| **Individual Action Plan Update for the Philippines for 2016** |
| --- |
| ***Highlights of recent policy developments which indicate how [economy] is progressing towards the Bogor Goals and key challenges it faces in its efforts to meet the Goals.***  |
| Implemented the APEC Environmental Goods List tariff reduction commitment through Executive Order No 185 on 26 June 2015. Provided for increased participation of foreign banks by allowing their operation as a branch, operation as a wholly-owned subsidiary, or acquisition up to 100 per cent of the voting stock of an existing domestic bank through Republic Act No. 10641.Implemented retail competition and open access in the electric power industry by allowing qualified customers to choose alternate electricity suppliers.Established a single maritime administration on all matters pertaining to the implementation of the International Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW Convention) 1978, as amended. This provided for a stronger maritime administration and will ensure that certificates issued to Filipino seafarers are accepted by global maritime administration and industry stakeholders. Allowed foreign ships to transport import or export cargo directly to and from any local port other than the Port of Manila through the issuance of the Foreign Ships Co-Loading Act. Reduced the process of starting a business from 16 steps and 34 days to 6 steps and 8 days.Developed 1,133 new Philippine National Standards (PNS) of which 87.20% are aligned with ISO/IEC. As of December 2015, 80.08% of the existing PNS are aligned with ISO/IEC.Introduced a national competition policy to enhance economic efficiency and promote free and fair competition in trade, industry and all commercial activities through the issuance of Republic Act No. 10667 or the Philippine Competition Act (PCA). The act created the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) to implement the PCA. Mandated the inclusion of Alternative Dispute Resolution provisions o c*ontracts involving Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Projects, Build-Operate and Transfer (BOT) Projects, joint venture agreements between government and private entities and those entered Into by local government units (LGUs) through Executive Order No. 78*Deregulated the domestic shipping industry by allowing domestic ship operators to establish their own shipping rates provided that effective competition is fostered and public interest is served., through Republic Act No. 9295.  |

| IAP Chapter (and Sub-Chapter and Section Heading, if any) | **Improvements made since 2014 IAP**  | **Further Improvements Planned** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tariffs | Issued Executive Order (EO) No. 185 on 26 June 2015 to implement the APEC Environmental Goods List tariff reduction commitment. The Philippines offers duty free access to about 90%of the tariff lines in four out of the seven FTAs in-force. PHILIPPINE Tariff Profile Under Various FTAs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FTA | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| **Simple Average Tariff** |
| ASEAN | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| ASEAN- China | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 |
| ASEAN-Korea | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 |
| ASEAN-Australia/New Zealand | 0.63 | 0.59 | 0.43 |
| ASEAN-Japan | 2.08 | 1.84 | 1.52 |
| Philippines-Japan | 1.61 | 1.41 | 1.13 |
| ASEAN-India | 4.55 | 4.01 | 3.76 |
| **% Duty free Tariff Lines to All goods** |
| ASEAN | 98.89 | 98.89 | 98.89 |
| ASEAN- China | 89.96 | 89.96 | 89.96 |
| ASEAN-Korea | 91.52 | 91.52 | 91.52 |
| ASEAN-Australia/New Zealand | 89.61 | 93.85 | 93.85 |
| ASEAN-Japan | 70.24 | 70.46 | 70.47 |
| Philippines-Japan | 71.05 | 71.07 | 71.08 |
| ASEAN-India | 4.10 | 4.10 | 4.10 |

Notes:* + - 1. Figures do not include sensitive agricultural products under EOs 313 and 328 series 1999
			2. Incorporating EO 191 in AANZFTA schedule

Participated in the negotiations which led to the conclusion of negotiations in the Expansion of the Product Coverage of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA-II) at the 10th Session of the Ministerial Conference (MC10) in December 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya. Under the terms of the agreement, the 53 WTO member-participants agreed to reduce tariffs on covered goods beginning 01 July 2016, with around 65% of these tariff lines eliminated by end of 2016. By 2019, 89% of tariff lines will be eliminated. Zero tariffs on all products will be achieved by 2022.The Philippines ensured to avail of the flexibilities of extended staging of tariff reductions. | A periodic comprehensive review of all MFN tariffs is being finalized to set the Philippine Tariff Structure for 2016-2020. Continue to implement a tariff rationalization plan aimed at boosting global competitiveness of Philippine industries; to provide business with long-term policy information and to promote transparency. Under the various FTAs, preferential tariffs are to be progressively reduced and/or eliminated with the end goal of zero tariffs levied on substantially all goods by the agreed end dates.

| FTA | End Dates |
| --- | --- |
| ASEAN  | 2015 |
| ASEAN-China | 2018 |
| ASEAN-Korea | 2016 |
| ASEAN-Australia/New Zealand | 2020 |
| ASEAN-Japan  | 2018 |
| ASEAN-India | 2022 |
| Philippines-Japan | 2018 |

Participate in the negotiation for the expansion of the product coverage of the WTO Information Technology Agreement. Tariffs of all products covered in the ITA shall be eliminated by 2022.Complete the domestic ratification procedures for ITA-II. |
| Website for further information:  | [www.tariffcommission.gov.ph](http://www.tariffcommission.gov.ph) |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The ChairmanTariff CommissionPhilippine Heart Center BuildingEast Avenue, DilimanQuezon CityTel: (632) 433-5899Fax: (632) 921-7960E-mail: info@tariffcommission.gov.ph |  |
| ***Non-Tariff Measures****Non-tariff measures include but are not restricted to quantitative import/export restrictions/prohibitions, import/export levies, minimum import prices, discretionary import/export licensing, voluntary export restraints and export subsidies* | On 24 July 2014, the Philippines secured a waiver at the WTO to continue the quantitative restrictions on rice. The waiver will expire on 30 June 2017. Refer to Executive Order No 190 (<http://wwwtariffcommission.gov.ph/all-executive-orders>). The Philippines is committed to comply with its WTO obligation to submit the notification on import licensing procedures. The following notifications were submitted by the Philippines:* Under Articles 1.4(A) and 8.2(B):

2014 - G/LIC/N/1/PHL/3 dated 5 February 2014; and2015 - G/LIC/N/1/PHL/4 dated 7 September 2015.* Under Article 7.3:

2014 - G/LIC/N/3/PHL/10 dated 6 February 2014; and2015 - G/LIC/N/3/PHL/11 dated 7 September 2015.Between 2013-2015,  newly issued regulations were notified to the WTO on the following commodities:  1. Fishery and Fishery Products - Fisheries Order No. 146 dated 22 April 2013; Suspension of processing and approval of applications for permit to import all live shrimps and other susceptible crustaceans from Asian Countries and other countries affected by Early Mortality Syndrome (EMS)/Acute Hepato-pancreatic Necrosis Syndrome (AHPNS) and Infectious Myonecrosis Virus (IMNV). 2. Lighting Products  - Joint DENR-DOE Administrative Order No. 2013-09-0001 dated 24 September 2013 on Lighting Industry Waste Management Guidelines 3. Firearms and Ammunitions - Republic Act No. 10591 and its implementing rules, dated 29 May 2013, providing for a comprehensive law on firearms and ammunition and providing penalties for violations thereof. For details, refer to <http://www.gov.ph/2013/05/29/republic-act-no-10591/>4. Products under Mandatory Certification- DTI DAO 15-1: 2015 dated 01 July 2015 Measures to Facilitate the Issuance of the Import Commodity Clearance<http://www.ntrc.gov.ph/tax-info/boc-issuances/memorandum-circulars>- BPS Memorandum Circular No. 15-03, Series of 2015 dated 10 July 2015 List of Products under Mandatory Certification<http://www.ntrc.gov.ph/tax-info/boc-issuances/memorandum-circulars> |  |
| Website for further information:  | [www.da.gov.ph](http://www.da.gov.ph)[*www.wto.org/english/thewto\_e/countries\_e/philippines\_e.htm*](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/philippines_e.htm)- Link to browse the import licensing notifications of the Philippines |  |
| Contact point for further details:  | The Executive DirectorMAV Secretariat2/F Yellow Room, ITCAF Bldg.Department of Agriculture, Elliptical Road,Diliman, Quezon CityTel: (632) 920-1786vero.librojo@yahoo.comFor the rice waiver: Policy Research ServiceDepartment of AgricultureElliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon CityTel: (632) 9267439 |  |
| ***Services******Financial*** | R.A. No. 10641 was signed into law opening the three (3) modes of entry and increased participation of foreign banks up to 100 percent of the voting stock of an existing domestic bank. R.A. No. 10641 was promulgated, as an enhancement to R.A.No. 7721, in order for the Philippines to take advantage of market developments associated with the Philippines’ economic growth and investment grade status.On foreign exchange (FX) policy, the *Bangko Sentral* *ng Pilipinas* (BSP) issued the following circulars to further amend the Manual of Regulations on Foreign Exchange Transactions issued under Circular No. 645:  1.     Circular No. 838 dated 20 June 2014; and2.     Circular No. 874 dated 8 April 2015.The circulars further simplify rules, enhance and further facilitate access by the general public to FX resources of the banking system to cover legitimate transactions. Another notable improvement in banking is the alignment of domestic regulations with Basel III requirements such as those pertaining to minimum risk-based capital adequacy ratios, the leverage ratio framework, and the Domestic Systemically Important Banks Framework, which are intended to further strengthen the industry. | Continuous review and updating of FX regulatory framework to maintain an appropriate environment attuned with current economic conditions.Continuously review and amend its regulations so that a broader and more inclusive range of services may be provided by financial institutions to a wider market including those that were previously unbanked or underbanked. Regulations will also continue to be aligned with international standards such as Basel III capital reforms, corporate governance and risk management, anti-money laundering rules and accounting standards, etc. recognizing that these are prerequisites to ensuring a safe and sound banking system. Capital reforms shall be actively pursued in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to provide the investing public with a wider array of financial products/services as well as increased transparency and governance of financial markets. Continue to be part of cooperative agreements with counterpart regulators and other jurisdictions for financial stability and further liberalization of the various aspects of the banking industry as necessary. |
| *Website for further information:*  | [www.bsp.gov.ph](http://www.bsp.gov.ph)BSP Circular No. 838 -[www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations/regulations.asp?type=1&id=3308](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations/regulations.asp?type=1&id=3308)BSP Circular No. 874 - [www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations/regulations.asp?type=1&id=3444](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations/regulations.asp?type=1&id=3444)*For FX Regulations*BSP Circular No. 742[www.bsp.gov.ph/downloads/regulations/attachments/2011/c742.pdf](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/downloads/regulations/attachments/2011/c742.pdf)BSP Circular No. 794 [www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations.asp?ID=3112](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations.asp?ID=3112) BSP Circular No. 815[www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations.asp?id=3197](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations.asp?id=3197)BSP Circular No. 818[www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations.asp?id=3205](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations.asp?id=3205)*Full ownership of foreign banks*BSP Circular No. 858<http://www.bsp.gov.ph/downloads/regulations/attachments/2014/c858.pdf>Republic Act (RA) No. 10641<http://www.bsp.gov.ph/downloads/laws/RA10641.pdf> |  |
| *Contact point for further details:* | The Director International Operations Department Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas pangeles@bsp.gov.phThe Assistant GovernorFinancial Supervision and Consumer Protection Sub-SectorBangko Sentral ng Pilipinasjravalo@bsp.gov.ph |  |
| ***Services******Energy***  | *Renewable Energy*The National Renewable Energy Board (NREB) endorsed the DOE’s Certification of Revised Installation Target for solar energy generation under the Feed-In Tariff System form 50 MW to 500 MW on March 27, 2014. On the same date, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) also approved the Php8.69/kWh FIT 2 for solar.The installation target for Wind was increased on 24 April 2015. On 9 December 2015, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) released a resolution for the second FIT Rate for Wind energy of Php7.40/kWh.A total of 289 customers registered under the Net Metering with a total capacity of 1599.99 kWp.Awarded 18 wind energy service contracts (WESCs); 81 solar energy service contracts (SESCs) and 8 certificates of registration for own-use, 3 ocean energy service contracts (OESCs); 179 hydropower service contracts (HSCs); 14 biomass renewable energy operating contracts (BREOCs) and 5 certificates of registration for own-use; and 6 geothermal renewable energy service contracts (GRESCs).Issued six (6) certificates of accreditations to fabricators, manufacturer and suppliers of locally-produced renewable energy equipment and components. | Prepare the internal guidelines for the operationalization of the Renewable Energy Trust Fund  |
| *Website for further information:* | [www.doe.gov.ph](http://www.doe.gov.ph) |  |
| *Contact point for further details:* | The DirectorRenewable Energy Management BureauDepartment of EnergyEnergy Center, Merritt RoadFort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1632Telefax: (632) 840-2268E-mail: mcmarasigan@doe.gov.ph |  |
|  | *Power & Electrification*Issued Department Circular No. 2015-06-0008 “Mandating all Distribution Utilities to Undergo Competitive Selection Process (CSP) in Securing Power Supply Agreements (PSA)”, requires mandatory CSP in the procurement of PSA and allows the aggregation of DUs un-contracted demand and energy to increase transparency in the procurement process, promote competition in the supply of electric power, ascertain least cost outcomes, and protect the interest of the general public. For details, refer to:  [www.doe.gov.ph/doe\_files/pdf/Issuances/DC/dc2015-06-0008.pdf](http://www.doe.gov.ph/doe_files/pdf/Issuances/DC/dc2015-06-0008.pdf)The Department of Energy (DOE) and Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) adopted Joint Resolution No. 1 “A Resolution Enjoining all Distribution Utilities to conduct Competitive Selection Process (CSP) in the Procurement of Supply of their Captive Market”, providing the agreement between the DOE and ERC to issue the appropriate regulations in the conduct of CSP which engenders transparency, enhances supply security, and ensures stability of electricity prices to captive electricity end-users in the long term.In pursuit of Section 30 of Republic Act No. 9136 otherwise known as “Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001” following are the latest developments:* Continued to implement the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) in Luzon (2006) and in the Visayas (2010). To further improve the governance and operation of the WESM, the DOE promulgated Circulars which adopted further amendments to the WESM Rules. The Circulars provide changes in the procedures particularly to address issues on inconsistencies between the WESM Rules and the Market Manuals for the purpose of promoting transparency and efficient electricity market.
	+ DC2013-12-0028, December 16, 2013
	+ DC2014-03-0007, March 26, 2014
	+ DC2014-03-0008, March 26, 2014
	+ DC2014-08-0016, August 22, 2014
	+ DC2014-10-0002 October 24, 2014
	+ DC2015-07-0013 June 29, 2015
 | Implement the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) in Mindanao. Implement the Renewable Energy Market (REM). A Department Circular will be promulgated to (a) provide framework for the establishment of the REM and Renewable Energy Registar; and (b) Define the attributes of Renewable Energy Certificate as complementary mechanism to the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS).Continue conduct of the study on the review and development of mitigating measures for the Phillipne WESM to cover the development of a framework for the identification of market power abuse and anti-competitive behavior.Circular No. 2015-06-0010 further provides the specific timeline for the implementation of the next phase of RCOA as follows:* All Contestable Customers with 750 MW demand and above have secured Retail Supply Contract with a Supplier by 26 June 2016 and Retail Aggregators shall be allowed to compete with Retail Electricity Suppliers
* Contestable Customers with 501 kW to 749 kW demand shall be allowed to choose their respective Suppliers by 26 June 2018 while lowering the threshold to 500 kW and below shall be based on the evaluation by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC).
 |
| *Website for further information:* | [www.doe.gov.ph](http://www.doe.gov.ph) and www.erc.gov.ph |  |
| *Contact point for further details:* | The DirectorElectric Power Industry Management BureauDepartment of EnergyEnergy Center, Merritt RoadFort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1632Telefax: (632) 840-21-20 |  |
|  | *Energy Efficiency and Conservation*No improvements to report | Passage of a bill to promote and implement the Accreditation Systems for Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) as well as Energy Efficiency Service Providers (EESPs) which will address cost competitiveness and energy security.Issue a Department Circular directing the institutionalization of the Philippine Energy Standards and Labelling Program (PESLP) which will cover the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEPS) on lighting, household appliances and motor vehicles.  |
| *Website for further information:* | [www.doe.gov.ph](http://www.doe.gov.ph)  |  |
| *Contact point for further details:* | The DirectorEnergy Utilization Management BureauDepartment of EnergyEnergy Center, Merritt RoadFort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1632Telefax: (632) 840-22-89 |  |
| ***Services******Maritime Transportation*** | Empowered the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) as the single maritime administration for the enforcement of the STCW Convention into a Congressional Act through Republic Act No 10635. MARINA issued circulars covering rules on trade and operations: 1. Rules and regulations implementing E.O. 909 to encourage investments for newly constructed ships or brand new vessels in the domestic shipping industry by providing incentive (Circular No. 2015-04). 2. Amended rules in the acquisition of ships under P.D. 760, as amended, and provides for implementing rules on the registration, documentation and licensing of ships for international voyages. (Circular No. 2015-01) Enacted R.A. 10668 or the Foreign Ships Co-Loading Act to allow foreign ships to transport import or export cargo directly to and from any local port other than the Port of Manila.  | Implement the rules and regulations of R.A. 10668 or the Foreign Ships Co-Loading Act. |
| *Website for further information:* | www.marina.gov.ph Republic Act No 10635 - http://marina.gov.ph/policies/RA/RA10635.pdf Republic Act No 10668 - https://www.senate.gov.ph/republic\_acts/ra%2010668.pdf  |  |
| *Contact point for further details:* | The AdministratorMaritime Industry Authority984 Parkview Plaza, Taft Avenue corner Kalaw Street, ManilaTel: (632) 523-9078, 526-0971, 524-2895Email: oadm@marina.gov.ph |  |
| ***Services******Air*** | By 2015, the Philippines was able to negotiate more liberal air services agreements and increased capacity entitlements to the following economies/countries: Republic of Korea, United Arab Emirates, Russia, Turkey, Qatar, Mexico, Australia, Oman, Singapore and Chinese Taipei (Taiwan). | Continue to enhance air services agreements to provide more and better connectivity.Review/update rules and procedures on hearings and investigations before the Civil Aeronautics Board.Continue to hold air consultation talks with other countries.Continue to review the APBR. |
| Website for further information:  | <http://cab.gov.ph> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The Executive DirectorCivil Aeronautics BoardCAB Building, Old MIA Road, Pasay CityTel: (632) 853-6761 Fax: (632) 833-6911E-mail: cab\_eprd@yahoo.com; info@cab.gov.ph |  |
| ***Investment*** | Simplified the process of starting a business from 16 steps and 34 days to 6 steps and 8 days. Introduced e-government initiatives for accessible and convenient online transactions for payroll-related payments to Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) and Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG Fund).BOI signed the following Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) on the processing and issuance of registration: 1. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR);
2. Food and Drug Administration (FDA);
3. Department of Tourism (DOT); and
4. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

Implemented the Enhanced Capacity Building Trainings (CBTs) on investment promotion to improve the capability of local government units and business proponents on project plan preparation.Implemented the Investments Priorities Plan (IPP) 2014-2016 which focuses on eight (8) activities: manufacturing, agribusiness and fishery, services, economic and low-cost housing, hospitals, energy, public infrastructure and logistics, Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects.Promulgated the 10th Foreign Investment Negative List (FINL) through Executive Order No 184. Foreigners are now allowed to practice various engineering disciplines, science-related professions, real estate services, and interior design, among others, provided their country allows Filipinos to be admitted to the practice of these professions. Launched the BOI-One Window Network (BOI-OWN), a cloud-based web portal and mobile application system for pre- and post-investment queries and concerns allowing investors to transact with the BOI online. It also is a central repository of investment and business-related services.Launched Republic Act No. 10644, otherwise known as the "Go Negosyo Act," which seeks to promote ease of doing business and facilitates access to services for MSMEs by establishing "Negosyo Centers" (business centers) in provinces, cities and municipalities. The law promotes job generation and inclusive growth through the development of MSMEs in the country. |  |
