



Canada Philippines Business Council

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Fil-Can Trade Councils Heads Urge Exporters Sell to Bigger Philippine Companies; EDC ‘Very Interested’ to Give Strategic Support

Vancouver, B.C. -- Bill Hogg, President of Philippine Canadian Trade Council (PCTC) in Vancouver, and Forte Gerardo, President of the national Canada Philippines Business Council (CPBC) based in Toronto, had a common message to exporters in Canada, notably entrepreneurs of Filipino origin: Step up to learn how to deal with larger companies in the Philippines and join big and medium sized Canadian businesses in the rally to export more goods and services to Philippine industrial and commercial firms especially in the private sector. They issued this call at the conclusion of their co-hosted Dinner and Networking Event on **“Export Development Canada – Strengthening Canadian Trade and Investment in the Philippines”** held in Vancouver last September 9

Canadian companies have incurred a deficit of at least half a billion dollars in the balance of trade and payments with the Philippines annually on average in the past five years. “We need to specially train and help say a thousand Canadian exporters – and/or Filipino importers -- each shipping about a half a million dollars a year to manage an equitable balance in our trading with the Philippines,” CPBC head Gerardo suggested in an update slide show presentation on the bilateral trade. “This could be done, and we are recruiting more individual and corporate members and organizing a strong selling mission to the Philippines in March 2010 to impel this movement ahead,” PCTC president Hogg added.

Export Development Canada's Chief Representative in Southeast Asia, Rob Simmons, in his keynote address to a focused gathering of business leaders including bankers, traders, Canadian entrepreneurs of Filipino origin; engineering, environmental and educational management consultants, and civic leaders from Vancouver and Toronto, said: "I am certainly very interested to work with small size companies to introduce them to medium size and larger buyers in the Philippines."

He went on to detail that "One of the things we try to do is open the door for small and medium sized Canadian companies" by leveraging EDC's strategic relationships with large companies developed over many years. "If you're a small technology provider with a real good technology that might be of interest to a large company like PLDT (Philippine Long Distance Company) ... if you go knock on their door it might get you a while to get to their top technical officer or decision makers. So what we try to do in that case is try to start with the top and work down, starting with the CFO and say 'CFO we'd like to have an agreement for our Canadian client to meet with you.' So you can see we can be a sort of rubber stamp to say that the Canadian supplier we introduce will do exactly what they said they can and so open the doors so that you can make your pitch to the right person..."

Citing a recent "success story," Simmons remarked that it was in such a way that a Canadian high-tech company got involved in the international consortium that is bidding to supply the Philippines with automated voting system worth about 300 million U.S. dollars, for possible use in the presidential election set for May 2010.

Simmons reminded that "the reason that EDC has people like me around (in Asia) is not so much to help Canadian companies do business with developed economies like Singapore, but to help more companies do business with emerging markets like the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia where business is not that straightforward and there is need for some support. We know that Canadian exporters have to look beyond the U.S. border for other opportunities."

For micro exporters he advised to involve their banks with Letters of Credit and insurance coverage for their export transactions at the start, and access EDC's services for these needs online, and not to shy from trying to do business with larger companies, because "We are certainly very interested in supporting smaller exporters," he reiterated.

Simmons said that of the 8500 or so companies that EDC supports with financing and insurance coverage of Canadian exports and loans, most, following the 80-20 norm, are small and medium sized companies. During the past three years EDC has supported over \$350 million worth of Canadian exports to the Philippines. This has included financing to leading corporate groups such as BDO, Metro, First Pacific, PLDT, Globe Telecom, and Medical City. Simmons, based in Singapore since January 2004, has over 20 years of experience in assisting Canadian business in Asia. He is on the advisory Board of CPBC. --- 30



Officers of the Canada Philippines Trade Council (CPBC, Toronto) and Philippines Canada Trade Council (PCTC, Vancouver) at the 1st Joint Trade Councils Networking Update on EDC's Works in the Philippines pose after the Vancouver event. From left: Former Ambassador & current Advisor to both councils John Treleven, PCTC Secretary Manny Ila, Keynote Speaker Rob Simmons, EDC Chief Representative in S. E. Asia; Sal Laganse, CPBC; PCTC President Bill Hogg, CPBC President Forte Gerardo, PCTC Director Felipe Calderon, PCTC Vice President Mike Calingo, PCTC Directors Ryan Ferrer and Liza Muyco and Treasurer Melecia Azares.



Guests at the First Joint CPBC-PCTC networking event held recently in Vancouver included Derral Moriyama, Sr. Vice President Commercial of BMO Greater Vancouver District; Scott Shepherd, President of Northstar Trade Finance, Vancouver; and Jamie Bateman, President of BMT Technology, Toronto.

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Companies in Canada West, particularly in B.C. may wish to contact Bill Hogg, President of the Philippines Canada Trade Council at its address: #1200 – 805 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1K1 and visit its website: www.pctc.biz for a complete list of the attendees and for membership application.

Applications for membership in CPBC and a view of the council's 2010 program are accessible in its website www.canphil.com

Forte Gerardo
President

Aurora, ON Canada
21 September 2009