23 July 2026

JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 26-01
Series of 2026

SUBJECT: RULES ON THE INVESTIGATION AND PROHIBITION OF THE IMPORTATION OF GOODS PRODUCED THROUGH FORCED LABOR

WHEREAS, Section 118 (g) of Republic Act No. 10863, otherwise known as the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA), prohibits the importation and exportation of goods or parts thereof, which importation and exportation are explicitly prohibited by law or rules and regulations issued by the competent authority;

WHEREAS, the growing global emphasis on responsible business conduct and ethical supply chains has led many countries to adopt measures prohibiting the importation of goods produced wholly or in part through forced labor, and major trading partners have strengthened their regulatory frameworks to prevent the entry of such goods into their markets and promote greater supply chain transparency;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a signatory to various legally binding international labor conventions, including the International Labour Organization (ILO) Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), and remains committed to the protection of workers' rights and the elimination of forced labor, pursuant to its domestic laws and its obligations under such international labor conventions;

WHEREAS, Book IV, Title X, Chapter 1, Section 3, paragraph (4) of Executive Order (EO) No. 292, series of 1987, also known as the Administrative Code of 1987 provides that the Department of Trade and Industry is mandated to adopt and implement measures to protect Filipino enterprises against unfair foreign competition and trade practices;

WHEREAS, the Department of Labor and Employment is mandated to recommend legislation to enhance the material, social and intellectual improvement of the nation's labor force;

WHEREAS, the Department of Finance is mandated to coordinate with other government agencies on matters concerning fiscal and monetary policies, credit, economic development, international finance, trade and investment;

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Customs is mandated to facilitate and secure international trade and commerce through an informed compliance program;

WHEREAS, the Board of Investments is mandated to develop investments in the Philippines and lead the promotions of various industries and investment opportunities;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority is mandated to operate, administer, manage, and develop the economic zones and to promote the flow of investors, both foreign and local into these economic zones;

WHEREAS, the increasing integration of global value chains and heightened scrutiny of supply chain practices by the Philippines' trading partners, international institutions, and other international stakeholders underscore the need for a coordinated government response to ensure that goods entering the Philippine market are not produced through forced labor;

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the foregoing premises, and pursuant to the authority vested in the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Department of Finance (DOF), under existing laws, rules, and regulations, this Joint Administrative Order (JAO) is hereby promulgated to establish the rules governing the investigation and regulation of imported goods suspected or determined to have been produced wholly or in part through forced labor.

1. PURPOSE

Pursuant to existing laws, regulations, and mandates of the concerned agencies, this JAO is issued to:

a. Prevent the importation into the Philippines of goods produced wholly or in part through forced labor;

b. Establish an inter-agency mechanism for the receipt, evaluation, investigation, and resolution of allegations involving imported goods suspected of having been produced through forced labor;

c. Strengthen coordination among relevant government agencies, including the trade regulatory government agencies (TRGAs) concerned in the implementation and enforcement of laws, regulations, and policies relating to forced labor, supply chain integrity, and responsible trade practices;

d. Ensure that importation practices are consistent with the Philippines' commitments under its domestic labor laws, rules, and regulations, as well as applicable international labor treaties and standards; and

e. Protect consumers, workers, exporters, importers, and legitimate businesses from the adverse effects of goods produced through forced labor, and promote fair competition and responsible trade practices.

2. COVERAGE

This Order shall apply to all imported goods, including raw materials, intermediate goods, components, and finished products, regardless of the sector or country of origin, where there is reasonable ground to believe that such goods were mined, extracted, produced, manufactured, harvested, processed, assembled, packaged, handled, or transported wholly or in part through forced labor.

