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## 5th GOPAC ends with Manila Declaration recognizing UN Convention Against Corruption

By: Philippine News Agency  
February 2, 2013 6:02 PM



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The online news portal of TV5

MANILA, Philippines -- The 5th Global Conference of Parliamentarians Against Corruption ended here Saturday, reaching a milestone with the signing of the Manila Declaration.

The declaration recognizes the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) as the first legally binding and internationally accepted instrument in the fight against corruption.

"GOPAC members agree that corruption is a plague that affects individuals at the local level, and that this plague can have serious consequences globally," Senator Edgardo Angara, who was elected GOPAC chair, said at a press conference.

A record 429 lawmakers from 78 countries, including 12 heads of parliament, participated in the four-day conference.

"Corruption is largely measured by perception because corruption is based on people's experience. It is a gut issue for many. Eliminating corruption therefore necessitates changing experiences, changing how people experience governance," Angara, who is current chair of the Southeast Asian Parliamentarians Against Corruption, said.

"As legislators, we cannot remain idle. We must be part of the solution, even while there are those among parliamentarians who have been party to corruption," he added.

The GOPAC participants vowed to enhance the capacity of parliamentarians to adapt international standards to national needs, strengthening anti-corruption strategies and monitoring their respective countries' compliance with the UNCAC.

"The agreement also urges parliamentarians to participate in anti-corruption meetings on the international stage, and work with international organizations and civil society on anti-corruption initiatives," Angara said.

The parliamentarians also agreed to help build the capacity of fellow legislators to exercise anti-corruption oversight functions in their respective countries by developing support networks for parliamentarians, and to strengthen relations with organizations that work on oversight issues.

"One important resolution we all agreed upon is to help each other develop and roll out resources to strengthen anti-money laundering regimes," Angara said.

"We must do all we can to aid the efforts of our fellow parliamentarians to recover stolen corrupt assets through domestic legislation and initiatives," he added.

Other agreements include a pledge to allow the public and civil society to participate in the fight against graft and corruption by providing education and access to information, as well as protecting the rights of anti-corruption advocates.

The delegates also resolved to disseminate and implement recommendations for the development of effective and comprehensive systems of ethics and conduct at global, regional and domestic levels.

They also agreed to uphold fundamental international standards while recognizing the differences in political and cultural contexts in which legislators work.

Lastly, a Global Task Force set up for Women in Parliamentary Work agreed to provide a network of support for women parliamentarians to enhance their capacity to participate in the fight against corruption.

The task force recognizes studies showing a direct link between the presence of women in parliaments and a decrease in the level of corruption.

Previous GOPAC chairman Dr. Naser Al Sane said corruption is getting worse despite relentless efforts to address "this monster facing us everywhere."

"We are optimistic, and have optimism in the bottom of our heart. We are up to this responsibility," Naser said.

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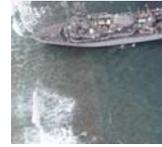
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**Rebecca Tala** · Works at Dentistry

Congratulations to Senator Angara and I do hope that they can find a way to lessen corruption here.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · February 2 at 10:20pm



**Toribio Gepila Jr.** · Top Commenter

It's to all Filipinos responsibilities to stop corruption in their country because this is basically the Daan Na Matuwid for prosperity. Strong laws must guard the budget so that these patong pats corruption can be true eliminated in all level of the government. The reason why we became 3rd world country is because of Corrupt government since Marcos regime till GMA.

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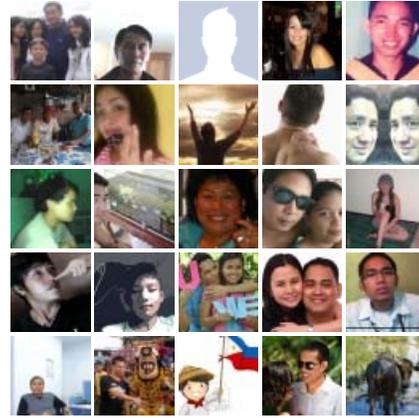
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