptroller Rowena Gutierrez; ACTSI Key Accounts Executive Chressa Malicdem; and Lufthansa Technik Philippines VP Finance & VP Strategy and Corporate Projects Stefan Yordanov. ECCP Industry and Government Affairs Manager Katt Baligod and Advocacy Officers Chienie Nethercott and Mazel Salazar took part in the meeting as well.

ECCP Tax and Financial Services Committee Meeting
22 April 2024

Last 22 April, the ECCP Tax and Financial Services Committee had their second 2024 meeting at the ECCP Office and via Zoom. Following the February 2024 Committee Meeting, the group discussed updates on recent ECCP TFS Committee activities and engagements, BIR Revenue Memorandum Circular Nos. 05-2024 and 38-2024, as well as legislative updates, with focus on the proposed Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act or (PIFITA). The group was also apprised of updates on ECCP's proposed engagements with relevant policymakers, and exchanged views on sector-specific tax concerns and recommendations.



JFC Meeting with Vice President Sara Duterte

25 April 2024

The ECCP organized a meeting with Her Excellency Sara Zimmerman Duterte, Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines, on behalf of the Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) last 25 April 2024 at the Department of Education (DepEd) Main Office in Pasig City.

The discussion covered the plans and priorities of the Office of the Vice President in improving the business climate in the Philippines. As the concurrent DepEd Secretary, Vice President Duterte also shared the administration's advocacies and programs for education. Moreover, the group had the privilege to tackle areas of cooperation for education standards enhancement. Joining the Vice President at the meeting is Chief of Staff and DepEd Undersecretary Atty. Michael Poa.



ECCP Meeting with Senator Sherwin Gatchalian

26 April 2024

On 26 April, the ECCP had back-to-back meetings with Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, to discuss the priorities of and areas of collaboration with the Senate. Senator Gatchalian, who currently chairs the Ways and Means Committee and is Vice-Chair of the Energy Committee, shared updates on several legislative proposals including CREATE MORE, PIFITA, Natural Gas Bill, Waste-to-Energy Bill, as well as the implementation of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act, and the promotion of the electric vehicles industry.

The ECCP was represented by its Committee leaders – Ms. Ruth Yu-Owen and Atty. Jay Layug (Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Committee), Mr. Willy Tee Ten (Automotive Committee), as well as Atty. Con Simundac-Delos Santos, Atty. Benedicta Du-Baladad, and Atty. Alden Labaguis (Tax and Financial Services).



EU-ASEAN Business Council Mission Trip in the Philippines in collaboration with ECCP

6-9 May 2024

From 06 to 09 May 2024, the delegates of the EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) convened for a series of meetings with key government officials for productive exchanges on policy directions, trade and investment opportunities, as well as areas for strengthened collaboration between the Philippine government and companies operating in the ASEAN region.

The mission trip delegates composed of over 50 delegates from 30 companies, met with top officials of the following agencies:

- Department of Science and Technology
- Department of Trade and Industry
- Department of Information and Communications Technology
- Department of Health



- Department of Tourism
- Department of Energy
- Department of Agriculture
- Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Finance
- Bureau of Customs
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- National Economic and Development Authority

Aviation Committee Workshop on Aircraft Maintenance

14 May 2024

As part of the preparations for the upcoming 2024 Aviation Summit, the ECCP Aviation Committee, together with the Asian Business Aviation Association (AsBAA), organized the Aircraft Maintenance Workshop hosted by Lufthansa Technik Philippines (LTP) in Pasay City. LTP Senior Vice President for Base Maintenance John Mahon and Base Production Shift Manager Armando Castro provided an overview of LTP's aircraft maintenance, while Training and Development Manager Jennifer Soriano presented the company's aircraft mechanic technician training, licensing, and international validation practices. Airworthiness directives, issuances, and implementation were likewise discussed by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) Engineering Safety Inspector I Engr. Christian Joi V. Joaquin. Exchanges on the topic were supplemented by Airworthiness Department, Flight Standards Inspectorate Services Department Manager III Engr. Ronaldo Lumibao.

