

ATTENTION: NEWSDESKS

For immediate release

Quezon City, 11 December 2013 - The Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT) called on its members to celebrate the International Day Against Trafficking also known as the December 12 campaign with renewed enlightenment, urgency and vigilance.

PACT National Coordinator Maria Salome Ujano called on its 500-strong membership all over the Philippines to provide assistance especially to those migrants in their cities, municipalities or barangays who have come from the Yolanda-devastated areas of Eastern Samar and Leyte, the earthquake affected areas of Bohol and war-torn Zamboanga City. She also called on PACT's network to stay vigilant against traffickers who would take advantage of the vulnerable situation of these victims.

"Our network of must be a strong web of anti-trafficking advocates extending throughout the country, offering protection to victims and combating human trafficking. We should be the eyes and the voice of the community in the fight against human trafficking," Ujano said.

Victims of the most recent disasters still languish in evacuation centers, makeshift homes or houses of relatives or friends. Some of them have moved to residence in a desire to recover from the trauma and rebuild their lives anew. Their daily struggles and situation of uncertainty puts them in great danger of being trafficked, Ujano said.

Emphasizing the theme of this year's celebration, ***Wakasan ang Human Trafficking, Ito'y Ating Tungkulin***, PACT reiterated that while ending human trafficking is the government's primary responsibility, it is everyone's duty to join the campaign against human trafficking.

To mark the commemoration, 45 partners and members of PACT based in 26 cities and provinces will lead the conduct of more than 100 anti-trafficking events nationwide. Around

17,000 individuals are expected to participate in the activities. The December 12 International Day Against Trafficking is being celebrated in commemoration of the signing of the Optional to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons signed in Palermo, Italy.

Explaining this year's theme, Ujano said "our duty includes reporting cases of trafficking, undertaking the rescue of trafficked persons, providing them with the assistance until they are fully recovered from their experience. It should not matter where they are from. We should extend help to them."

More importantly human trafficking should begin in the family and the community.

"Trafficking prevention should start with ensuring that every child is able to go to school, enjoys economic sufficiency and stability and lives in a safe, nurturing and sustainable environment. No woman or child must be sold or bought for sex or for exploitative labor. People should be aware of their rights and of laws that affect them," Ujano said.

Finally, government must not only ensure that every individual enjoys her/his rights but must also function effectively toward effectively implementing the law.

For additional details and inquiries, contact:

Ms. Maria Salome Ujano

PACT National Coordinator (0905-3519556) or

Ms. Vida B. Subingsubing

PACT Information Officer, 0927-7398533

at 📞 **929-0347, (02) 355-4773;**

or ✉️ philippinecampaign@gmail.com