

# PRESS RELEASE

## PSA conducts the 2023 Data Dissemination Forum on International Merchandise Trade Statistics

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*(Top Photos, Left to Right) Deputy National Statistician Divina Gracia L. del Prado, PhD of PSA, Officer-in-Charge Assistant National Statistician Rachel C. Lacsá of PSA, Director Bianca Pearl R. Sykimte of DTI, Mr. Jonathan T. Soriano of BOC, and Dr. Karl Robert L. Jandoc of UP School of Economics. (Below Photo) Awardees, Data Sources, Data Users, Keynote Speaker and Discussants, and PSA Officials.*

11 December 2023 – QUEZON CITY. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) conducted the fourth Data Dissemination Forum on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS), which was spearheaded by the Trade Statistics Division of the Economic Sector Statistics Service (ESSS), Sectoral Statistics Office (SSO).

The IMTS, which is one of the primary data that the PSA generates, pertains to the movement of goods between one country and other countries.

The data dissemination forum aims to increase awareness and data appreciation of the data providers, data users, and other stakeholders on IMTS. The event was attended by 92 participants from various government and private agencies.

The forum started with the welcome remarks of PSA Undersecretary Claire Dennis S. Mapa, PhD, National Statistician and Civil Registrar General. In his welcome remarks, he emphasized the importance of the IMTS in the formulation of trade policies, in the computation of Balance of Payment, and in the estimation of the National Accounts of the Philippines, among others. Undersecretary Mapa also announced the additional indicators of IMTS that were released by the PSA this 2023, namely, the Seasonally Adjusted Exports and Imports and the Unit Value Index. These new products are manifestation of the PSA's commitment to deliver relevant and timely data on IMTS. Lastly, he extended his appreciation to the data providers and data users of IMTS, who provided constant support to this undertaking of the PSA.

Director Bianca Pearl R. Sykimte of the Export Marketing Bureau (EMB), Department of Trade and Industry, served as the keynote speaker during the forum. She expressed her appreciation to PSA for the invaluable support to the country's export development and growth by providing timely and accurate data. Furthermore, she mentioned the importance of accessibility of firm-level data so they can make interventions for export readiness and capabilities of Philippine businesses. She hopes that EMB can continue to count on the strong partnership they have with the PSA.

Officer-in-Charge Assistant National Statistician Rachel C. Lacsá of the ESSS presented the IMTS results for 2022 and the preliminary results of IMTS from January to September 2023. This was followed by the presentations of the two discussants, namely, Mr. Jonathan T. Soriano, Chief of the System Management Division, Management Information System and Technology Group of the Bureau of Customs, and Dr. Karl Robert L. Jandoc, Associate Professor and Department Chair of the School of Economics at the University of the Philippines.

Mr. Soriano highlighted the customs processing system of export and import declarations by stakeholders and service providers, and the provision of data for IMTS. Meanwhile, Dr. Jandoc discussed that Global Value Chain and Big Data continuously shape the global economy. He added that the PSA is in a unique position to leverage the use of big data, such as the IMTS data for smarter and fact-based policymaking.

Chief Statistical Specialist Gerald Junne L. Clariño of the Satellite Accounts Division moderated the open forum. One of the key takeaways from the open forum was the importance of the IMTS data and data analytics. Furthermore, the adoption of the 2022 Philippine Standard Commodity Classification next year was also discussed.

The event was highlighted by the awarding of certificates and tokens of appreciation to the keynote speaker and discussants. Plaque of Recognition was also awarded to the key data sources and data users of the IMTS.

The closing remarks was delivered by Deputy National Statistician (DNS) Divina Gracia L. del Prado, PhD, of the SSO. She thanked everyone who attended the forum and emphasized that the PSA continuously improves the data by ensuring adherence to international standards. DNS del Prado also shared the continuous expansion of the data on international trade, as the PSA will release other foreign trade indices next year. She concluded her remarks hoping for continuous collaboration and stronger partnership with the data sources, data users, and other stakeholders.

- *Economic Sector Statistics Service, Sectoral Statistics Office*

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