

EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
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THANK YOU, MADAM CHAIR.

My name is ROMEO P. SALUTAN and I belong to the Blaan tribe and an active member of TUKLAS KATUTUBO-a National Volunteer Organization of Tribal Leaders and advocates in the Philippines.

Madam Chair, before highlighting our issues and concerns in this agenda item, allow me to recognise the efforts of my government, the Government of the Philippines, for having the Republic Act 8371, also known as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 (IPRA Law)- a legislation that recognizes and promotes Indigenous Peoples rights in the Philippines, which also created the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, an independent body that is mandated to protect and promote the interest and well-being of our peoples with regards to our beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions.

Madam Chair, it is commending indeed that after 20 years since the inception of the law, as of 2016, 206 Certificate of ancestral domain title has been issued, some of them are with formulated ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plan (ADSDPP). A national guidelines for the Free Prior and Inform Consent was formulated for us to have the right to a consensus decision prior to the implementation of any development in our community.

However, despite the efforts made by the government, gaps in the implementation of IPRA Law still persist like the non - issuance of certificate of non-overlap (CNO) which is a pre requisite prior to the registration of the approved Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) to the Registry of Deeds. Per NCIP record, despite the facts that over 200 CADTs has been issued, as of 2017, only 43 are registered with the Registry of Deeds. The reason for this Madam Chair is that there are the four (4) government agencies; namely: the National Commission in Indigenous Peoples, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Agrarian Reform and the Land Registration Authority that are involve in the whole process of indigenous peoples ancestral land registration with overlapping mandates that exacerbates delay in land registration in the country.

With very limited resources, these competing government agencies have their own technical requirements which most indigenous peoples would struggle to comply due to lack of financial and technical capacity.

Madam Chair, in this regards, we call upon the intervention of the Expert Mechanism for the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples to ask the Philippine Government to streamline implementation of the approved Joint Administrative Order No. 1, series of 2012 on Certificate of Non-overlap in favor to the right holders of the ancestral domain and we call upon the Philippines Government to revise the said Joint Administrative Order to simplify the process in securing the said Certificate of Non-overlap.

Thank you.