| Website for further information:  | [www.boi.gov.ph](http://www.boi.gov.ph)Republic Act 10644 -<http://www.gov.ph/2014/07/15/republic-act-no-10644/> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | Office of the Executive Director Industry Development Group Board of Investments Industry & Investments Building 385 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue Makati City Tel: +632.896-9239 Fax: +632.895-3701 Email: mchdichosa@boi.gov.ph  |  |
| ***Standards and Conformance*** | Developed 9,602 Philippine National Standards, 80.08% or 7,691 are aligned with relevant international standards (ISO/IEC). Between December 2013 (last IAP report) and December 2015, 1,133 new Philippine standards were developed. Of this number, 988 standards are with international standards (ISO/IEC).Signatory member to IAF/PAC MLA and ILAC/APLAC MRA on:* 1. Testing and Calibration (ILAC/APLAC MRA)
	2. QMS Certification Bodies (IAF/PAC MLA)
	3. EMS Certification Bodies (IAF/PAC MLA)

Continued to implementation eight accreditation schemes as reported in 2014.Promoted transparency of standards and conformance requirements through the Standards and Conformance Portal ([www.bps.dti.gov.ph](http://www.bps.dti.gov.ph)), weekly publication of TBT notifications, and the airing of a weekly consumer advocacy radio program.Updated information on SPS issuances, including approved Philippine National Standards on agriculture and fishery products through [www.spsissuances.da.gov.ph](http://www.spsissuances.da.gov.ph).  | Continue to align processes with international agreed practices and standards.Continue to increase transparency aligned with its WTO commitments and regional agreements. |
| ebsite for further information:  | <http://www.bps.dti.gov.ph>[http://www.dti.gov.ph](http://www.dti.gov.ph/) (see Accreditation Process is under “Services”);<http://pabaccreditation.dti.gov.ph/public/public_mscb.php><http://www.fda.gov.ph> <http://www.bafs.da.gov.ph><http://spsissuances.da.gov.ph> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The DirectorBureau of Philippine StandardsDepartment of Trade and Industry3F Trade & Industry Building361 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati CityTel: +632.751.4729Fax : +632.751.4706E-mail: bps@dti.gov.ph The Director Philippine Accreditation Bureau Department of Trade and Industry3F Trade and Industry Bldg.,#361 Sen Gil Puyat Ave., Makati CityTel. Nos. (632) 751-4707Fax. No. (632) 751-3262E-mail: pao@dti.gov.phThe Director Food and Drug Administration PhilippinesDepartment of HealthTel Nos: (632) 857-1900/809-4390Fax No: (632) 807-0751 Email: info@fda.gov.phThe Executive DirectorBureau of Agriculture and Fisheries and Product Standards BPI Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon CityTel. Nos. (632) 920-6131, 467-9039, 455-2856Fax. No. (632) 455-2858E-mail: bafpsda@yahoo.com; bafs@da.gov.ph |  |
| ***Customs Procedures*** | Automated and simplified procedures for Philippine Export Processing Zone Authority (PEZA) shipments.Issued Customs Memorandum Order (CMO) 04-2014 that simplifies the requirements for accreditation at the Bureau of Customs (BOC).Developed anonline submission system of air manifests for forwarders and airlines.Implemented a joint Philippine Port authority (PPA) and BOC project for harmonization of standards and processes for arrastre operators.Harmonized standards and processes for off-dock container yard/container freight stations (CY/CFS), customs bonded warehouses (CBW) and NAIA warehouses.A monthly importation disclosure is now available through the BOC website, making information available on importations to the Philippines in terms of value and volume. Launched a master list of all regulated import items including the necessary import requirements of all trade regulator regulatory government agencies, downloadable at the BOC website. For details see <http://customs.gov.ph/regulated-imports-list-2015-04-06/>Launched an online tracker that enables recipients of Balikbayan Boxes to check the status of their packagesMade available online at the BOC wensite a current list of accredited importers and brokers, guidelines and procedures on customs clearance of international donations availing of duty and/or tax exemption, notices of auction of various goods, and procurement/purchase notices, among other helpful resources. Issued the following Customs Memorandum Orders:* + - 1. CMO 2-2014 - Guidelines in the Implementation of the Second Pilot Project for the ASEAN Self-Certification System and the Accreditation of “Certified Exporters”
			2. CMO 3-2014- Amendments to Inward Foreign Manifest (IFMs) (No Longer Require OCOM Clearance)
			3. CMO 4-2014- Policies, Guidelines and Procedures for the Accreditation of Importers and Customs Brokers with the BOC
			4. CMO 11-2014 - Revised Guidelines for Registration of Importers & Customs Brokers
			5. CMO 27-2014 - Establishment of Prepaid Accounts—Electronic Filing and Payment through the E2M System of all Transshipment
 | Operationalize a program for Customs bonded warehouse (CBW) automationContinue to review the Super Green Lane (SGL) program to complement the planned implementation of the Authorized Operator Program |
| Website for further information:  | <http://customs.gov.ph/> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The CommissionerOffice of the CommissionerBureau of CustomsG/F OCOM BuildingPort Area, ManilaTel. +632 5274573/37Fax. + 632 5266355 |  |
| ***Intellectual Property Rights*** | Enhanced institutional infrastructure in the promotion, protection and enforcement of IPR by expanding its network of partners both in the government and private sector (both local and international).Enhanced IPR enforcement operations through a whole of government approach.Launched a long term strategy in building respect for IP by institutionalizing IP awareness/education campaign in the youth sector through an IP Youth Camp.Launched the IP Depot, an online market place for registered IP assets. IP Depot is a user-friendly platform for promoting and commercializing IP assets in the Philippines. Provided a platform to enhance innovative capacity and facilitate commercialization of IP Assets through the establishment of Innovation and Technology Support Offices (ITSO) where stakeholders can avail of technical support services (ex. patent search, claims drafting and strategies for IP commercialization. As of 2015, there are 85 ITSOs established all over the country.For 2014 and 2015, the Philippines has been removed in USTR Special 301 Review Watch List. | Sustain a strong IP regime in the country and further enhance IPR enforcement through a stronger public private partnership.Intensify IPR enforcement operations and IP awareness campaign.Involve more local and international partners in various IP advocacies.With the cooperation of international partners, it is envisioned to expand the IP Youth Camp in the region to further enhanced IP awareness and respect for IP.Further expand the network of ITSOs. Work on IP valuation policy and mechanism, and explore the possibility of institutionalizing IP financing in the banking and financial institutions to drive the growth of the MSME sector. Enhance capacity of MSME on branding and IP protection. |
| Website for further information:  | <http://www.ipophil.gov.ph>  |  |
