

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN LEBANON HOSTS INDEPENDENCE DAY 2013 RECEPTION**



*L-R: Guest of Honor H.E. Hagop Pakradounian MP, Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz, Mr. Alejandro Ricardo D. Ruiz*

17 June 2013 – The Philippine Embassy in Lebanon hosted a diplomatic reception on 12 June 2013 to commemorate the 115<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence, which was held at the Hilton Beirut Metropolitan Palace.

Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz and Mr. Alejandro Ricardo D. Ruiz welcomed the Guest of Honor, H.E. Hagop Bakradounian, Member of Parliament, who was the official representative of the President of the Republic of Lebanon General Michel Sleiman, the Speaker of the National Assembly Nabih Berri and the Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati.



*(Left Photo) Embassy personnel and Filcom members sing the Philippine National Anthem. (Right Photo) Ambassador Ruiz delivers her speech.*

In her speech, Ambassador Ruiz highlighted the considerable successes achieved by the Philippine government led by President Benigno Aquino III under his motto *good governance is good economics*. She noted that this year's theme "*Kalayaan: Ambagan Tungo sa Malawakang Kaunlaran*" underscores the unwavering commitment of the President to promote equitable and inclusive growth by focusing on greater job creation, increased investment, agricultural modernization and infrastructure upgrading. She also pledged to redouble the Embassy's efforts in deepening and increasing ties between the Philippines and Lebanon, particularly in the area of political dialogue, trade and labor cooperation.



Ambassador Ruiz and Members of the Diplomatic Corps led by Papal Nuncio and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Monsignor Gabriele Caccia.



Embassy, POLO and OWWA Officers and Staff and members of their respective families pose with the members of the Filipino community after the Reception.

The event was well attended by members of the diplomatic and consular corps, Lebanese government officials, representatives of Lebanese political parties, businessmen, NGOs, religious figures and leaders of Filipino community organizations in Lebanon.

Also present was the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants (MFAE) Dr. Wafiq Rhaime, as well as the MFAE Director for Protocol Ambassador Mira Daher. The Papal Nuncio Monsignor Gabriele Caccia, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, led the international community in presenting their felicitations for the occasion.

During the reception, guests had the opportunity to taste Filipino food. The famous Pancit, Chicken Adobo and Banana Turon were served. As a means to promote Philippine products, Ambassador Ruiz also invited the guests to sample the delicious Philippine Paradise Mango Rum Liqueur, the only mango rum liqueur of its kind in the world, which was served “On the Rocks”.

Handcrafted abaca gift bags were also distributed to guests containing tourism brochures, Philippine-made fans, dried mangoes and Oishi biscuits. -



*Ambassador Ruiz, together with the Embassy, POLO and OWWA Officers and Staff, and members of their respective families at the lobby of the Hilton Beirut.*