



PRESS STATEMENT

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TransCo welcomes Senate inquiry on NGCP's executive composition

National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) President Anthony Almeda claims that NGCP has "no foreigners, particularly Chinese, among its top executives and managers."

During a hearing before the Senate Committee on Energy on 3 February 2020, however, Sen. Richard Gordon confronted Mr. Almeda with an old NGCP document showing a certain "Wen Bo" signing as "Chief Technical Officer." Mr. Almeda commented that Mr. Wen was, during his stint as Chief Technical Officer, subject to the scrutiny of NGCP's leadership anyway.

Preliminarily, Mr. Almeda does not appear to deny the existence of the document shown by Sen. Gordon or that Mr. Wen signed that same document as Chief Technical Officer.

First, Mr. Wen was not occupying a run-of-the-mill technical position as Mr. Almeda wants the Senate—and the public—to believe.

In NGCP's Table of Organization, presented during the hearing by Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Energy, the office of the Chief Technical Officer is in charge of overseeing the technical management, planning and engineering, and systems operations of the national power grid.

In fact, and as brought out by questions from Sen. Gatchalian, the office of the Chief Technical Officer is just one position below the office of no less than the Chief Executive Officer himself.



Indeed, even the very nomenclature of “Chief Technical Officer” necessarily connotes that Mr. Wen, under NGCP’s corporate hierarchy, had control over all technical matters.

Thus, the position of Chief Technical Officer is one of the most vital—if not the most vital—in NGCP’s management structure.

Second, Mr. Wen’s engagement with NGCP was, from the very beginning, already prohibited under Section 11, Article XII, of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, which expressly provides that “[t]he participation of foreign investors in the governing body of any public utility enterprise shall be limited to their proportionate share in its capital, and all the executive and managing officers of such corporation or association must be citizens of the Philippines.”

Clearly, the Constitution unqualifiedly forbids foreign nationals from occupying executive or management positions in public utility enterprises—such as NGCP—irrespective of whether these positions are subject to review by higher management.

The now-obvious lack of transparency in NGCP’s operations, its continuing refusal to subject itself to audit (it has consistently rejected audit requests by both the Department of Energy and TransCo), and violations of no less than the Constitution itself, all reinforce the need for the Philippine Government to audit, not just NGCP’s general performance, but also its financial transactions and technical operations, if only to ensure that Philippine laws are upheld and, more important, that the Filipino People are provided with quality public service free from foreign intervention.

TransCo joins the Philippine Senate in exacting accountability and ensuring that truth and justice prevail.

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