The first panel discussion covered aircraft mechanic technical personnel poaching and was participated by Jet Aviation Manila Ag General Manager Patrick



Ho, LTP VP for Legal Affairs and OIC VP for Human Resources Atty. Jose Emmanuel Academia, TAG Aviation Director for Maintenance Phil Balmer, and Wingbox CEO/Managing Director Darmilo "Dar" Sosa. Bombardier Aerospace Services Singapore PTE Ltd Director for Operations Winston Hoo and Air Transport International, Inc. Quality Control Representative - Heavy Maintenance Ben Penaga also joined the panel in addressing grey maintenance.

ECCP Aviation Committee Co-Chairperson Atty. Manolito "Mannix" Manalo served as the master of ceremonies of the workshop, while AsBBA Vice Chairman Max Motschmann moderated the round table discussions. AsBAA Chairwoman Jenny Lau and LTP Deputy President and CEO Holger Beck delivered their respective opening messages as well.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Committee Meeting with the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines 15 May 2024

On 15 May, the ECCP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Committee hosted a productive meeting with the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, represented by Redi Allan Remoroza, AVP and Head of Transmission Planning. At the said gathering, the ECCP members received updates on NGCP's current and upcoming initiatives relative to grid connectivity, transmission projects, as well as promotion of renewable energy. The participants also had an exchange on recommendations to improve and streamline processes in energy transmission projects, as well as to have a more regular dialogue between energy stakeholders.



Department of Finance Meeting with Stakeholders on their claims for VAT refund 17 May 2024

The ECCP was represented by its Tax and Financial Services Committee Vice Chairperson, Atty. Alden Labagu, at the Department of Finance (DOF) Meeting with Stakeholders on their claims for VAT refund held on 17 May, at the DOF Office. The meeting brought together stakeholders and tax practitioners for a discussion on common issues, concerns, and recommendations on VAT refund claims.



ECCP Agriculture Committee Meeting 21 May 2024

The ECCP Agriculture Committee convened last 21 May 2024 via Zoom. During the meeting, the members had a discussion on the recent developments on the Committee Structure, specifically the implementation of the sub-committees on commodity pillars.

The group also discussed and shared their insights on the Committee's pillar event, the 2024 Sustainable Agriculture Forum, happening on 26 September 2024. Together with high-level stakeholders, the Forum will feature sessions on crops, fishers and other related industries, and livestock and poultry. Finally, the members also had an exchange on the EU ECCP BAEP CRESCENT Project and other pertinent sector updates relevant to the committee's advocacy priority areas and legislations.



JFC Meeting with Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual 22 May 2024

The ECCP and its Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) partners, took part in a meeting with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Alfredo E. Pascual last 22 May 2024 at the DTI Office of the Secretary in Makati City.

The discussion covered the DTI's Investment Promotion Plan and updates on several legislations including the Internet Transactions Act (ITA), the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE), and the Open Access in Data Transmission Bill. Moreover, the group tackled the resumption of the EU-PH FTA negotiations slated for the second half of the year.



During the meeting, ECCP President Paulo Duarte touched on the expanded coverage of Executive Order No. 12 (EO 12), which temporarily modified the rates of import duties on Electric Vehicles (EVs). Additionally, ECCP Executive Director Florian Gottein expressed enthusiasm in working with DTI down the line to maximize the potential of the Philippines' critical raw materials.

ECCP Customs & Logistics Committee Meeting 23 May 2024

The ECCP Customs & Logistics Committee convened last 23 May 2024 at the ECCP Office in Makati City. During the meeting, the members discussed the Advocacy Recommendations presented within the ECCP Advocacy Papers 2024. The committee also discussed notable developments within the sector including the recent EU-ASEAN Business Council and ECCP courtesy call with the Bureau of Customs (BOC) held last 8 May 2024.