This Order shall cover:

a. All importers, consignees, brokers, and other persons involved in the importation of goods into the Philippines; and

b. All imported goods entering the Philippines, including areas designated by law as special and/or economic zones, whether for consumption, warehousing, processing, distribution, resale, or other commercial purposes.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this Order, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

a. ***Chairperson*** shall refer to the Secretary of Trade and Industry;

b. ***Forced Labor*** shall mean all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily as defined in the International Labour Organization (ILO);

c. ***Goods*** refer to articles, wares, merchandise, and any other items which are subject of importation or exportation as defined in the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA);

d. ***Goods Produced through Forced Labor*** refer to goods, wares, articles, merchandise, and other items mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part by any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily;

e. ***Importation*** refers to the act of bringing in goods from a foreign territory into Philippine territory, whether for consumption, warehousing, or admission as defined in the CMTA.

4. CREATION OF THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF IMPORTS PRODUCED BY FORCED LABOR

An Inter-Agency Committee for the Investigation of Imports Produced by Forced Labor is hereby created and shall consist of the following:

a. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as the Chairperson;
b. Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) as the Vice-Chairperson;
c. Department of Finance (DOF) as the Member;
d. Bureau of Customs (BOC) as Member;
e. Board of Investments (BOI) as Member; and
f. Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) as Member.

The Committee may invite the relevant Investment Promotion Agencies, Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC), and other government agencies, as necessary, based on the nature of the case under investigation.

The DTI shall serve as the Secretariat and shall provide administrative and technical support to the Committee.

4.1 **POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall have the following powers and functions:

4.1.1 Receive, evaluate, and act upon complaints, referrals, and information concerning imported goods suspected of having been produced wholly or in part through forced labor;

4.1.2 Conduct or coordinate investigations, request relevant information and documents from concerned parties and government agencies, and evaluate evidence in accordance with this Order and applicable laws, rules, and regulations;

4.1.3 Coordinate with relevant government agencies, foreign authorities, international organizations, and other entities, as may be necessary, for purposes of verification and investigation;

4.1.4 Prepare findings and recommendations based on the evidence gathered during the investigation;

4.1.5 Endorse findings and recommendations to BOC and other competent authorities for appropriate action within their respective mandates and in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations; and

4.1.6 Perform such other coordinative and recommendatory functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Order, consistent with the mandates of the member agencies.

5. INITIATION OF INVESTIGATION

The Committee may initiate an investigation upon the submission to the Chairperson of any of the following:

a. Complaint filed by any natural or juridical person;
b. Referral from any government agency;
c. Information received from foreign governments, international organizations, labor organizations, civil society organizations, or other credible sources; or
d. Information obtained through its own monitoring and intelligence activities.

All complaints, referrals, or information submitted to the Committee shall be accompanied by supporting information, documents, or evidence sufficient to establish reasonable grounds for the conduct of an investigation.

6. NOTICE AND OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND

An importer subject of an investigation shall be notified by the Committee and shall be given fifteen (15) working days from receipt of notice to submit a written explanation and supporting documents demonstrating that the imported goods were not produced wholly or in part through forced labor.

7. INVESTIGATION FINDINGS AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT

Upon completion of the investigation, the Committee shall prepare a report of its findings and recommendations.

Where substantial evidence exists that imported goods were produced wholly or in part through forced labor, the Committee shall endorse the findings to the BOC and other competent authorities for the prohibition of the importation of such goods, in accordance with customs laws, and other applicable rules, and regulations.

8. EXCLUSIONS

This Order shall not apply to goods shipped prior to its effectivity, as evidenced by the Bill of Lading, Airway Bill, or equivalent transport document.

9. IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

The DTI, DOLE, DOF, and BOC shall jointly issue the implementing guidelines within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Order.

The implementing guidelines shall provide for a streamlined procedure without prejudice to the requirements of due process.

10. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any portion or provision of this Order is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other portions hereof, which are not affected thereby, shall continue to be in full force and effect.

11. REPEALING CLAUSE

All other regulations and circulars in conflict/inconsistent with this Order are deemed repealed, revised, or amended accordingly.

12. EFFECTIVITY

This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation and shall remain effective until otherwise revoked by the President. A certified copy shall be filed with the Office of the National Administrative Register of the University of the Philippines Law Center.

Approved:

MA. CRISTINA A. ROQUE
Secretary
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

FRANCIS N. TOLENTINO
Secretary
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

FREDERICK D. GO
Secretary
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE