



## **Wellington, New Zealand March 17, 2014**

### **1. Current economic, political situation and labour situation in the country**

#### **Economy**

The Philippines may be due for another credit-rating upgrade in the coming months as the economy continues to exhibit the sustainability of its growth despite challenges inside the country and overseas.

Latest GDP posted 7.2% growth. Inflation rate is 2.1%. Exports amounted to \$53.98 billion. Export goods include semiconductors and electronic products, transport equipment, garments, copper products, petroleum products, coconut oil and fruits. Main export partners are Japan, United States, China, Hong Kong, South Korea and Thailand. Imports amounted to \$57.24 billion. Imported goods include electronic products, mineral fuels, machinery and transport equipment, iron and steel, textile fabrics, grains, chemicals and plastic. Main import partners

## Page 2

are the U.S., China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Gross external debt is \$60.3 billion. The economy of the Philippines is the 40<sup>th</sup> largest in the world, according to the International Monetary Fund statistics, and is also one of the emerging markets in the world.

Despite significant damage to infrastructure and agriculture at the hands of Typhoon Haiyan, one of the deadliest storms in history, the Philippine economy is expected to continue growing, Typhoon Haiyan killed 6,100 people. The Philippine President, Mr. Benigno C. Aquino III, appointed a Rehabilitation Czar to help in the rehabilitation of heavily-damaged areas, particularly, Tacloban. His name is Panfilo Lacson, former Philippine Senator.

### **Political situation**

Some politicians, particularly Senators, are already gearing up for the Presidential Elections in 2016. Since the 6-year term of the President cannot be extended, the incumbent President of the Philippines, Mr. Aquino III, is banned from running again. The current Vice President, Jejomar Binay, former Mayor of the richest city in the Philippines, Makati, bolted his old party and formed his own. He already announced his candidacy for President. Two other Senators

## Page 3

have hinted that they will also vie for the Presidency.

In the meantime, the Philippines is still embroiled in the almost 6 months investigation of the “pork barrel” scandal where some funds of the government were allegedly diverted to ghost projects. The Senate Blue Ribbon Committee is currently making an investigation in aid of legislation. The Justice Department, on the other hand, is trying to beef up its list of witnesses by encouraging them to “spill the beans” on some Senators who accordingly they have evidence of participation in the alleged scam, and in the process, qualify to become state witnesses. This is a long-drawn process and no resolution seems clear at this time.

### **Labour Situation**

Philippine labour latest statistics shows a labour force of 59.81 million. These consist of services (52%), agriculture (33%), and industry (15%). Unemployment rate was registered at 7.1%.

To mark International Women’s Day the other day, the Philippine President’s Office vowed to strengthen measures to combat violence against women and provide more opportunities for gender equality and empowerment. Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma said it is everyone’s obligation to seek an end to violence, discrimination and other forms of gender

bias. In a statement, President Aquino III recognized the contributions of Filipino women to the country's rebuilding efforts in the aftermath of calamities.

## **2. HR challenges**

The 3 main challenges facing the HR profession in the Philippines at present are still:

- Leadership development
- Talent management
- Succession management

## **3. PMAP projects and initiatives**

Newly-elected President of the People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) Josephus B. Jimenez kicked off his administration by announcing the theme of his Presidency, Leading the Filipino Human Capital to the Threshold of the Asean Integration.

Among others, the strategic thrusts include:

- Benchmarking the Filipino human capital's core competencies with the rest of Asean and focusing on the critical few competitive edges.
- Identifying and tapping the tremendous opportunities for Filipino people managers in specific areas of special skills and competencies.
- Bringing PMAP to the threshold of the Asean integration.

PMAP is also strengthening the local chapters as well as adding chapters overseas. President Jimenez has been regularly visiting the chapters and inducting their officers.

APFHRM President Ernesto G. Espinosa was appointed as Chair of the PMAP International Affairs Committee as well as the Publications Committee and Editor-in-Chief of the PMAP magazine, People Manager. He will invite the members of APFHRM to contribute articles for every monthly issue of the magazine. Peter Wilson and Musharrof Hossein have been invited and they have already contributed articles for publication in the magazine.

#### **4. Annual Conference**

- **51<sup>th</sup> PMAP Annual Conference**  
September 17-19, 2014  
Cebu Waterfront Hotel, Cebu City, Philippines

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