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**PHILIPPINES.**

**Universal Health Coverage and Access to Quality Healthcare:  
Aspirations in the Philippines and Switzerland"**

Organized by the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines and the Asian Development Bank  
20 March 2017  
9:00 to 12:30  
Asian Development Bank, Ortigas CBD  
Auditoriums A and B

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**MARCH 20, 2017**

Pasig City --Over 200 healthcare stakeholders, mostly experts from the medical field of both the Philippine public and private sectors, gathered today at a health forum organized by the Embassy of Switzerland in Manila, the Asian Development Bank, Novartis Philippines, Roche Philippines and the Zuellig Family Foundation.

Four speakers, shared best practices of the Swiss healthcare system that could be applied immediately to ongoing Philippine universal health coverage efforts, or looked upon as aspirational benchmarks which can trigger and drive transformational reforms. The Swiss healthcare system is acknowledged as among the best worldwide.

*"Today is a Forum of knowledge sharing."* – Dr. Eduardo Banzon, Principal Health Specialist at the Asian Development Bank

The four speakers at the event included Professor Dr. Kaspar Wyss, who heads the Swiss Center for International Health of the Swiss Tropical Health Institute (Swiss TPH) in Basel, who spoke about the Swiss Healthcare System and the private sector as an important health care provider. Mr. Ernesto Garilao, President of the Zuellig Family Foundation talked on investing in LGU accountability and performance in view of the importance of local health leadership. Dr. Juergen Brokatzky-Geiger, who is the Global Head for Corporate Responsibility of Novartis, talked about the critical importance of investing in Research and Development and presented several different forms of partnerships Novartis engages in. Ms. Louise Abbott, Regional Policy Lead for Asia Pacific of Roche Pharma, spoke on harnessing R&D for universal health coverage and the many issues on which Roche Pharma is engaged in public health.

*"What the Philippines can learn is the management of the private sector."* – DOH Undersecretary for Policy and Health Systems Dr. Lilibeth David

During the open forum members from the audience were able to engage the speakers on different issues. Among these issues, Dr. Wyss elaborated on the way the Swiss government engages with the private sector and ensures oversight and cooperation. Mr. Garilao discussed the challenges to ensure sustainability of private-public health care initiatives. Dr. Brokatzky-Geiger discussed transparency as a key



issue to foster trust in the honesty of public health projects of private companies. Ms. Abbott expressed her hope that universal health coverage would help the drive to fair medicine prices in the Philippines. We must engage with everyone – private, public, CSOs - like Switzerland does and not be wary of the private sector, Dr. Banzon concluded.