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Standard Chartered Bank Chief Executive Officer Lynette Ortiz was named UN Women 2021 Philippine Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Awards Champion in the Leadership Commitment category recently. This category recognizes leaders in corporations who have been instrumental in setting strong corporate commitments inclusive of progressive policies, regulations or practices that aim to promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community. This includes taking specific roles and responsibilities in promoting gender equality within the company and making public commitments or delivering gender sensitive messages to the public. Ortiz accepted the award at the virtual UN 2021 WEPs Awards Philippines Ceremony last October 15.

Ortiz is a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion with gender equality and women empowerment as her personal advocacies. In the past, she led the local staging of Vagina Monologues to celebrate International Women's Day to benefit One Billion Rising with some parts played by international theatre actress and women's rights activist Monique Wilson and has spoken in conferences and symposia on these topics.

She is also actively involved in various career coaching sessions for college students and young professionals with Filipina CEO Circle, and a mentor in the bank's global Speed Mentoring Programme for female colleagues. She was recently appointed as Vice Chairperson of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Management Association of the Philippines.

Ortiz highlights SCB's commitment to promote equality and create an inclusive and flexible culture in the workplace where people can realise their full potential. She said, "The bank believes in equal opportunities for all. Being an inclusive employer and business is fundamental to our strategy and our purpose to drive commerce and prosperity through our unique diversity. Representation and inclusion of our diverse talent is key to our long-term success as a bank. This helps us understand and serve our customers better across our wide footprint globally. It allows us a broader range of ideas, views and solutions."

She also underscores the importance of empowering women in the workplace. "SCB's culture and work environment create a fertile ground to promote women's empowerment. It is important to support and inspire each other and add a collective voice to the conversation. We must actively challenge stereotypes, offer support to female colleagues, and openly celebrate role models in order to drive a more inclusive environment."

The oldest international bank in the Philippines, StanChart continues to embed diversity and inclusion into its organizational DNA and reaffirm its commitment to gender equality. The bank ranked among the top 100 companies in Equileap's 2021 Gender Equality Global Report and Ranking and recognized on Bloomberg Gender Equality Index 2019 for the fourth year in a row. Financial Times also recognized StanChart as a diversity leader and signed a statement of support to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles in 2018.

The WEPs Awards honour Asia-Pacific private businesses that champion gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community in alignment with the WEPs. Established by UN Women and UN Global Compact, the WEPs are a set of 7 principles guiding businesses to become more gender-responsive across their value chain.

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