



Republic of the Philippines  
**ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING COUNCIL**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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For further information, contact:

Tel. No. 53062833

**PHILIPPINES MOVES CLOSER TO FATF GREYLIST EXIT**

The Philippines this week moved closer to exiting anti-money laundering watchlists by 2025, paving the way for Filipinos, especially Overseas Filipino Workers, to benefit from faster and cheaper remittances and other transactions.

In a statement, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global anti-money laundering watchdog, said the Philippines had addressed the 18 action plan items that had kept the country in the watchdog group's "grey list" since June 2021.

"The Philippines has made the following key reforms including: (1) demonstrating that risk-based supervision of DNFBNs is occurring; (2) demonstrating that supervisors are using AML/CFT controls to mitigate risks associated with casino junkets; (3) implementing the new registration requirements for MVTs and applying sanctions to unregistered and illegal remittance operators; (4) enhancing and streamlining LEA access to BO information and taking steps to ensure that BO information is accurate and up-to-date; (5) demonstrating an increase in the use of financial intelligence and an increase in ML investigations and prosecutions in line with risk; (6) demonstrating an increase in the identification, investigation and prosecution of TF cases; (7) demonstrating that appropriate measures are taken with respect to the NPO sector (including unregistered NPOs) without disrupting legitimate NPO activity; and (8) enhancing the effectiveness of the targeted financial sanctions framework for both TF and PF," FATF said in its 25 October 2024 statement.

Failure to address the remaining action plan items would have put the Philippines at risk of entering the blacklist. FATF member countries impose restrictions and additional checks, and possibly refusal of financial transactions with countries in the blacklist. This results in failed transactions, delays, and costs that may be passed on to the consumers.

FATF also commended the Philippines' high-level political commitment to strengthen the effectiveness of its AML/CTF regime. As early as last year, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered agencies to have their own anti-money laundering strategies and reorganized the government's interagency task force to include anti-terrorism finance in its agenda. Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin chairs the task force.

*Press Release on the October FATF Statement*

The FATF's Asia/Pacific Joint Group (APJG) will visit the Philippines early next year to verify the sustainability of the AML/CTF reforms towards addressing the 18 action plan items as well as the high-level political commitment of the Philippine government to continue improving the Philippines' AML/CTPF regime. This is the final step toward the country's removal from the greylist.

According to Executive Secretary and National Anti-Money Laundering and Combating of Terrorism Financing/Counter-Proliferation Financing Coordinating Committee Chairman Lucas Bersamin, "This milestone is a testament to the hard work and coordination across government agencies. It reflects our strong commitment to meeting the FATF's stringent standards and ensuring the long-term protection of our financial system. We are confident that this progress will be affirmed during the on-site visit."

Executive Secretary Bersamin also emphasized, "We must continue our efforts to ensure that our reforms are implemented and sustained. Building a resilient AML/CTF regime is critical for safeguarding our financial system and our economy from illicit activities."

The interagency task force adopted an action plan to exit the FATF greylist. On 4 July 2023, Malacanang issued Executive Order No. 33 requiring all government offices and departments that are members of the NACC to adopt the National Anti-Money Laundering, Counter-Terrorism Financing, and Counter-Proliferation Financing Strategy (NACS) 2023-2027.

The NACC agencies that collaborated in this are the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Securities and Exchange Commission, Insurance Commission, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation, Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority, Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, Department of Justice, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Finance, Department of National Defense, Department of Trade and Industry – Strategic Trade Management Office, National Bureau of Investigation, National Intelligence and Coordination Agency, Philippine National Police, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Bureau of Customs and the Anti-Terrorism Council.

To emphasize the urgency of the strategy, the Palace also released Memorandum Circular No. 37 on 16 October 2023 to accelerate NACS implementation, followed by a directive from President Marcos on 2 January 2024 for the NACC member agencies to complete the remaining FATF action items by year-end 2024.

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