| Contact point for further details: | Atty. Josephine R. Santiago, LLMDirector GeneralIntellectual Property Office of the Philippines Intellectual Property Center, 28 Upper McKinley Road, McKinley Hill Town Center, Fort Bonifacio, 1634 Taguig CityTel.: +632 238 6300Fax: +632 890 4862Email: josephinesantiago.dg@ipophil.gov.phAtty. Allan B. GeptyDeputy Director GeneralIntellectual Property Office of the Philippines Intellectual Property Center, 28 Upper McKinley Road, McKinley Hill Town Center, Fort Bonifacio, 1634 Taguig CityTel.: +632 238 6300Fax: +632 890 4862Email: allan.gepty@ipophil.gov.ph Atty. Leny B. RazDirector, Bureau of Trademarks (BOT)Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines Intellectual Property Center, 28 Upper McKinley Road, McKinley Hill Town Center, Fort Bonifacio, 1634 Taguig CityTel.: +632 238 6300Email. leny.raz@ipophil.gov.ph |  |
| ***Competition Policy*** | Promulgated Republic Act No. 10667, otherwise known as the Philippine Competition Act (PCA), which took effect on 17 September 2015. The PCA prohibits anti-competitive agreements, abuses of dominant positions, and mergers and acquisitions that limit, prevent, and restrict competition.  Under the law, it seeks to create the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC), a quasi-judicial body composed of a chairperson, four commissioners, and an executive director, all appointed by the President. The PCC can impose penalties against entities that engage in unfair business practices with fines reaching up to P250 million. The PCA further strengthens competition law enforcement by giving the Department of Justice’s Office for Competition (DOJ-OFC) a more focused mandate – investigating and prosecuting the most egregious anticompetitive behavior (cartels). For details, refer to <https://www.senate.gov.ph/republic_acts/ra%2010667.pdf>  | Continue to raise public awareness to inform the general public of the provisions of the PCA), while further strengthening its capacity in the field of cartel investigation and prosecution. Work towards enabling a knowledge-sharing environment that advances responsible business and regulatory practices beneficial to consumers and other stakeholders. |
| Website for further information:  | <http://www.doj.gov.ph> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | Head Office for Competition Department of Justice Padre Faura, Ermita Manila, Philippines Tel: (632) 521-2941 loc. 388Fax: (632) 524-2230 E-mail: competition@doj.gov.ph**;** gls.doj@gmail.com  |  |
| ***Government Procurement*** | Maintained the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) as the central electronic portal on government procurement. It operates the Electronic Bulletin Board, the Supplier’s Registry, the Electronic Catalogue, the Virtual Store and the Merchant’s Registry System.In the process of reviewing the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, including proposed amendments, to adapt to the changes in the procurement environment.  The Government Procurement Policy Board-Technical Support Office (GPPB-TSO) implemented the “Professionalization Program for Public Procurement Practitioners”. Training modules were reviewed, revised, and improved based on current local and international best practices on procurement vis-à-vis the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its revised Implementing Rules and Regulations and allied issuances.  As part of the professionalization program, conducted a pilot training for government procurement practitioners to serve as trainers for the roll out of the professionalization program. Improved transparency through Administrative Order No. 46, Series of 2015, which requires the submission of the Annual Procurement Plan (APP) to the Government Procurement Policy Board-Technical Support Office  (GPPB-TSO) within the first month of the year to speed up procurement procedures.Included in Government Procurement Policy Board website the Construction Industry Authority of the Philippines’ updated and consolidated list of blacklisted contractors (as of 31 July 2015). | Conduct a study on the establishment of an independent complaints or protest review body.Development of a framework to sustain an ensure the participation of civil society organizations in procurement monitoring.Amend the Blacklisting Guidelines and study the possibility of implementing a Cross-Debarment policy with International Financing Institutions .Conduct the possibility of adopting a wider policy on Framework Agreements (e.g., agreement or arrangement between buying authorities).Study the fluctuation factor formula for Price Escalation.Further strengthen the procurement monitoring and enforcement institutions and mechanisms of the government through an online monitoring and assessment platform, i.e. the Online Procurement Performance and Compliance Indicator System (OPPCIS) Create the GPPB Institute.Link professionalization of public procurement practitioners with the procurement competency framework that will provide a concrete selection approach for government personnel who will be designated as Bids and Awards Committee, Secretariat and Technical Working Group members.Develop/create procurement program (Masteral Degree, Diploma Program or Certificate Course) within respective educational institutions. |
| Website for further information:  | [www.gppb.gov.ph](http://www.gppb.gov.ph) [www.neda.gov.ph](http://www.neda.gov.ph)  |  |
| Contact point for further details: | Ruben S. Reinoso, Jr.Assistant Director General for Investment ProgrammingNational Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)12 Saint Jose Maria Escriva DrivePasig City, PhilippinesTel.: (632) 631-0945 loc 607Fax: (632) 631-2192Email: RSReinoso@neda.gov.ph Roderick M. PlantaDirector IV, Infrastructure StaffNational Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)12 Saint Jose Maria Escriva DrivePasig City, PhilippinesTel.: (632) 631-3724Fax: (632) 631-2188Email: RMPlanta@neda.gov.ph Dennis S. SantiagoExecutive Director VGovernment Procurement Policy Board-Technical Support Office (GPPB-TSO)Unit 2206, Raffles Corporate Center, F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas, Pasig CityTel: (632) 900-6741 to 44E-mail: gppb@gppb.gov.ph |  |
| ***Deregulation/Regulatory Review*** | Water SectorUndertook a study on the water resources sector institutional structure and development of proposal to reconstitute, elevate in the bureaucracy, and strengthen the existing national Water resources Board (NWRB).Transportation SectorContinued to implement the 2011-2016 Philippine Development Plan (PDP) to separate the regulatory and operation functions, and eliminate overlapping functions of transport and other concerned agencies.Energy SectorSigning of Joint Resolution No. 13, series of 2015 enjoining all distribution utilities (DUs) to conduct competitive selection process in the procurement of electricity supply for their captive market. Issued the following circulars to further promote competition in the sector.1. DOE Circular No. DC2015-06-0010 “Providing policies to facilitate the full implementation of the Retail Competition and Open Access (RCOA) in the Philippine Electric Power Industry”, and

 1. DOE Circular No. DC2015-06-0008 “Maintaining All Distribution Utilities to Undergo Competitive Selection Process in Securing Power Supply Agreements”.

