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Parliamentarians: Corruption a crime against humanity

By Michael Punongbayan (The Philippine Star) | Updated December 10, 2013 - 12:00am

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MANILA, Philippines - The Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) is asking members of parliament all over the world to declare the worst forms of corruption as crimes against humanity.

In celebration of International Anti-Corruption Day, which the Philippines – through the Office of the Ombudsman – also observed yesterday, the worldwide alliance of parliamentarians said corruption should be denounced and addressed in the strongest possible way.

GOPAC, whose mandate is to combat corruption, strengthen good government and uphold the rule of law, issued its statement from Ottawa, Canada.

On Nov. 27 at the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the group unanimously adopted a resolution declaring the worst forms of corruption as crimes against humanity, which should be prosecuted by the highest national and international institutions.

"Grand corruption encompasses the most egregious forms of corruption – crimes so grave that they are an affront to human decency and harm the well-being of civil society around the world," GOPAC chairman Ricardo Garcia Cervantes said.

"If we are to thwart the perpetrators of these crimes, parliamentarians, governments, institutions and NGOs (non-government organizations) must band together," he added.