

# PLDT makes its presence felt in international CG events

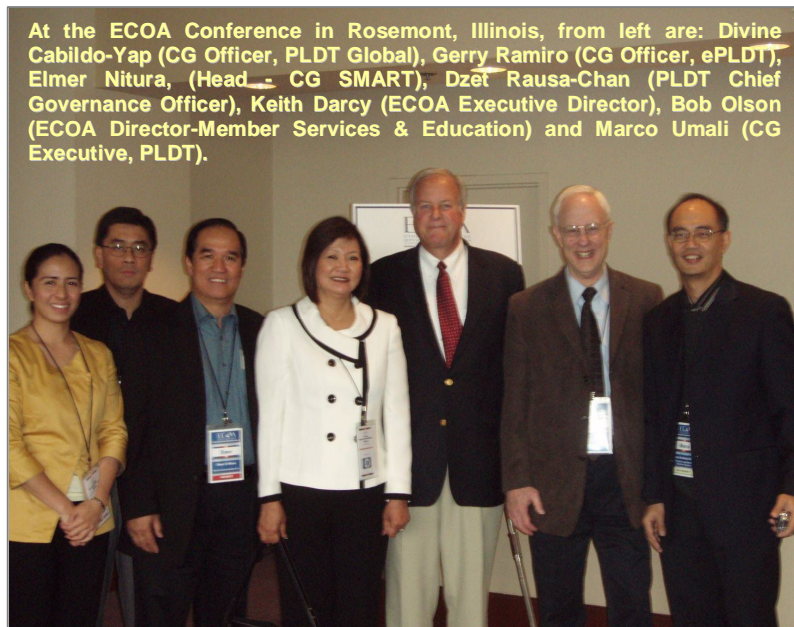
By Blue Festin

November 4, 2009

## Ethics and Compliance Officer Association

On September 22-25, 2009, the PLDT Group sent five delegates to the Ethics and Compliance Officer Association's (ECOA) 17th Annual Business Ethics and Compliance Conference held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, Illinois. The ECOA is a non-profit, non-consulting organization composed of ethics and compliance officers and is the largest and most respected professional ethics and compliance organization worldwide. No less than PLDT Chief Governance Officer, Atty. Dzet Rausa-Chan, led the delegation composed of Elmer Nitura (SMART), Gerry Ramiro (ePLDT), Divine Cabildo-Yap (PLDT Global) and Marco Umali (PLDT).

Over 500 ethics and compliance practitioners coming from various parts of the world and representing distinguished international and government agencies, multinational and U.S. corporations, and universities, attended the conference. The delegates



At the ECOA Conference in Rosemont, Illinois, from left are: Divine Cabildo-Yap (CG Officer, PLDT Global), Gerry Ramiro (CG Officer, ePLDT), Elmer Nitura, (Head, CG SMART), Dzet Rausa-Chan (PLDT Chief Governance Officer), Keith Darcy (ECOA Executive Director), Bob Olson (ECOA Director-Member Services & Education) and Marco Umali (CG Executive, PLDT).

participated in the various plenary sessions and concurrent break-out workshops which were designed to provide leading-edge tools, programs and best practices in the field of ethics and compliance.

The conference carried the theme, *Transforming Ethics and Compliance: Leadership in Achieving Integrity in the New Economy*. Among its highlights were the

keynote address by author James O'Toole who presented his research on "How Leaders Create a Culture of Candor" which looked at the ways corporate leaders successfully establish and nurture cultures of candor characterized by transparency and the willingness to speak truth to power, considered essential before companies can be transparent towards shareholders and regulators; and a plenary session on the current global crisis entitled "The Great Debate: Is the Current Global Financial Crisis Primarily the Result of a Series of Bad Business Decisions or a Systemic Decline in Business Integrity?" The workshops focused on maintaining and building organizational trust and integrity through practical measures such as the development of risk-based ethics

communications and trainings plan, managing conflict-of-interest risks, workplace investigations, Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) compliance and cross-cultural competence.

The PLDT delegation had a brief audience with Mr. Keith Darcy, Executive Director of ECOA, and Mr. Bob Olson, Director-Member Services & Education, to talk about common issues and concerns regarding ethics and compliance and probable regional linkages through a similar organization of ethics and compliance professionals in the Philippines. Mr. Darcy will be coming to Manila, upon PLDT's invitation, to meet and talk with PLDT officers and directors in December of this year.

Atty. Dzet Rausa-Chan says that participation in the ECOA conference is only "one way of displaying PLDT's commitment to constantly improving and fine-tuning its corporate governance practices to make these at par with, if not better than, those of the rest of the world." Atty. Elmer Nitura, Head of SMART Corporate Governance, observed that the ECOA conference "was a terrific opportunity for us to network with fellow practitioners from all over the world." He adds that "Modesty aside, I would say that the PLDT Group's programs are at par with global best practices!"

PLDT is the only member of the ECOA from the Philippines and PLDT's former Chief Governance Officer, Atty. Rene Bañez, was the first Director of the ECOA coming from Asia.

### **OECD Asian Corporate Governance Roundtable**

The PLDT Group also actively participated in the 10th Asian Corporate Governance Roundtable - *Corporate*

*Governance in Asia: 10 Years from Now* of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on September 9 to 10. The event, which was hosted and organized through the OECD's local partners, the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) and the Department of Finance (DoF), gathered together over two hundred delegates from all over Asia, with some delegates coming from Europe and the



Taking a break from the Asian Corporate Governance Roundtable Conference in front of the PLDT booth are (from left) Dr. Jesus P. Estanislao, Chairman - ICD, Mon Santiago, CG Executive, Gerry Ramiro, CG Officer - ePLDT, Dr. Mak Yuen Teen, Director - Corporate Governance and Financial Reporting Center - National University of Singapore, and Blue Festin, CG Executive.

USA as well. The delegates represented corporate regulators and other government bodies, stock exchanges, the academe, business and other advocates and experts on corporate governance. The conference featured discussions and break-out sessions on

corporate governance in the Philippines, related party transactions, and plans and perspectives on moving the corporate governance agenda forward in the next ten years.

PLDT participated as one of only two Diamond sponsors to the event. It had a booth in the display area where an interactive display highlighted the corporate governance story of PLDT. Foreign delegates expressed their appreciation for the extent and depth of the PLDT Corporate Governance program.

### **Asian Investors Forum**

The following day, PLDT was involved in the Asian Investors' Forum, also organized by the ICD. The event brought together representatives of investor groups from all over Asia to hear and discuss topics such as: CG and Firm Valuation in Emerging Asian Markets; Institutional Investors' Corporate Governance Concerns with East Asian Publicly Listed Corporation's; Beyond Compliance, and Overall Perspectives/Next Steps.

PLDT was invited to present its corporate governance journey in the "Beyond Compliance" session. Atty. Elmer Nitura discussed the PLDT Group's commitment to corporate governance and the corresponding programs that it has put into place to back up this commitment. Ms. Melissa Vergel De Dios, Head of PLDT Investor Relations, was also present at the forum.

Mr. Jonathan Juan DC Moreno, Vice President and Head of Corporate Governance for the Philippine Stock Exchange, had positive remarks about PLDT's participation in the Asian Roundtable and the Investors' Forum when he said: "The PLDT flag flew quite high. Your CG guys came in full force which really sent a strong signal of the group's commitment. The presentation left a positive impression of MVP and the group to the foreign delegates most of whom were investor groups."