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DTI lays groundwork for week-long National Design Celebration

Design Week Philippines, a bi-annual national celebration meant to strengthen the Philippines' claim as Asia's foremost design destination, will be launched on 11-17 March 2012. It is led by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), through the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM) and the Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines (PDDCP), in cooperation with the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

The week long celebration will include exhibitions, conferences, workshops, and festivals that will showcase and create awareness on the importance of the Philippine creative industries and promote the Philippines as a design hub in Asia.

"The time has come for the Philippines to promote design as an important driver for innovation. By celebrating Design Week Philippines, we hope to encourage a nationwide pursuit of excellence that will result in competitive and world-class Philippine products. This should, in turn, ultimately brand the country as a center of creativity, inspiration, and design," said Rosvi C. Gaetos, Executive Director of CITEM.

Gaetos cited a 2010 United Nations Creative Economy Report recognizing creativity, knowledge and access to information as powerful engines for economic growth and development. According to the report, global trade in creative industries' products grew an average of 14% annually from 2000 to 2008, and has promoted "economic diversification, revenues, trade and innovation."

"There is a need to create one event brand that promotes Philippine design in all its different but equally relevant and inspiring aspects - from product and industrial design to architecture, graphics, advertising, and visual and performance arts," said Gaetos.

"Design Week Philippines answers this need and aims to be recognized along with the design week celebrations of global cities such as New York, London, Paris, and Tokyo," she added.

By virtue of Proclamation No. 277, Design Week Philippines will be held every third week of March and October, coinciding with the bi-annual CITEM-led Manila FAME, the country's premier international trade show for the furniture and furnishings, holiday and gifts, and fashion sectors.

Manila FAME, formerly held bi-annually during April and October, moved its April show to March to align itself with the March Asian Furniture show circuit, which plays host to a variety of furniture-centric trade fairs in countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand and China. The strategic move led by CITEM is an effort to reel in more buyers and visitors who will visit trade fairs in the neighboring Asian countries.

The most recent edition of Manila FAME last October 2011 marked the historic co-location of Manila Now, CEBUNEXT and Bijoux Cebu after 30 years of separation. The co-location will continue in the March and October 2012 Manila FAME shows.

"There has to be a serious effort among our Philippine design stakeholders to unify behind CITEM and Manila FAME to strengthen our positioning in the global community as Asia's Design Trendsetter in home and fashion," noted Gaetos. The next edition of Manila FAME, set on 14-17 March 2012, will take another step towards unification with the participation of the fashion design industry under the initiative of fashion icons Josie Natori, Inno Sotto and JC Buendia.

Manila FAME is one of the highlights of the Design Week Philippines, along with *Design Networking, Museum and Art Tours*, and the celebration of the first *Metro Manila Design Festival* which includes the *Creative Environment* (Mural Competition in partnership with Boysen KNOxOUT Air Cleaning Paint).

The Design Week Philippines will continue in October 2012 with more activities such as the International Design Conference, Philippines-Korea Design Sharing Program and Industry Design Awards.

This event is supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP). For more information on what to expect at Design Week Philippines, you may contact the Design Week Philippines team at (632) 8312201 local 276.

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