6th State of the ARTA Address 24 May 2024

The ECCP, represented by Vice President Dr. Diana Edralin, graced the 6th State of the ARTA Address on 24 May 2024, as part of the agency's month-long celebration of its 6th Anniversary. At the event, the Authority shared its accomplishments and plans, as well as launched The Philippine Global Competitiveness Dashboard.



The Joint Foreign Chambers Urge Senate to Approve Critical Airport Reforms

The Joint Foreign Chambers of the Philippines released a media statement, calling for the approval of crucial legislative measures to improve the overall quality of airports in the Philippines. The said legislative measures are (1) the Civil Aviation Authority Act of the Philippines (CAAP) Law amendments, (2) the creation of the Philippine Airports Authority, and (3) the creation of the Philippine Transportation Safety Board.

Media Statement
May 27, 2024

The Joint Foreign Chambers Urge Senate to Approve Critical Airport Reforms

The Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC), in a letter to the Philippine Senate, called for the approval of crucial legislative measures aimed at overhauling the governance framework of the country's airports. Specifically, the JFC emphasized the importance of (1) the Civil Aviation Authority Act of the Philippines (CAAP) Law amendments to strengthen CAAP's role in safety oversight by enhancing human resource development, fortifying the board, and aligning with global safety standards, (2) the creation of the Philippine Airports Authority to separate the conflicting functions of the CAAP as an airport regulator and operator, and (3) the creation of the Philippine Transportation Safety Board to strengthen the government's ability to investigate accidents and improve safety. The letter also comes after numerous flights in and out of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) on Monday were [delayed](#) due to a technical issue with the navigational air traffic management system.

The letter reads, in part, "These reforms are essential to enhancing the safety, efficiency, and overall quality of both domestic and international airports in the Philippines."

The letter also notes that these legislative reforms were also recommended in Senate Committee Report 39, filed on March 23, 2023, following the legislative inquiry into the air traffic management system glitch at Ninoy Aquino International Airport, and calls for the appropriate structure in place to prevent similar transport incidents from happening in the future.

The JFC is a coalition of the American, Australian-New Zealand, Canadian, European, Japanese, and Korean chambers and PAMURI. We represent over 3,000 member companies engaged in over US \$100 billion worth of trade and some US \$30 billion worth of investments in the Philippines. The JFC supports and promotes open international trade, increased foreign investment, and improved conditions for business to benefit both the Philippines and the countries we represent.

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ECCP Infrastructure Committee Meeting with DPWH

29 May 2024

On 29 May 2024, the ECCP Infrastructure Committee met with the Department of Public Works and Highways Bureau of Research Standards (DPWH BRS) at the BRS Office in Quezon City. At the meeting, the group discussed the updates and policy thrusts of the DPWH on sustainable and green infrastructure. Particularly, the participants tackled the use of blended cement in infrastructure projects.

DPWH BRS Assistant Director Juliana Vergara took part in the meeting with other DPWH representatives Engr. Avilson Ong, Engr. Alberto De Guzman, Engr. Mariel De Leon, Engr. Joanna Pajarillo, Engr. Teodor Viyar Jr., Engr. Alejandro Ilagan, and Engr. Mariz Tiglao.

Meanwhile, representing the ECCP is Infrastructure Committee Co-Chairperson Mr. Ramakrishna "Ram" Maganti. Joining him are Holcim Representatives Joy Aballe and Erween Pablo; Cement Manufacturers' Association of The Philippines (CEMAP) Executive Director Cirilo Pestaño; Republic Cement representatives PV Aquino and Eric Sampang; and ECCP Advocacy team members Chin Nethercott and Alyssa Marcos.



