

## **DOLE meets with the Council of Global Union (CGU)**

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), through the Bureau of Labor Relations (BLR), convened a meeting with the representatives of the Council of Global Union-Pilipinas on 03 February 2021, via zoom cloud, with Undersecretary Benjo Santos M. Benavidez presiding.

The said meeting was convened in response to the request for a dialogue of the CGU-Pilipinas to discuss concerns on the arrest and red-tagging of trade union leaders, the ILO High-Level Mission, as well as the freedom of association efforts in the ecozones.

CGU-Pilipinas representatives provided a brief background on each of the issues raised and discussed the corresponding proposed actions to address the same. They proposed, among others, the intervention of the Department by tapping the Regional Director to assist, provide legal remedies, and facilitate the release of arrested trade unionists within their respective jurisdiction. They recommended that statements in relation to the said concern should have been issued by the Department of Labor and Employment. The CGU-Pilipinas representatives suggested strict implementation and observance of the guidelines with the PNP, AFP, and DOJ relative to the exercise of workers' rights and activities to address red-tagging against trade union leaders and members. However, they also underscored the need to review the guidelines to address the current times.

On possible training to capacitate and drive awareness to all the stakeholders and players of the guidelines, Undersecretary Benavidez mentioned that this may be done in coordination with the International Labor Organization (ILO). When asked for updates regarding the ILO High-Level Mission, Undersecretary Benavidez maintains the Department's readiness to accept.

Concerning the Freedom of Association (FOA) in the ecozones, the body was informed that there has been an initial effort to meet with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) to review the PEZA Guidelines and discuss the creation of the tripartite mechanism in the ecozone.

The CGU-Pilipinas representatives expressed their appreciation for the conduct of dialogue as this allowed them to raise their concerns and provide action points and recommendations.

In his concluding statement, Undersecretary Benavidez said that the Department took note of the importance of social dialogue and review of the guidelines. For matters requiring the decision of the Secretary, feedback to CGU-Pilipinas will be provided once they become available.

End/Honey Glaze Alipio