

Novartis executive elected chair of Philippine-Swiss Business Council

Mar 09, 2021

- Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc. Corporate Affairs Head, Ms. Christine Fajardo, has been elected Chairperson of the Philippine-Swiss Business Council (PSBC).
- The PSBC serves as a channel for initiating and facilitating business-related and networking activities to further the growth of trade and investment between the Philippines and Switzerland.
- The Council currently has 65 members of Swiss equity companies operating in the Philippines as well as Philippine companies who have business relations or are keen to pursue business with Switzerland.

March 9, 2021 – Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc. Corporate Affairs Head, Ms. Christine Fajardo, has been elected Chairperson of the Philippine-Swiss Business Council (PSBC).

“I am privileged to serve as Chairperson of the PSBC for 2021. I have deep respect for what the officers and members of the Board of Directors have done in the past years. As such, I intend to follow through on their achievements,” said Ms. Fajardo.

Established in 2003 as a result of a cooperation agreement between the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and the Swiss Southeast Asian Chamber of Commerce (SACC), the PSBC serves as a channel for initiating and facilitating business-related and networking activities to further the growth of trade and investment between the Philippines and Switzerland. It currently has 65 members of Swiss equity companies operating in the Philippines as well as Philippine companies who have business relations or are keen to pursue business with Switzerland.

According to Ms. Fajardo, the PSBC intends to reframe its purpose in order to better serve the needs of its members and community. “The Council will provide a platform on which businesses operating in the country can tap markets in Switzerland. We will foster trade, economic, and technical cooperation as well as tourism between the Philippines and Switzerland. In this new reality, the PSBC is committed to reconnecting with partners, and re-energizing our members to contribute in rebuilding our economy,” she said.

“PSBC has been a reliable partner of the Swiss Embassy in the promotion of trade and investments with the Philippines, and with the election of Christine Fajardo, I am looking forward to a number of joint events and advocacy this year. I am also pleased to see more women executives active in the board, and with a renewed vision to re-energize the Council, I think it will be a great year of meaningful collaborations. I look forward to working with Chris as the newly elected chair of PSBC,” said H.E. Alain Gaschen. Swiss Ambassador to the Philippines.

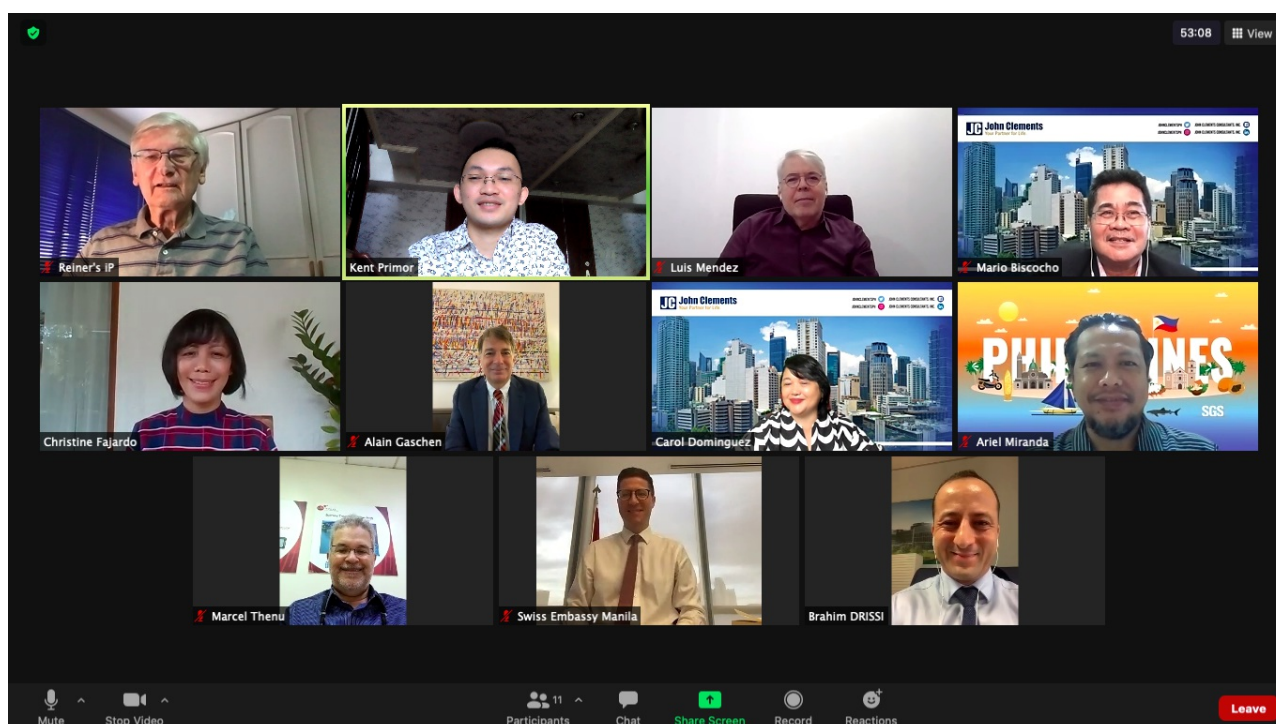
“We are very pleased with the election of Ms. Fajardo as the Novartis representative to a respected business organization such as the PSBC. Novartis is committed to being a responsible corporate citizen and to engage with a wide range of stakeholders who have a shared goal of contributing to the country’s socioeconomic development,” said Mr. Jugo Tsumura, President and Managing Director, Novartis Healthcare Philippines, Inc.