DOE Public Consultation of the Draft Implementing Guidelines of the VFELP-IG on RPCM

31 May 2024

The ECCP took part in the Public Consultation of the Draft Implementing Guidelines of the Philippine Transport Vehicles Fuel Economy Labeling Program on Registration Procedures and Compliance Mechanism (VFELP-IG on RPCM). This initiative of the Department of Energy (DOE) took place last 31 May 2024 via Microsoft Teams. At the consultation, Director Patrick Aquino, CESO III of the Energy Utilization Management Bureau (EUMB) presented the draft implementing guidelines for stakeholders' review and comments. These guidelines provide



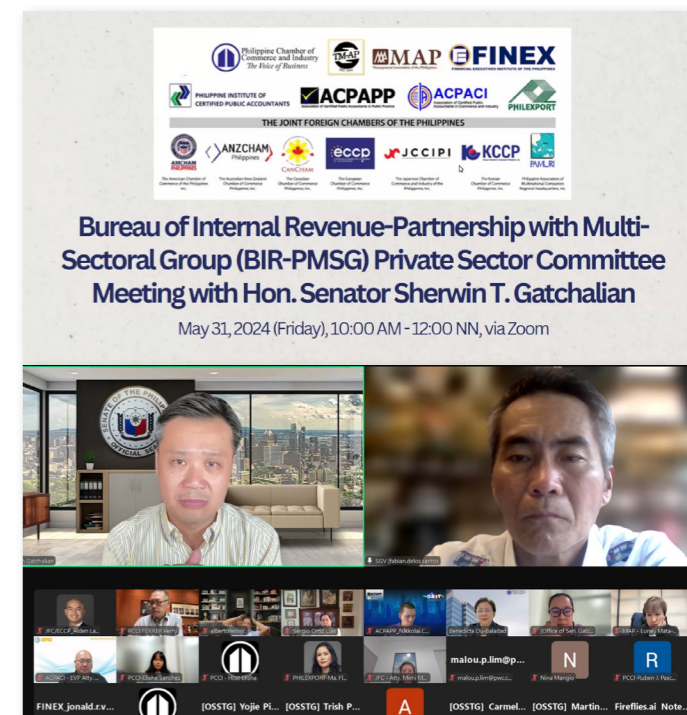
the procedures for the company registration and vehicle registration of vehicle manufacturers, importers, distributors, dealers and rebuilders. The registration procedures under the guidelines apply to all companies, including automobiles and motorcycle dealerships.

BIR-PMSG Meeting with Sen. Gatchalian on BIR RMC 05-2024

31 May 2024

On 31 May, the ECCP was represented as a member of the Joint Foreign Chambers of the Philippines at the Bureau of Internal Revenue - Partnership with Multi-Sectoral Group (BIR-PMSG) Private Sector Committee Meeting with Senator Sherwin Gatchalian, Chairperson of the Senate Ways and Means Committee. At the virtual meeting, the industry and tax representatives provided their insights on the BIR Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 05-2024 and CREATE More Act. Senator Gatchalian likewise shared the Senate's response to and insights on these developments.

The ECCP was represented by Atty. Alden Labaguis, Vice Chairperson of the ECCP Tax and Financial Services Committee.



ECCP Meeting with EU FTA Chief Negotiator Ms. Dora Correia

4 June 2024

On 04 June, the ECCP, together with the EU Delegation, had a meeting with the the EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Chief Negotiator, Ms. Dora Correia, along with Mr. Fabian Gehl, Deputy Chief Negotiator, and Mr. Mikkel Sejberg, Policy Officer for the Philippines, for a discussion on key areas and industry inputs relative to the ongoing discussions surrounding the EU-Philippine FTA. At this meeting, ECCP members and partners representing EU companies provided their insights on the various chapters under the FTA, as well as the opportunities and challenges in doing business in the Philippines.

Chairing the meeting was ECCP President, Mr. Paulo Duarte. Meanwhile, also present from the EU Delegation were Mr. Philipp Dupuis, Minister Counsellor and Head of the Economic Trade Section, and Ms. Therese Yosucio, Trade Officer.