Issuance of Department Circular no. DC2015-07-0014 providing incentives to invest in renewable energy. Promulgation of Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) Resolutions Nos. 6 and 14 adopting feed-in tariff rates for solar and wind power on 27 March 2015 and 06 October 2015 respectively.Promulgation of ERC Resolution No. 12 Series of 2015, discontinuing the wholesale aggregator scheme eliminating third parties from participating in the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM), enabling DUs to directly compete and participate in the same, and effectively reduce the price of electricity. Maritime SectorIssued Executive Order No. 909 entitled “ Encouraging Investments in Newly Constructed Ships or Brand New Vessels by Providing Incentives therefore.”To encourage investments, Republic Act No. 9295 entitled: An Act Promoting the Development of the Philippine Domestic Shipping, Shipbuilding, Ship Repair and Ship Breaking, Ordaining Reforms in Government Policies Towards Shipping in the Philippines and for other purposes was issued, which among others, deregulates the domestic shipping industry by allowing domestic ship operators to establish their own shipping rates provided that effective competition is fostered and public interest is served. | Water SectorIssue an Executive Order (EO) to reconstitute, elevate in the bureaucracy, and strengthen the existing NWRB.Awaiting the approval of H.B. 3303, an Act Rationalizing the Financial Regulation of Water Utilities, Creating the Water Regulatory Commission and for Other Purposes, to establish a Water Regulatory Commission (WRC), an independent economic/financial regulator for the water supply and sanitation (WSS) subsector.Transportation SectorAwaiting legislation of a law setting the direction of and parameters for the development of and regulation of the transportation system.Drafting of an E.O. adopting a policy framework to set the direction of and parameters for the integrated development and regulation of the transportation system.Energy SectorDevelopment egislation of a law to promote and implement the Accreditation Systems for Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) as well as Energy Efficiency Service Providers (EESPs).   |
| Website for further information:  | <http://www.neda.gov.ph><http://www.erc.gov.ph>[www.marina.gov.ph](http://www.marina.gov.ph) |  |
| Contact point for further details: | Ruben S. Reinoso, Jr.Assistant Director General for investment ProgrammingNational Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)12 Saint Josemaria Escriva DrivePasig City, PhilippinesTel.: (632) 631-0945 lo. 607Fax: (632) 631-2192Email: RSReinoso@neda.gov.phRoderick M. PlantaDirector IV, Infrastructure StaffNational Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)12 Saint Josemaria Escriva DrivePasig City, PhilippinesTel.: (632) 631-3724Fax: (632) 631-2188Email: RMPlanta@neda.gov.phThe AdministratorMaritime Industry Authority984 Parkview Plaza, Taft Avenue corner Kalaw Street, ManilaTel: (632) 523-9078, 526-0971, 524-2895Email: oadm@marina.gov.ph |  |
| ***Implementation of WTO Obligations/ROOs*** | Participated actively in the 9th Session of the WTO Ministerial Conference (MC9) that adopted the Bali Ministerial Declaration.Complied with the annual obligation of the Philippines to participate in an annual notification exercise on Import Licensing Procedures (ILP) as required under Articles 1.4(A) and 8.2(B); Article 7.3; and Article 5 of the WTO Agreement on ILP.Submitted the necessary notification requirements mandated under the covered WTO Agreements, among others, on:* Anti-Dumping;
* Safeguards;
* Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures; and
* Technical Barriers to Trade
 | Continue to actively participate in the negotiations and as mandated by the Ministerial Declaration, i.e., Submission of necessary notification requirements within the prescribed period. |
| Website for further information:  | <https://www.wto.org/> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The Director Bureau of International Trade RelationsDepartment of Trade and Industry357 Senator Gil J. Puyat AvenueMakati City 1200 PhilippinesTel: (632) 465-3300; 465-3356Fax: (632) 890 5149 |  |
| ***Dispute Resolution*** | Dispute ResolutionPromulgation of Republic Act (R.A.) No. 10642, or the Philippine Lemon Law, protecting rights of buyers of new motor vehicles. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) may settle the dispute through mediation, arbitration or adjudication.Continued to fine-tune the proposed overhaul of the Rules on Civil Procedure. The first draft of the amendment proposes the following:Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is mandatory, save for exceptions, before a complaint may be filed.Even if the case is permitted to be filed, parties may settle during the stages of court-annexed mediation or judicial dispute resolution.Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)The Supreme Court, through its decisions, continues its liberal stance towards ADR as a welcome alternative to burdensome litigation.Issuance of E.O. No. 78 on 04 July 2012 - Mandating the inclusion of of provisions of the use of ADR mechanisms in all contracts involving PPP projects, BOT projects, joint venture agreements between government and private entities and those entered by LGUs. | Dispute ResolutionAs the law is still in its relative infancy, the efficacy of mediation and arbitration as dispute settlement mechanisms has yet to be seen.The Second Draft of the Revised Rules of Civil Procedure has yet to be published. This will be the draft that will be submitted to the Supreme Court for its evaluation and approval.ADRReview of possible amendments to the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Law of the Philippines.Efforts to further strengthen R.A. No. 9285, the ADR Act, including an amendment that would lower the penalty in criminal cases where the civil aspect is settled through ADR.Participation in the formulation of ADR rules for the SEC as stated in the 2015 SEC corporate governance blueprint.Finalization of the IRR of E.O. No. 78, s. 2012 and the conduct of information campaign on the policy directive contained in E.O. No. 78, to be spearheaded by the Office for Alternative Dispute Resolution (OADR), an attached agency of the DOJ, and the NEDA, through the PPP Center. |
| Website for further information:  | http://doj.gov.ph<http://www.osg.gov.ph> <http://www.pdrci.org/> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | Office of the Chief State CounselDepartment of Justice Padre Faura St., Ermita1000 Manila PhilippinesTel: (632) 523-1505; 523-8481 to 98 ext. 316Fax: (632) 525-2218E-mail: rvparas@doj.gov.ph**Office of the Executive Director** Office for Alternative Dispute Resolution Padre Faura St., Ermita1000 Manila PhilippinesTel: (632) 524-8939; 523-8481 to 98 ext. 302, 398Fax: (632) 536-0458E-mail: bcongoco@gmail.com The Solicitor General Office of the Solicitor General 134 Amorsolo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City Tel: (632) 818-6381 Fax: (632) 817-6037 E-mail: docket@osg.gov.phPhilippine Dispute Resolution Center, Inc. (PDRCI)3rd Floor, Commerce & Industry Plaza (PCCI Building), 1030 Campus Ave. cor Park Ave., Mckinley Town Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig CityTel: (632) 822-4102 Fax: (632) 822-4102 E-mail: secretariat@pdrci.org  |  |
