

ASEAN Tripartite Partners Adopt Manila Declaration Strengthening Social Partnership in the Region



In line with the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) under Philippine chairmanship, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) hosted the Eighth (8th) ASEAN Regional Tripartite Social Dialogue Conference (RTSDC) on October 18-19, 2017 at the Century Park Hotel in Manila. The 2-day Conference was participated by tripartite delegates from the ASEAN Member States, as well as representatives of various workers' and employers' organizations in the Philippines.

“[T]his activity is not possible without the assistance from the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, the cooperation of ASEAN Services Employees Trade Union Council and ASEAN Confederation of Employers, and the guidance of the ASEAN Secretariat,” underscored Undersecretary Dominador R. Say in his keynote message on behalf of the DOLE Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III.

With the theme “Raising the Bar of Social Partnership in an Integrating ASEAN”, the 8th RTSDC provided a platform for a tripartite dialogue on a wide range of labor and industry issues such as changing economic and labor landscape in an integrating ASEAN, good industrial relations practices and other decent work initiatives, economic and technological changes, migration and gender concerns, and decent work promotion in the public sector.

“Tripartite partners are recognized as important contributors to the attainment of ASEAN commitments and aspirations in key ASEAN documents”, stated H.E. AKP Mochtan, ASEAN Secretariat Deputy Secretary-General for

Community and Corporate Affairs Department. “Through functional social dialogue and tripartism, enforcement of labor laws and protection of workers’ rights can be more effective”, he added.

Aside from panel discussions, the activity facilitated the adoption of the “Manila Tripartite Joint Statement towards Strengthening Social Partnership in an Integrating ASEAN”. The milestone document embodies the tripartite delegates’ collective commitment to give all-out support to the efforts of the ASEAN and its social partners in building a sound and stable industrial relations system in each ASEAN Member State, and in the ASEAN as a whole.

“In this modern time, globalization ushered a new breed of labor and industry concerns brought about by labor migration, technological advancements, non-standard forms of employment arrangements, and other contemporary issues; Nevertheless, I believe that we will prevail over any challenges because we are ‘One ASEAN’”, emphasized Undersecretary Joel B. Maglunsod in his Conference Synthesis.

The Conference is considered as a milestone in ASEAN history as the member-states, in a sound exercise of tripartism and social dialogue, were able to discuss and address a wide range of emerging and cross-cutting issues that pose challenges in ASEAN regional integration.

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