ECCP Meeting with the Department of Energy on EVs and EVOSS

4 June 2024

The ECCP Automotive and Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Committees had a follow-up meeting with the Department of Energy, represented by EUMB Assistant Director Lana Manaligod and Ms. Hazel Vicencio, on 04 June, at the DOE Office. At the said meeting, the group had a discussion on recent developments in the areas of electric vehicles as well as implementation of the Energy Virtual One Shared System (EVOSS).

The ECCP was represented by Mr. Paulo Duarte, ECCP President and Automotive Committee Co-Chairperson; Mr. Willy Tee Ten, Automotive



Committee Co-Chairperson; as well as Ms. Ruth Yu-Owen and Atty. Jay Layug, ECCP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Committee Co-Chairpersons. Also in attendance were Katrina Baligod, Manager for Industry and Government Affairs, as well as Chienie Nethercott, Advocacy Officer.

Meeting with Mr. Michael Hager

4 June 2024

On 04 June, ECCP Executive Director, Mr. Florian Gottein, met with Mr. Michael Hager, Head of Cabinet of Executive Vice President Dombrovskis and handed over the latest set of the ECCP Advocacy Papers. Mr. Gottein, who currently serves as Treasurer of the European Business Organisation Worldwide Network (EBOWWN), participated in the organisation's annual meeting held in Brussels, Belgium.



Joint Foreign Chambers' Meeting with the IMF Mission

6 June 2024

The ECCP and its Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) partners, attended a meeting with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mission last 06 June, at the Manila Elks Club in Makati City, to discuss the Philippines' Economic Outlook for 2024 and the medium term as well as salient views on foreign direct investment (FDI) developments and key structural reforms.

Moreover, the JFC elaborated on regulatory issues and the infrastructure industry in relation to the Philippines' business environment. At the meeting, the ECCP was represented by Mr. Roman Menz, ECCP Vice President. Meanwhile, also present from the IMF Mission were Ms. Elif Saxegaard, Mission Chief and Mr. Ragnar Gudmundsson, IMF Resident Representative to the Philippines.



ECCP Tourism Committee Meeting

6 June 2024

Co-Chaired by Ms. Gwen Dela Cruz and Atty. Cenelyn Manguilimotan-Dalnay, the ECCP Tourism Committee convened last 6 June 2024 via Zoom with guest speaker Department of Tourism (DOT) OIC-Director for Industry Manpower Development Hon. Arlene Alipio. Director Alipio discussed the Agency's priorities and initiatives for tourism workforce development. Additionally, the Committee had the opportunity to present the 2024 Tourism Advocacy Recommendations to the DOT.



Meeting of the European Business Organisation Worldwide Network (EBOWN)

3-7 June 2024

ECCP Executive Director, Mr. Florian Gottein, who also currently serves as the Treasurer of the European Business Organisation Worldwide Network (EBOWN), participated in the organisation's annual meeting in Brussels, Belgium. The week-long activity gathered 48 delegates from 43 EBOs for high-level discussions with representatives from the European Commission and the European Investment Bank, among others. Key topics included critical raw materials, economic security, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), sustainable development, and strengthening EU collaborations with its global partners. In several of these meetings, Mr. Gottein also handed out copies of the ECCPs' publications, including the 2024 Advocacy Papers, 2024 Doing Business in the Philippines Guidebook, and 2023 Sustainability Whitepaper.



New Members Corner

Regular Members



Primer Resources Corporation

Regional Operating Headquarters (ROHQ) in the Philippines



Alpha Aviation Group

An institution providing airline-ready pilots & top-of-class pilot training solutions with a vision to have an AAG-trained pilot in every flight deck in the regions we serve and a mission to train & develop world-class pilots and aviation leaders.



