

THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW CONVENTIONS WEBINAR SERIES

Last Sept. 16 - 18, 2020, the Supreme Court of the Philippines-Philippine Judicial Academy and the Office of the Court Administrator, in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs through its Office of Treaties and Legal Affairs, conducted an online webinar focused on the discussion of the various international conventions under the Hague Conference on Private International Law (“HCCH”).²

The webinar was conducted with the goal of raising awareness and attention to the impact of HCCH’s work on Philippine legal practice. The webinar series was also accredited under the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education program in the Philippines.³

Over the course of the three-day webinar, there were presentations and discussions on The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, and the Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents⁴ from Philippine subject-matter experts and authorities as well as legal practitioners and experts from the HCCH Permanent Bureau.

The HCCH webinar commenced with welcome messages from Department of Foreign Affairs (“DFA”) Assistant Secretary for Treaties and Legal Affairs Igor Bailen, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro L. Locsin, Jr., Chief Justice Diosdado Peralta, and Secretary General Dr. Christophe Bernasconi. Speakers for the first day included DFA Undersecretary J. Eduardo Malaya, International Country Adoption Board Executive Director Bernadette Abejo, DOJ Office of the Chief State Counsel George Ortha II, DFA Office of Consular Affairs Assistant Secretary Neil Frank R. Ferrer, and Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez.⁵

² THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW (HCCH) CONVENTIONS WEBINAR SERIES, <https://philja.judiciary.gov.ph/hcch/index.html> (last visited August 26, 2021).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Day 1 Program 16 September 2020, THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW (HCCH) CONVENTIONS WEBINAR SERIES, <https://philja.judiciary.gov.ph/hcch/day1.html#day1> (last visited August 26, 2021).

⁵ *Id.*

For the second day, among those who presented were Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez, Integrated Bar of the Philippines President Atty. Domingo Egon Cayosa, HCCH First Secretary Philippe Lortie, HCCH Support Coordinator Jean-Marc Pellet, HCCH expert and UP College of Law Professor Elizabeth Aguilin-Pangalangan, HCCH Legal Officer Elizabeth Zorrilla, and Supreme Court Rules Committee Member Atty. Tranquil Gervacio Salvador III.⁶ The final day concluded with lectures from HCCH Senior Legal Officer Dr. Ning Zhao and Supreme Court Rules Committee Member Justice Maria Filomena Singh and closing remarks by Philippine Judicial Academy Chancellor, retired Justice Adolfo Azcuna.⁷

The HCCH is an intergovernmental organization whose purpose is “to work towards the progressive unification of the rules of private international law.” At present, the Conference has 85 Members: 84 States and 1 Regional Economic Integration Organization (European Union). The Philippines became a member of the Conference in 2010 and is a State Party to four of the 39 conventions: 1) Adoption, 2) Abduction, 3) Apostille, and 4) Service.⁸

⁶ Day 2 Program 17 September 2020, THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW (HCCH) CONVENTIONS WEBINAR SERIES, <https://philja.judiciary.gov.ph/hcch/day2.html#day2> (last visited August 26, 2021).

⁷ Day 3 Program 18 September 2020, THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW (HCCH) CONVENTIONS WEBINAR SERIES, <https://philja.judiciary.gov.ph/hcch/day3.html#day3> (last visited August 26, 2021).

⁸ *Id.* at 371.