

## **Press Statement Re: “*Plunder, graft raps filed vs. 7 gov’t procurement agency execs*” published in GMA 7 website on January 20, 2017**

We are writing to respond to the above titled news article published in the GMA 7 website on 20 January 2017.

*“Named respondents in the eight-page complaint filed by the Transnational Anti-Organized Crime Intelligence Group (TAOC IG) were PHILGEPS former executive director Jose Tomas Syquia, former chief accountant and now Financial Management Group director Laarni Testor, chief comptroller Allan Raul Catalan, bids and awards committee head Rommel Rivera, BAC secretariat head Vincent Cañares, Rosa Maria Clemente and Rosalyn Joan Pascual.”*

### **Statement/Clarification:**

From this statement alone, it is quite obvious that the source of the material did not do its homework properly. The Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System or PHILGEPS is the website and electronic procurement system of the Philippine government which is defined under Section 8 of RA 9184 as the single, central portal that shall serve as the primary and definitive source of information in government procurement. It is being managed by the Procurement Service. PhilGEPS refers also to the group managing it which is a functional group under PS. The seven “officials” mentioned in the article are employees of the Procurement Service or PS. As of press statement, we have yet to receive a copy of the alleged complaint or any order regarding this case from the Ombudsman.

The inclusion of Rosalyn Joan Pascual in the complaint is also questionable since she was not involved in any bidding or financials process involving the project.

*“But the complainants were questioning if the Columbian Autocars Corporation, which won the bidding, was duly registered under PHILGEPS.*

*“If it is not, then why allow it to win as a bidder?” the group said in the complaint.”*

### **Statement/Clarification:**

These are again erroneous statements resulting from poor research. Columbian Autocars Corp. is a PhilGEPS registered bidder since 27 April 2012.

*“Aside from this, the group said the approved budget for the contract had no detailed breakdown and supporting documents from Philippine National Police, citing a suspension notice.*

*The group also claims that the respondents based the prices for the vehicles on the Internet and not the actual market prices.”*

**Statement/Clarification:**

It is unclear what the group meant by “no detailed breakdown and supporting documents from Philippine National Police.” Anent the price of the vehicles, we are also in a quandary as to whether the source is pertaining to bid price or the approved budget for the contract. If the group is referring to the approved budget for the contract (ABC), PS has detailed computations on how it arrived at the ABC. The specifications and ABC of the patrol jeeps were defined by the Philippines National Police as the end user and subject matter expert on this good. As part of its due diligence, the ABC was validated by PS based on market research which **did not** include internet prices. The resulting ABC is a result of the price validation which compares all prices gathered from the market research. We strongly deny that the ABC was based on internet prices.

*“Moreover, the group asked the respondents for an explanation why the transaction continued despite the disqualification of a prototype when tested for post-qualification.”*

**Statement/Clarification:**

This statement can only come from lack of research and irresponsible reporting to the detriment of the people being accused of wrongdoing. It must be clarified that before the project was awarded there were two biddings that were conducted. The first was a failure and the second resulted to an award. Columbian Autocars failed to post-qualify in the first bidding but passed the post-qualification tests during the second bidding which resulted to the award. Re-bidding is a procedure allowed under RA No. 9184

In all, the Procurement Service denies the allegation that it violated the procurement rules.

**PS MANAGEMENT**