Kenram Palm Industries

The Palm Oil Industry started in Sultan Kudarat when Kenram Philippines Inc., converted its kenaf and ramie plantations to oil palm in 1967. Kenram was derived from the word "Kenaf" and "Ramie". From an initial area of 167 hectares, the plantation expanded to 1,500 in 1972. The company further expanded its plantation to about 3,000 hectares, throughout-growership program in 1976 to 1980. In 1987, Kenram Industrial and Development, Incorporated (KIDI), a subsidiary company of Kenram Philippines Inc. (KPI), was formed to own and operate a mill.



WEnergy Power Pilipinas, Inc.

WEnergy Global Pte Ltd delivers complete and comprehensive sets of in-house renewable energy systems and services based on the combined international experience of the key management team for over 120 years in the renewable energy sector and international project development.



Landicho Abela & Co.

Landicho Abela & Co. is one of the local practice of the Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited Global Network and is one of the leading professional services firms in the Philippines.



ZAMA Manufacturing

ZAMA Group is a well-known air-fuel-system supplier in the forest and garden machinery industry worldwide. We are cooperating with all major original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of gasoline-powered outdoor tools, and we regard ourselves as the technology leader of our industry.



CI NMF (PH) CORP.

Copenhagen Offshore Partners (COP) is a world leader in offshore wind project origination, development, and construction. COP is accelerating the energy transition through development of a 50+ GW project portfolio



JEG Realty Corporation

JEG Realty Corporation (JRC), the real estate arm of the JEG Development Corporation, is at the forefront of green and sustainable real estate in Cebu, championing long-term strategizing and vision-making. JRC provides a range of commercial and office spaces, catering from the smallest units to entire floors. Notably, JEG Tower is a LEED Gold-certified building and the first solar-powered commercial establishment in Cebu City

The JRC also prides itself with their highly effective governance standards and leadership, seeking trust with its partners by practicing transparency in their work.



Bukidnon Giant Bamboo Resources Corp.



FiveDOL Upcycling Corporation



Codersforhire, Inc.



Powertech Asia Pacific, Inc.



DAHER INDUSTRIAL SERVICES INC.

We offer on-site technical assistance to Maintenance Repair Overhaul (MRO) and aircraft manufacturing companies across Asia. In Tianjin, our activities include Non-Conformity (NC) rectification, outstanding work (OSW), treatment of Aircraft Logbook (ALB) items for Airbus Tianjin FAL-A Flow-line, and Fuselage Equipping, covering both production on structures and Quality Line side inspections.



Belgian Iloilo Construction Corporation

Belgian Iloilo Construction Corp is a company that provides outstanding general works contractors located in Iloilo Philippines.

We provide our clients with general construction such as roads, drainage, canals, warehouses, and buildings. We also take charge with land development, trucking services, and construction consultancy.

We, at BICC, aim to deliver outstanding service and rise to the challenge of building global infrastructure.

Associate Members



Diamond Hotel Philippines

Diamond Hotel is a 5-star hotel located minutes away from the airport, convention centers, cultural sites, historical landmarks, and more.



Ditrolic Solar Philippines Inc.

Ditrolic Energy is one of the leading independent clean energy company in Southeast Asia. Headquartered in Malaysia, the company operates regionally from offices in Singapore, Manila, Jakarta, Shanghai and Dhaka.



Bolder Philippines Ltd Inc

Bolder Group is the result of the merger between AMS Financial Group and Circle Partners into one independent global organization. Having worked closely together over the last decade with stakeholders involved in both operations, the consolidation of funds and corporate services has resulted in a growth strategy which offers seamless services worldwide.



Office Essentials System Furniture Inc.

Office Essentials has been in the industry for 15 years, trusted by architects, interior designers, and different companies for quality, customized office furniture. Providing broad selection of ergonomic and cost-efficient furniture, committed to be of service to our clients.



Le Cellier

Engaged in importation and distribution of French Wines & Spirits in the Philippines, mainly caters in fine dining hotels and restaurants.



Weremote

We offer more than just spaces – we provide a comprehensive workspace solution designed to meet your professional needs. Whether you're a freelancer, entrepreneur, remote worker, or a business of any size, Weremote has the perfect space for you.



