

## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN LEBANON ASSISTS IN THE REPATRIATION OF 58 OFWs FROM SYRIA**



L-R: Vice Consul Goce and Vice Consul Briones



L-R: Four IOM staff, ATN officer Ali, Vice Consul Briones, Vice Consul Goce, Mr. Ruiz, ATN Officer Macaraeg and Cultural Officer Perey



L-R: Ms. Perey turns over the OFWs' documents to Mr. Macaraeg at the airport.



*Left and Middle photo: Ambassador Ruiz briefs the 58 OFWs before boarding their flight*



02 July 2013 – The Philippine Embassy in Lebanon once again assisted in the successful cross-border repatriation of 58 OFWs from Syria to Lebanon on 01 July 2013 at the Masna'a border and the exit in Lebanon of this batch for their flight to Manila via the Rafik Hariri International Airport in the early morning of 02 July 2013.

The repatriation was undertaken in close coordination with Damascus PE and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which shouldered the cost of the airline tickets.

With the IOM personnel at the Masna'a border in the afternoon of July 1 was the Beirut PE Team I led by Vice Consul Rona Beth Goce and composed of Cultural Officer Gladys Perey, ATN Officer Junaid Ali and Mr. Ricardo Ruiz (spouse of Ambassador Ruiz). They received the 58 OFWs as they were turned over by the officers and staff of the Philippine Embassy in Damascus, including the personnel from the Rapid Response Team (RRT).

Beirut PE Team 2 composed of Vice Consul Dennis John Briones (leader) and ATN Officer Dexter Macaraeg received the repatriates in the evening of July 1 at the Rafik Hariri International Airport in Beirut and assisted them, together with IOM personnel, in completing the security, airline and immigration procedures up to the time they boarded their flight to Manila at 4:50 in the morning of July 2.

Philippine Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz arrived at the airport at 3:00 a.m. to send off the repatriates and wish them a safe journey.

This group is the 23<sup>rd</sup> batch to be repatriated from Syria via Lebanon since 12 December 2012 and brings the total of OFWs repatriated via Lebanon to 1,373 OFWs. **END**