



Press Release

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PRIVATE SECTOR FORMALLY LAUNCHES INTEGRITY INITIATIVE

The observance of the International Anti-Corruption Day on December 9 continues this week with the official launch today of the Integrity Initiative project of the private sector, led by the Makati Business Club (MBC) and European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) in a press conference at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

The Integrity Initiative is the boldest move yet by the private sector to combat corruption in the Philippines. It begins by getting top management of companies to expressly commit to ethical business practices and good corporate governance through the Integrity Pledge. “Our focus is on the CEO. It’s not just about signing a pledge, but walking the talk, with zero tolerance for bribery and favoring long-term sustainability over short-term gain. If you have integrity, you pay proper taxes, take care of your people and the environment,” said ECCP executive vice president Henry Schumacher.

To date, almost 300 companies representing a cross-section of industries and size have signed the Integrity Pledge through their CEOs, presidents, managing directors, and other top-level officials. As company heads, they acknowledge their companies’ responsibility to lead by example in the fight against corruption and operate their businesses ethically and with integrity. Eventually, the project aims to get the support of all levels of the business organization, especially the rank and file, through integrity circles, codes of conduct, and concrete control measures.

Other groups that have thrown in their support for the Integrity Initiative are the Asian Institute of Management-Ramon del Rosario Sr. Center for Corporate Governance, the Management Association of the Philippines, the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, and the Coalition Against Corruption. These organizations are now calling on the government to apply the same degree of urgency in introducing similar anti-corruption mechanisms in public offices.

“The business sector’s success in fighting corruption in the country is anchored on government’s willingness to likewise abide by the same set of rules of conduct,” emphasizes Mr. Schumacher.

The project envisions an eventual certification and accreditation system for companies, just like the ISO system, to make it sustainable.

The MBC-ECCP initiative, which commenced late last year, has won the support of the global Integrity Initiative of Siemens AG that was publicly announced last December 9, 2010. In supporting the project, Siemens reiterates its belief that only clean business is good, sustainable business. MBC chairman Ramon R. del Rosario Jr. during the press conference thanked Siemens for the funding, saying that it will go a long way in ensuring that the anti-corruption projects that the Makati Business Club and the other business groups have started will be sustained.

An initial tranche of US\$40 million is being distributed by Siemens to more than 30 projects from over 20 countries that have been selected. The MBC-ECCP project is the only project in the Philippines being supported by the Siemens grant.

For more information about the Integrity Initiative, please contact the Makati Business Club (Edward Gacusana – e.gacusana@gmail.com) or the ECCP (Nonette Climaco – nonette.climaco@eccp.com).