Plantassion

As the public perception on the environment has shifted into protection and sustainability, there is now an ever growing clamor for services to reach this demand.

This is where Plantassion comes in, wherein since 2019 they have been offering services and products that cater to various needs, ranging from aesthetic enhancements to ecological restoration. They have a diverse array of services and products, highlighting their significance in fostering green growth and sustainable living.

Discover how bringing plants and trees into your living space can improve your environment and provide amazing experiences while celebrating special occasions. Plantassion does more than simply sell plants and trees; they also provide a gateway to a greener lifestyle by creating places that are not only visually appealing but will also create a healthier environment for all.



2Go Group, Inc.

2GO GROUP, INC. is the Philippines' largest integrated transportation and logistics provider, at its core has five business units, namely, 2GO Sea Solutions, 2GO Special Containers, 2GO Logistics, 2GO Distribution, and 2GO Express. 2GO is a subsidiary of SM Investments Corporation, one of the largest conglomerates in the country. It offers multimodal transportation, warehousing and inventory management, distribution, special containers, and project logistics as well as e-commerce logistics, including last-mile deliveries, and express courier deliveries. 2GO also provides sea travel, and a wide range of peripheral logistics such as freight forwarding, import and export processing, and customs brokerage. Our company leverages all our services to create unique supply chain solutions for our chosen target customers. Backed by 148 years of expertise in transportation and logistics, 2GO has made a mark for providing the best travel experiences, efficient movement of products and cargoes, and for catalyzing business growth in domestic and international markets.



Flipside AI

Flipside AI is a leader and expert in AI Machine Learning (ML) training data labeling and annotation, specializing in computer vision and perception for autonomous vehicles (AV), advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS), and robotics. We operate an outsourced business process outsourcing (BPO) service to ensure high-accuracy, secure, and ethical data labeling.



COFIPOrt, INC.

COFIPOrt is an importer, exporter, manufacturer, and distributor of premium quality coffee, teas and infusions, dried fruits, nuts, herbs and spices.



Philippines Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture

Catalyzed in 2015 by Grow Asia and the Department of Agriculture, the Philippines Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (PPSA) believes in the power of partnerships and knowledge exchange in shaping better lives for Filipino farmers.



Nezda Services Inc.

In 2014, Nezda started with a vision to be one of the top recruitment companies in the Philippines, fast forward to several years after, we are now one of the largest recruitment firms in Philippines, with offices covering Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and Malaysia.



Vineyard International Polytechnic College

Vineyard College is a non-stock and non-profit Educational Institution established with the main purpose of providing quality basic, technical /vocational, higher and advanced education responsive to the needs of time and society. The College has put in place the following forming part of its strengths as an international training center: National Registration - The College is registered with the Philippines' Department of Education (DepEd), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and The Department of Tourism (DOT). Industry-standard facilities - It is equipped with industry-standard hospitality and culinary training facilities and resources, simulating the real workplace. Direct industry linkage with various hotels and resorts all over Asia and Australia.



Urus Integrated Technologies Inc.

At Urus, our unwavering commitment is to deliver holistic technology solutions tailored to meet our clients' unique needs. Our services span the entire project lifecycle, covering planning and consultation, design, implementation, and the proficient management of projects of all sizes and complexities. At Urus, our team of dedicated professionals values collaboration with our clients. We make it a priority to comprehend their unique requirements, address challenges, align with their business objectives, and respect budget constraints. Driven by our unwavering passion and commitment to delivering exceptional services, our aim is to cultivate enduring, long-term relationships with our valued clients.



Tagum City Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc.



University of the Philippines Mindanao



Greenfibr Corp.



Assumption College of Davao

Foreign-Based Individual Member Elizabeth "Maxie" Magsaysay-Cr ebassa

Individual Member

Iren Dornier

Chairman and CEO of Aviation Enterprises Inc.