| *Mobility of Business People* | Implemented Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Department Order No. 146-15, “Revised Rules for the Issuance of Employment Permits to Foreign Nationals” which excluded the several categories of natural persons from securing Alien Employment Permit (AEP).The APEC Business Travel Card’s (ABTC) validity was extended from 3 years to 5 years effective 01 Sept 2015.Implemented Foreign Service Circular 95-2014 which extends temporary visitors’ visa-free entry to the Philippines from 21 days to 30 days. To date, 157 countries benefit from this law. For more information, please see: http://www.immigration.gov.ph/images/Issuances/2014/april/SBM%202014-001.pdf | Implement the online application system in securing AEP.Implement a Philippine Skilled Occupational Shortage List. Foreign nationals will be exempted from the publication requirement and payment of publication fee.Streamline ABTC operations to include online applications and local priniting of ABTC cards for Filipino businessmen. Assignment of dedicated personnel for ABTC processing and the development of revised guidelines on ABTC application and renewals are under consideration.  |
| *Website for further information:*  | <http://www.dole.gov.ph/files/DO%20146-15.pdf>[www.immigration.gov.ph](http://www.immigration.gov.ph)http://www.dfa.gov.ph/ |  |
| *Contact point for further details:* | Director Dominique Rubia-TutayBureau of Local Employment-DOLETel. No.: 528-0087Email: nikki\_planning@yahoo.comMr. Jose S. SandovalBureau of Local Employment-DOLETel. No.: 528-0083Email: joessandoval@yahoo.comStrategic Management OfficeRoom 401,Bureau Of ImmigrationMagallanes Drive, Intramuros, Manila; tel. No.: 523-6183Office of the Undersecretary for International Economic Relations2330 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City1300 PhilippinesTel. No. 834-3047 |  |
| *Official websites that gather economies’ information* | Publication of APEC Book (Volume 1) in November 2015. For the period 2013-2015 below are some important research outputs:1. Building Inclusive Economies, Building A Better World: A Look at the APEC 2015 Priority Areas (Volume 1). 2015
2. Supporting WTO and Pathways to the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) (DP 2015-17)
3. Deepening Regional Cooperation for Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction: A Proposal for Proactive Approach to Risk Financing (DP 2015-21)
4. How Are Firms Responding to Philippine Free Trade Agreements? (DP 2015-22)
5. Furthering the Implementation of AEC Blueprint Measures (DP 2015-35)
6. Doing Business: A Review of Literature and its Role in APEC 2015 (DP 2015-37)
7. Social Enterprises and Employment: Mainstreaming SMEs and Employment Creation (DP 2015-38)
8. Evaluation of the APEC Environmental Goods Initiative: A Dominant Supplier Approach (DP 2015-34)
9. Toward an Enabling Set of Rules of Origin for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (DP 2015-29)
10. Green and Gold: Promoting Eco-Adventure and Cultural Tourism for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (DP 2015-33)
11. What Factors Affect the Business Success of Philippine SMEs in the Food Sector? (PN 2015-21)
12. Development of Policy on the Gains/Challenges of the 1st High Level Meeting on Human Capacity Building and the thematic paper on Aligning Education and Training to Industry Requirements
13. Assessment of Shared Services Facilities: Whether to Expand or Maintain Status Quo in terms of its impact on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
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| Website for further information:  | <http://www.pids.gov.ph> <http://pascn.pids.gov.ph/><http://www.ascc2015.org/> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The President Philippine Institute for Development Studies 18F Three Cyberpod Centris, North Tower EDSA corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon CityEmail: gllanto@mail.pids.gov.phThe Project DirectorPhilippine APEC Study Center Network SecretariatEmail: emedalla@mail.pids.gov.ph; pascn@mail.pids.gov.ph |  |
| ***Transparency*** | Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill passed the Committee on Appropriations. Publication of up-to-date announcements, statements, articles, advisories, and documents from the government on the National Government Portal through the online Official Gazette Development of online social media accounts for the national government.The government's data portal, Open Data Philippines (data.gov.ph) was developed which aims to make national government data accessible.After the launch of the Foreign Aid Transparency Hub or FAiTH ([www.gov.ph/faith](http://www.gov.ph/faith)) in November 18, 2013, FAiTH 2.0 was launched to streamline the reporting process from various donors. | Development of the Official Gazette search engine based for thorough document parsing and improved return results.Expansion of the Institutional Memory of the Office of the President, as a digital archive and through printed volumes to be distributed to public libraries and institutions.Further development of the online citizen engagement platform, an online feedback platform that will allow the public to report local concerns by entering or pinpointing their location on an online interactive map. Development of a the Public Consultations page, an online posting of scheduled public hearings from government agencies, as well as from the House of Representatives and the Senate. Policy papers, draft bills, and the like shall be uploaded and be open for public comments. |
| Website for further information:  | The Official Gazette ([www.gov.ph](http://www.gov.ph))Open Data Portal ([www.data.gov.ph](http://www.data.gov.ph))Foreign Aid Transparency Hub ([www.gov.ph/faith](http://www.gov.ph/faith)) |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office 3/F New Executive Building, Jose P. Laurel St., Malacañang, Manila Tel. No.: (632) 736-0719 Fax No.: (632) 735-6167  |  |

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| **RTAs/FTAs**  |
| ***-*** ***Description of current agreements*** |  |
| ***Agreement #1*** | **Philippines-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement**The Agreement was ratified and entered into force in December 2008. The General Review of the Agreement, following from PJEPA Article 161, is scheduled for 2016. Copy of the agreement is available at [www.dti.gov.ph/dti/index.php?p=642](http://www.dti.gov.ph/dti/index.php?p=642) |
| ***Agreement #2*** | **ASEAN Free Trade Area**The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) is a trade bloc among the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).During the 27th ASEAN Summit held on November 22, 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, ASEAN Leaders adopted the AEC Blueprint 2025 which provides for broad, strategic measures for the AEC from 2016 to 2025.[www.aseansec.org/19585.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/19585.htm) |
| ***Agreement #3*** | **ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Partnership Agreement**The ASEAN – Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (AJCEPA) provides for the establishment of a Free Trade Area (FTA) between ASEAN and Japan. Philippines signing the Agreement on 02 April 2008. The Philippines begun implementation of the Agreement on 01July 2010.[www.aseansec.org/22572.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/22572.htm) |