Ms. Fajardo said that one of the PSBC’s key priorities is supporting the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the Philippines and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states composed of Iceland,

Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The Philippines and EFTA signed the FTA in Bern, Switzerland, on 28 April 2016. The EFTA-Philippines FTA entered into force on 1 June 2018 for the Philippines, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland and on 1 January 2020 for Iceland. The EFTA-Philippines FTA has been fully implemented since 24 October 2018.

“Through this FTA, the Philippines and EFTA member states can import and export goods without any tariff barriers or other non-tariff barriers to trade. Essentially, it enables lower prices for consumers, increased exports, benefits from economies of scale and a greater choice of goods,” Ms. Fajardo explained.

As a broad-based agreement, the FTA covers trade in goods, trade in services, investment, competition, the protection of intellectual property rights, government procurement, and trade and sustainable development. In the area of trade in goods, EFTA abolishes all customs duties on industrial products as of the entry into force of the Agreement, whereas the Philippines will gradually lower or abolish its duties on the vast majority of such products.



The 2021 Philippine-Swiss Business Council (PSBC) Board of Directors holds a courtesy Zoom meeting with Swiss Ambassador to the Philippines, His Excellency Alain Gaschen, on February 8, 2021. Photo shows (from left, first row): Reiner Gloor, Director; Kent Primor, Senior Economic and Trade Officer and Commercial Attache, Embassy of Switzerland to the Philippines; Luis Mendez, past Chairperson; Mario Biscocho, member; (from left, second row) Christine Fajardo, current Chairperson; Amb. Gaschen; Carol Dominguez, Director; Ariel Miranda, Director; (from left, third row) Marcel Thenu, Director; Mathias Domenig, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland to the Philippines; and Brahim Drissi, Director.

About Novartis

Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people's lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world's top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach more than 750 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 105 000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at www.novartis.com.

Novartis is on Twitter. Sign up to follow @Novartis at <http://twitter.com/novartis>

For Novartis multimedia content, please visit www.novartis.com/news/media-library

For questions about the site or required registration, please contact media.relations@novartis.com

Source URL: <https://www.novartis.com/ph-en/news/media-releases/novartis-executive-elected-chair-philippine-swiss-business-council>

List of links present in page

- <https://www.novartis.com/ph-en/ph-en/news/media-releases/novartis-executive-elected-chair-philippine-swiss-business-council>
- <http://www.novartis.com>
- <https://twitter.com/novartis>
- <http://www.novartis.com/news/media-library>
- <mailto:media.relations@novartis.com>