

Philippines Committee

2018 Work Plan



Objective

The goal of the Philippines Committee is to support the expansion of US business interests in and activities with the Philippines. The committee's objectives include:

- Identify and provide opportunities for members to influence and benefit from efforts by the Duterte administration to improve the overall business environment;
- Increase infrastructure development;
- Attract more foreign direct investment, particularly in rural areas.

Major economic policy objectives of the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte in 2018 are:

- Passage of the second package of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program;
- Accelerate construction of infrastructure projects under the "Build, Build, Build" initiative;
- Open up of certain economic sectors to greater foreign participation and ownership.

These policy objectives will serve as thematic areas of focus for the Philippines Committee in 2018, and as a way to deepen engagement with the Government of the Philippines and other key stakeholders.

The Committee will advocate for the policy priorities outlined below and track business-related trends and developments via our country and sector updates.

Themes and Policy Priorities

1. Improvement of overall business environment through structural reforms

- A. Open industry sectors up to greater foreign participation and ownership
 - a. Loosen foreign ownership restrictions in 1987 Constitution
 - b. Amendment of Public Service Act (Commonwealth Act 146)
 - i. Expand liberalization beyond telecommunications sector
 - c. Further reduction of sectors included in next (2019/20) Foreign Investment Negative List (FINL)
- B. Improve government procurement policies and practices
 - a. Share best practices on integrating best-value determination and life-cycle cost analysis into procurement systems
 - b. Share best practices on training professional workforce to use objective evaluation in procurement decisions
 - c. Partner with U.S. Trade and Development Agency's (USTDA) Global Procurement Initiative (GPI)
 - d. Advocate that the Philippines take on observer status to WTO's Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)
- C. Increased private sector input in major legislation that affects business environment
 - a. Future packages of Comprehensive Tax Reform Program
 - i. Second package to focus on reduction of corporate income tax rate and rationalization of fiscal incentives for certain business sectors
 - b. Federalism
 - i. Opportunity to apply best practices and develop human capital in governance at Local Government Unit level
 - c. Ease of Doing Business legislation
- D. Sector/industry-specific reforms that affect business environment

- a. Maintain momentum behind modernization of customs enforcement (Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA), smuggling crackdown)
 - i. Participation in ASEAN Single Window (ASW) (via TradeNet) as way to drive improvement in business environment
- b. Continued build out of National Retail Payment System
- c. Promote U.S. companies as a source of modern agricultural technologies and of human capital knowledge in agribusiness

2. Promote U.S. company participation in “Build, Build, Build” infrastructure development initiative

- A. Encourage expansion of infrastructure development initiative beyond transportation infrastructure (e.g. to include energy, telecommunications infrastructure, etc.)
- B. Rebuilding/rehabilitation of Marawi
- C. Improving resiliency of communities to natural disasters
 - a. Opportunities to work with National Resilience Council (NRC)

Council Activities/Resources Supporting Themes and Policy Priorities

Advocacy	Addresses*	Quarter / Date
Philippines Business Mission		Mar 6-7
ASEAN Finance Ministers’ and Central Bank Governors’ Meeting (AFMGM) & Related Meetings (Singapore)		Apr 3-6
World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings (Washington, DC)		April 20-21
27 th Meeting of the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs (Malaysia)		May 8-10
50 th ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Meeting & Related Meetings (Singapore)		Aug 26-Sept 2
UN General Assembly (New York)		Sept 18-28
World Bank/IMF Fall Meetings (Bali Nusa Dua, Indonesia)		Oct 12-13
36 th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) & Related Meetings (Singapore)		Oct 25-31
ASEAN Summit (Singapore)		Nov 11-15
APEC Economic Leaders’ Week (Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea)		Nov 12-17
Intelligence		
News Clippings/Updates		Bi-weekly
Tracking of legislative and regulatory updates		Bi-quarterly
Committee Quarterly Calls		Quarterly
Sense of Business Paper (for Business Mission)		Q1
Relationship Development		
Reception with US Embassy (during Business Mission)		Q1
Business-to-Business Luncheon (during Business Missions)		Q1
Roundtable with Members and embassy officials from ASEAN countries (DCMs, Econ Officers, Agricultural Attaches, Commercial Attaches, Transportation Attaches, etc.)		Ongoing
Quarterly Coffees with Ambassador		Quarterly
Regular engagement with key USG contacts in Manila and DC		Ongoing
Regular meeting with GOP and Business Stakeholders in Manila and DC		Ongoing

Promotion		

Committee Leadership and Key Contacts:

Leadership

Chair: Philip Vaughn, Fluor
 Vice Chair: Aftab Ahmed, Citi
 Jonah de Lumen, Coca-Cola
 Raul Cortez, Microsoft
 Charina “Chat” G. Ocampo, Monsanto
 Patrick Muttart, PMI

USABC Staff

Kim Yaeger, Director for Maritime Southeast Asia
 Elizabeth Magsaysay-Cr  bassa, Senior Country Representative
 Evelyn Mariano, Representative
 Riley Smith, Manager
 Norika Pineda, Associate

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