

▶ URGENT CALL FOR SIGNATURES

Joint Statement Regarding the Philippine Identification System Act IRR Proceedings

- ▶ We, the undersigned, as civil society organizations and concerned citizens of the Philippines, express our grave concern for the recent proceedings regarding the promulgation of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 11055, or the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) Act.

During the weekend of September 22, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) posted on its website the draft IRR of the PhilSys Act. On Monday, September 24, the PSA announced the schedule of the PhilSys IRR public consultations: which were to be held later that same day in Metro Manila and the following day (September 25) in Cebu and Davao.

There are no indications that further consultations will be carried out. Neither are there any reports that civil society and/or the private sector were approached, consulted, or involved in the actual drafting of the Rules. Instead, the Rules are expected to be approved and signed within mere days of the two-day consultation mentioned.

These hasty proceedings do not constitute sufficient public consultation. They do not speak well of the administration's sincerity in fomenting a more inclusive approach to policy-making.

We wish to emphasize that the PhilSys Act, including its IRR, will directly impact the identity of every Filipino and resident alien, as well as all rights that flow from such identity. A mechanism of such reach and significance warrants genuine participation of those it purports to serve.



It demands consultation that gives voice to all sectors of society. Such engagement is the kind envisioned by no less than the Philippine Constitution itself:

The right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The State shall, by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms. (Section 16, Article XIII)

Accordingly, a hasty, exclusionary, and undemocratic handling of public consultations for a law as monumental as the PhilSys IRR is in direct defiance of this Constitutional right.

- ▶ We, the undersigned, therefore call on the PSA and the other members of the PhilSys Policy and Coordination Council to delay the promulgation of the PhilSys IRR and extend the period for public consultations so as to allow for broader, and more meaningful participation of the public in this important rule-making process. Only under these conditions can a truly fair and rights-based identification system be established.

