

PRESS RELEASE

PHILIPPINE EMBASSIES IN BEIRUT AND DAMASCUS REPATRIATE 14 OFWs FROM SYRIA



PHOTOS:

FIRST ROW LEFT – Vice Consul Rona Beth Goce distributes sandwiches and drinks to the repatriates inside the bus while at the Masna'a border; **FIRST ROW RIGHT** – Welfare Officer Imelda Gatinao pose with the repatriates inside the bus; **SECOND ROW**- Ambassador Ruiz (rightmost) welcomes the repatriates upon arrival at the Philippine Embassy in Beirut; **THIRD ROW LEFT** – Assistant Labor Attaché Irma Valiente (second from right) and Property Officer/Administrative Assistant Ma. Chloe Silverio briefs the repatriates in the Embassy; **THIRD ROW RIGHT** – MWOFR Houseparent Gina Murillo assists the repatriates upon departure from the Embassy; **FOURTH ROW LEFT:** Cultural Officer Gladys Perey assists the repatriates while undergoing airline check in procedures at the Beirut Rafik Hariri International Airport; **FOURTH ROW RIGHT** - Vice Consul Dennis John Briones guides the repatriates as they line up to board their flight to Manila scheduled to depart at 4:10 a.m., 30 August 2013.

30 August 2013 – Fourteen (14) OFWs from Syria, including an eight (8) months pregnant OFW were repatriated today via the Rafic Hariri International Airport in Beirut at 04:10 AM, via Etihad Airways flight EY 534.

The journey of this group of OFWs from Syria started in the morning of 29 August 2013 when they traveled from Damascus, Syria to the Syrian and Lebanese borders where they were assisted by the officers and staff of the Philippine Embassies in Beirut and Damascus. While undergoing Lebanese immigration formalities at the Masna'a border, the group was assisted by Vice Consul Rona Beth Goce and Welfare Officer Imelda Gatinao.

From the Masna'a border, the 14 OFWs were escorted directly to the Philippine Embassy in Beirut where they spent another 10 hours and took the opportunity to rest and prepare for their flight to Manila. Upon arrival at the Embassy, they were briefed by Assistant Labor Attaché Irma Valiente, Property Officer/Administrative Assistant Ma. Chloe Silverio and MWOFRRC Houseparent Gina Murillo. Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz warmly welcomed the repatriates and wished them a safe and happy return to the Philippines and reunion with their respective families. While in the Embassy, the repatriates were served dinner.

At 1:00 AM of 30 August 2013, the group left the Embassy and proceeded to the airport where they were assisted by Vice Consul Dennis John Briones and Cultural Officer Gladys Perey during airline check in and immigration clearing procedures.

The 14 OFWs are scheduled to arrive in Manila on 30 August 2013, at 2310H via Etihad Airways flight EY 428. The cost of the airline tickets of this group of repatriates was shouldered by the Philippine Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs.

This is the 28th cross-border repatriation undertaken by the Philippine Embassies in Beirut and Damascus, which brought the total of OFWs repatriated from Syria via Lebanon to 1,559 since the start of the cross-border operation between the two Embassies in December 2012. **END**