| ***Agreement #4*** | **ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement**The Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation among ASEAN Member Countries (AMCs) and Korea and the Annex on Cooperation was signed on 13 December 2005.  [www.aseansec.org/18063.htm](http://www.aseansec.org/18063.htm) |
| ***Agreement #5*** | **ASEAN-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership** The Agreement on Trade in Goods Under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Republic of India was signed on 13 August 2009.[www.aseansec.org/22677.pdf](http://www.aseansec.org/22677.pdf) |
| ***Agreement #6*** | **ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement**The Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area was signed on 27 February 2009.[www.aseansec.org/22260.pdf](http://www.aseansec.org/22260.pdf) |
| ***- Agreements under negotiation*** |  |
|  | ***Agreement #1*** | **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** Parties have adopted a set of Guiding Principles and Objectives in negotiating the RCEP that aims to achieve a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement among the ASEAN Member States and ASEAN’s FTA Partners. Since the inaugural meeting in May 2013, there have been ten rounds of negotiations led by the RCEP Trade Negotiating Committee (RCEP TNC) and supported by sixteen working groups and sub-working groups. The 11th round of negotiations will take place in February 2016 and the target is to conclude RCEP negotiations in 2016. |
| ***Agreement #2*** | **ASEAN – Hong Kong FTA (AHKFTA)**Parties have adopted a set of General Principles in negotiating the AHKFTA that will build on the rights and obligations of both sides under the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO), among others. The ASEAN – Hong Kong Trade Negotiating Committee (AHKTNC) has met five times supported by eight working groups and the target is to conclude negotiations in 2016.  |
| ***Agreement #3*** | **European Free Trade Association (EFTA)**The Joint Declaration on Cooperation (JD) signed on 23 June 2014 in Iceland provides the framework for the negotiation of a free trade agreement between the Philippines and EFTA Member States. Discussions on a scoping paper followed the JD signing which includes the objectives and key principles on which the FTA negotiations will be based. It also enumerates the key elements/areas to be included in the FTA as well as the process of negotiations.The FTA covers, among others, trade in goods, rules of origin and customs cooperation, trade facilitation, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, trade remedies, trade in services, investments, intellectual property rights, competition, government procurement and trade and sustainable development.Four (4) negotiating rounds were held in 2015 (March, June, September and November). The chapters on Competition, SPS, TBT and Trade and Sustainable Development have been concluded.The 5th round is scheduled on 1-5 February 2016 in Manila. |
| ***-*** ***Future plans*** | The Philippines is firmly committed to fair and liberal trade and have upheld this position consistently in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora. The Philippines also remains committed to the multilateral trading system of the WTO even as the country seeks to further expand trade particularly with possible dialogue partners |
| Website for further information:  | www.dti.gov.ph |
| Contact point for further details: | The Director Bureau of International Trade RelationsDepartment of Trade and Industry361 Senator Gil J. Puyat AvenueMakati City 1200 PhilippinesTel: (632) 465-3300, 465-3356Fax: (632) 890-5149 |

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| ***Other voluntary reporting areas:******Women and the Economy***  | The government encourgares women in all sectors of the society to take part in leadership and the drive for excellence. Proclamation 227 of 1988 highlights the historical contributions of Filipino women of every class, religion and ethnic background to the nation’s growth and strength. The Magna Carta for Women (Republic Act No 9710) seeks to eliminate discrimination against women by recognizing, protecting, fulfilling and promoting the rights of Filipino women. This includes the non-discrimination in employment in the fields of military, police and other several services.In 2015, the Philippines:* Completed Phase-1 of Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation (GREAT) of Women Project - a governance and capacity development project that aims to promote and support a gender responsive enabling environment for women’s economic empowerment;
* Integrated gender sensitive modules and entrepreneurship values in basic competency modules of technical-vocational skills building programs;
* Implemented a National Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Plan (2011-2016) with gender perspective provisions;
* Developed women economic empowerment tools for social forestry programs, eco-tourism programs, tourism sector, technology applications for SMEs, monitoring microfinance institutions, etc.;
* Increased the gender budget allocations for women in microenterprises and product development initiatives by selected national and local government agencies; and
* Issued the PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2012-01 which mandates all government agencies and instrumentalities including LGUs to allocate a minimum of five percent (5%) of their total appropriations for Gender and Development (GAD) programs and projects.
* Repealed Articles 130 and 131 of PD 442-Labor Code of the Philippines prohibiting the night work for women.
* Implemented the Department of Labor and Employment’s *Balik Pinay! Balik Hanapbuhay!* (Returning Filipinas! Returning Employment!)where returning women overseas workers, particularly those displaced by the hostilities and conflicts in their host country, are provided with livelihood starter kits based on the training that they attended.
 | Advance the Boracay Action Agenda to “strengthen focus on MSMEs led by women” by ensuring the following:1. Fostering the use of gender-disaggregated data in measuring economic and social impacts of MSMEs.
2. Promote an understanding of the divergent constraints faced by male and female-led MSMEs.
3. Encourage exchange of best practices on women-friendly interfaces with customs and other border authorities.

Participation in the pilot of the APEC Healthy Women, Healthy Economy Policy Toolkit in the PEZA economic zones consisting of 3,500 companies. |
| Website for further information:  | <http://pcw.gov.ph/gwp/about> |  |
| Contact point for further details: | The DirectorResource Generation and Management ServiceDepartment of Trade and Industry4/F RGMS, Board of Investments Building, 385 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati CityTel: (+632) 976-5711 local 5311Fax: (+632) 976-5702E-mail: RGMS@dti.gov.phThe Executive DirectorPhilippine Commission on Women1145 J.P. Laurel St., San Miguel, ManilaTel: (+632) 735-1654 loc. 125; 735-4955Fax: (+632) 736-4449E-mail: edo@pcw.gov.ph |  |