

DSWD, UP Law to assist kids get support from foreign or Filipino parents outside PH



Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Officer-in-Charge Eduardo M. Punay (2nd from left) and UP Law Center Dean Edgardo Carlo Vistan II (2nd from right), together with DSWD Operations Group Undersecretary Jerico Francis Javier (left) and Department of Foreign Affairs – Office of Treaties and Legal Affairs Assistant Secretary Roussel Reyes (right), present the signed Memorandum of Agreement on the implementation of the Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance right after the agreement signing on Monday, January 30 at the UP Diliman College of Law.

In its continuing efforts to protect the welfare of every

Filipino child, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) forged a partnership with the University of the Philippines (UP) Law Center on the implementation of the Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance.

The partnership was sealed through the ceremonial signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on January 30, 2023 at the UP Diliman College of Law. The MOA was signed by DSWD Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Eduardo M. Punay and UP Law Center Dean Edgardo Carlo Vistan II and was witnessed by DSWD Operations Group Undersecretary Jerico Francis Javier and Department of Foreign Affairs – Office of Treaties and Legal Affairs Assistant Secretary Roussel Reyes.

The Convention aims to ensure the effective international recovery of child support and other forms of family maintenance by providing a system of close coordination and cooperation between contracting parties around the world; better access to cross-border maintenance procedures through services and any free legal assistance; and expedited and simplified procedures for recognition and enforcement, among others. Furthermore, it will facilitate the applications of individuals seeking child support, and to a limited basis, spousal support from foreign parents or spouses, as well as the efficient recognition and enforcement of support decisions even if rendered by foreign courts.

Through the Convention, Filipino families may seek assistance from DSWD, as the Central Authority of the Philippines, to locate their foreign or Filipino spouses residing abroad to obtain support for their child or children. Likewise, foreign nationals may also ask for assistance, through their respective Central Authority, to locate their Filipino or non-Filipino spouses, if alleged here in the Philippines, to provide support for their child or children.

In his message during the signing ceremony, OIC Punay

expressed the Department's gratitude to the UP Law Center and stated the importance of the implementation of the Child Support Convention. He said, "With this Convention in place, we will be able to assist the families to locate, apply, process, and claim child support for the left-behind child or children from his or her foreign parent or Filipino parent residing outside the Philippines."

For his part, Dean Edgardo Carlo Vistan II, said, "As I also welcome you all to the signing ceremony, allow me to assure you, our colleagues in the DSWD as well as in the DFA, that as we enter into this partnership, we are ready and eager to roll up our sleeves and begin the work with you to ensure that the needs and the best interest of children all over the world are addressed," he said.

As the designated Central Authority of the Philippines, the DSWD shall transmit and receive applications from the "creditor" or the family requesting child support, and from the "debtor" or the legally obliged provider; initiate or facilitate the institution of proceedings of the applications; and shall provide assistance in locating the debtor or the creditor, obtaining documentary requirements, collecting and transferring the provided support, among others.

Meanwhile, the UP Law Center will provide assistance on the applications requiring legal assessment and advice; obtaining documentary requirements or other evidence; and facilitating the ongoing enforcement of maintenance decisions, including any arrears, as well as collection and expeditious transfers of maintenance payments.

The DSWD vowed to continue to make a difference in the lives of poor and disadvantaged Filipinos, especially vulnerable families and their children. ###