



PRESS RELEASE

EU Delegation and NEDA Launch TRTA Website

NEDA Acting DG Augusto B. Santos and Head of the EU Delegation to the Philippines, Ambassador Alistair MacDonald will launch the Trade Related Technical Assistance (TRTA) Project 2 website on 14 January 2010 at 3:00 p.m., Hampton Function Room, Astoria Plaza, Escriva Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

The website aims to provide information on TRTA to a wider audience and promote the positive impact of the project on its government agency partners and private stakeholders.

The website features the four components of the project as well as links to other government agencies and offices of the European Union involved in the implementation of the project. The activities of the project are succinctly packaged in the brief activity reports found in each of the component web pages. Philippine and EU food and product safety standards, regulations and laws can also be accessed in the website. The website can be visited at <http://www.eu-trtaphils.org>.

TRTA 2 is an EU-assisted program that aims to support sustainable poverty reduction in the Philippines by enhancing the capacity of both government and non-state actors to integrate into international trading systems in a beneficial manner.

TRTA has three main components that highlight the potential key points where Philippine trade can improve and benefit greatly, as follows: trade policy and export development, standards harmonisation and food safety compliance, and trade facilitation, the Rapid Response Facility, to be activated at a later date.

The launch will principally feature the switch-on ceremony to be led by the NEDA Acting Director-General, Augusto B. Santos, and the EU Ambassador, Hon. Alistair MacDonald. Stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, officials from partner government agencies, and members of the press will join the launch.



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Delegation of
The European Union
In the Philippines
Tel: (632) 859 5100
Fax: (632) 859 5109

The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

“The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.

After the launch, a press conference shall be conducted with the following invited as resource-persons: NEDA Acting Director-General Augusto B. Santos, Ambassador Alistair MacDonald, NEDA Deputy Director-General Margarita R. Songco, Department of Trade and Industry Senior Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino, Department of Agriculture Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano, and Bureau of Customs Deputy Commissioner Alexander M. Arevalo. The press conference will be at the Broadway Function Room, also at Astoria Plaza.

TRTA 2 Background

- TRTA 2 is a € 6.5 million (approximately P420 million) grant from the European Commission to reduce poverty in the Philippines by facilitating trade between the EU and the Philippines as well as enhancing investment in the country. The project was launched in 2009 and will run until 2012 with the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) as lead implementing agency.
- The project has three main components with the following as key objectives:
 - a. Trade Policy and Export Development component
 - support the formulation and implementation of appropriate trade policies and commitments in particular the ones made in the framework of the ongoing EU-ASEAN FTA negotiations
 - b. Standards Harmonisation and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Conformity
 - facilitate the adoption of and compliance with international standards and regulations for selected product and service exports
 - c. Trade Facilitation
 - Enhance the competitive, transparent, and efficient movement of traded products within the international and regional trade facilitation systems
- In 2009, the project has extended technical assistance to the Philippine Accreditation Office (PAO) in building its capacity and competence as the national accreditation institution and to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in enhancing its capacity to develop and implement harmonized SPS (food safety) regulations that conform to EU and internationally accepted standards.
- Notably in the private sector, TRTA has trained fishery stakeholders in three key areas in the country on BFAR's modified registration system, risk-based sampling and risk-based inspection procedures. Through the training, the stakeholders were able to understand BFAR's registration and inspection procedure and are expected to become compliant to it.
- Specific to the trade facilitation component, the project has supported the Bureau of Customs (BoC) in the development, adoption and implementation of an enhanced Customs Transit/ Transshipment System in the Philippines. The proposed enhanced transit system features GPS (Global Positioning System) assisted tracking of cargoes in transit to allow real time monitoring and tracking.

Reference:

Theresa Jane Cajarte
ICE Associate
TRTA 2
Tel: 631 3739/ 633 6013
Email: theresacajarte@yahoo.com,
cajarte.theresa@eu-trtaphils.org

Thelma Gecolea
Public Affairs Officer
EU Delegation to the Philippines
Tel: 859-5125
Email: Thelma.GECOLEA@ec.europa.eu