Business Opportunities



A Finnish software solutions company is seeking to establish partnerships and have dialogues with Philippine enterprises to exploring supply chain solutions

A Finnish software solutions company specializing in unified supply chain and retail planning services is seeking to establish partnerships and have dialogues with Philippine enterprises to exploring supply chain solutions.



Portuguese global consulting firm with expertise in Advanced Data Analytics is seeking for partners or clients

A Portugal headquartered global consulting firm with expertise in Advanced Data Analytics and AI is looking for partners and clients for operations improvement and success by using their tailor fit business solutions. They cater to various industries such as but not limited to Energy & Utilities, Telecommunications, Retail & Ecommerce, Transport & Logistics, Consumer Goods, Process Industries & Manufacturing.



Spanish wholesale company, specializing in the global distribution of perfumes and selective cosmetics, is seeking to establish partnerships with Philippine enterprises

A Spanish wholesale company, specializing in the global distribution of perfumes and selective cosmetics, is seeking to establish partnerships with Philippine enterprises to explore business opportunities in the perfume and cosmetics market. They work with the leading brands in perfumery and cosmetics, and offer competitive pricing and personalized service to clients.

If interested in becoming a partner, we would love to talk to you. Please send us an email to catherine.lee@eccp.com or visit www.eccp.com for more information. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

JUNE

E-LEARNING SESSION
PERSONAL MASTERY WORKSHOP

7 June | 01:00 PM - 04:00 PM | ZOOM

E-LEARNING SESSION
EFFECTIVE INTERNAL CONTROLS TO ACHIEVE BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

13 June | 09:00 AM - 04:00 PM | ZOOM

E-LEARNING SESSION
AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT FUNDAMENTALS 7.0

18 June | 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM | ZOOM

FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING
SKILLS TRAINING ON ENGINEERED BAMBOO PRODUCTION

18 - 20 June | 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM | HomeBiz Crafts Bamboo Hub, Iligan City

FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING
SAFETY FIRST: BUILDING A CULTURE OF OWNERSHIP IN THE FILIPINO WORKFORCE

19 June | 08:00 AM - 10:00 AM | Makati Commerce Tower

ECO-LIBRIUM: MOBILIZING INDUSTRIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

19 June | 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM | Park Inn by Radisson Iloilo

E-LEARNING SESSION
UNLOCKING DATA PRIVACY COMPLIANCE EXCELLENCE WITH GenAI

19, 21, 25, 27 June | 01:00 PM - 05:00 PM | ZOOM

ECCP CEBU COMMUNITY CONNECT

20 June | 03:00 PM - 05:00 PM | South Road Properties, Cebu City

ECCP INFORMATION SESSION ON GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO COMBAT PLASTIC WASTE

20 June | 01:00 PM - 05:00 PM | Spaces BGC

E-LEARNING SESSION
MANAGING UPWARDS: IMPROVING THE EXECUTIVE-ASSISTANT RELATIONSHIP

21 June | 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM | ZOOM

TALKS ON INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE STRATEGIES

21 June | 03:00 PM - 05:00 PM | Davao City (TBA)

THE CITY OF WATERFALLS: GO RIGHT AND INVEST IN ILIGAN CITY

24 June | 01:00 PM - 04:00 PM | ZOOM

EMPOWERING INCLUSION THROUGH GENDER DIVERSITY AND ALLYSHIP

27 June | 02:00 PM - 04:00 PM | Makati Commerce Tower

E-LEARNING SESSION
FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR BUSINESS: A BLUEPRINT TO CONTINUITY SUCCESS

28 June | 09:00 AM - 05:00 PM | ZOOM

NAVIGATING THE GREEN AND BLUE FUTURE: EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ECO-ECONOMY

28 June | 10:00 AM - 06:00 PM | Cebu City (TBA)

PHILIPPINE
DIALOGUE
ENES CENTRESTAGE

