

Climate conference set for Monday

BY JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ, TMT ON MAY 27, 2017 BUSINESS

Leaders of civil society, government, and the international community will gather for a 3-day consultation to help define a Philippine roadmap for fulfilling the country's obligations under the Paris Agreement and provide transition to a climate economy.

Dr. Hoesung Lee, chair of the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Senator Loren Legarda, UNISDR Champion for Disaster Resilience will keynote the opening of the "Tripartite Conference on the Philippines Roadmap for the Paris Accord," to be held at the Manila Hotel on May 29.

"Lee will present the science based perspective of confronting the crisis of global climate change while Senator Legarda will present the response need within the local perspective of vulnerability," said Heherson Alvarez, former senator and chair of the Climate Change Commission.

Alvarez, along with former senator and DILG secretary Jose Lina Jr., will serve as the conveners of the first national climate change conference after President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed the PH accession to the landmark Paris Agreement in March.

The IPCC is the lead UN body for climate change policy, whose comprehensive report in November 2014 provided crucial inputs for the Paris Agreement adopted in December 2015.

It was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, together with former US Vice President Al Gore Jr. for helping disseminate knowledge on climate changes and the steps that need to be taken to counteract those changes.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) established the IPCC in 1988 to provide the world with a clear scientific view on the current state of knowledge in climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts.

"We are deeply honored and encouraged that Dr. Hoesung Lee has deemed it important enough to join us in this effort in spite of the tremendous pressures of his office," Alvarez said, noting that the IPCC head also attended the first climate change conference in Asia Pacific that he organized in 1995 as chair of the Senate committee on environment.

Lee was one of the scientists representing IPCC at that meeting.

"Dr. Lee will be sharing his insights that will be invaluable to the Philippines and the ASEAN region as we rethink our development plans and shape strategies to achieve our Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris climate agreement," Alvarez added.

Elected as IPCC chair in 2015, Dr. Lee received his BA in economics from Seoul National University and a PhD in economics from Rutgers University. One of his elder brothers, Lee Hoi-chang, is former Prime Minister of South Korea.

The Tripartite Conference will bring together officials from the local government, academe, civil society, NGOs, culture, business, and the interfaith sectors with the Senate Committees on Education, Arts and Culture under the leadership of Senator Chiz Escudero, Committee on Climate Change, the Committee on Urban Planning, the Committee on Environment, the UNEP Project of the Green Climate Fund Readiness Program, with UNESCO patronage and in liaison with the United Nations Development Program, and the Department of Education.

The conference is made possible in part by McDonald's, Chinese General Hospital, Metrobank Foundation, San Miguel Corporation, PAGCOR, PAGIBIG Fund, Landbank, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, National Council on Disability Affairs, Tzu Chi Foundation Philippines.