

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN LEBANON SUPPORTS FILCOM ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS, INDUCTS NEW SETS OF OFFICERS**



#### **PHOTOS:**

**FIRST ROW LEFT** – Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz delivers her message to the officers and members of Isabelino Ako Organization, Inc. – Lebanon Chapter; **FIRST ROW RIGHT** – Ambassador Ruiz (extreme right) administers the oath of office to the new officers of Isabelino Ako Organization; **SECOND ROW LEFT**– Ambassador Ruiz (seated fourth from left) with Labor Attaché Bulyok Nilong (seated, third from right), Assistant Labor Attaché Irma Valiente (second row, second from left), and Welfare Officer Imelda Gatinao (second row, third from left) pose with the officers and members of the Sarba Parish Group, including its spiritual leader, Rev. Fr. Theo Vlugt S.J. (seated fourth from right); **SECOND ROW RIGHT** – Ambassador Ruiz (extreme right) administers the oath of office to the new officers of the Sarba Parish Group.

**07 October 2013** – Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz led Embassy, POLO and OWWA officers and staff in attending back-to-back Filipino community organization celebrations on Sunday, 06 October 2013, in order to demonstrate the full support of the Philippine Team in Lebanon for their common endeavors towards the benefit of OFWs in Lebanon.

During two separate events, two Filipino community organizations, namely, Isabelino Ako Organization Inc, Lebanon Chapter and the Sarba Parish Group, installed their respective new set of officers by reciting their oaths of office before Philippine Ambassador Leah M. Basinang-Ruiz.

The *Isabelino Ako Organization Inc. Lebanon Chapter* has 260 members, including its 8 newly elected officers. As indicated by the name of the group, the members all hail from the province of Isabela who commit themselves to promote their home province in their places of work. The organization is present in 8 other countries namely: Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi), Kuwait, France and Malaysia. The Lebanon chapter also celebrated its second anniversary on that day.

The *Sarba Parish Group* is a church-based organization with 46 members. While its name was taken from the place where the group usually meets (a village in the Keserwan District of Mount Lebanon), its membership is open to all Filipinos working in the different parts of the country. It was founded in 2003 when a group of OFWs from the village initiated a weekly Catholic mass for migrant workers in the area, celebrated by the group's spiritual adviser, Fr. Theo Vlugt SJ. The Sarba Group also assists Father Theo during his regular Sunday masses at the St. Elie Church in Antelias (a town in the Matn District of Mount Lebanon), which gather the third largest number of Filipino workers for community worship in Lebanon.

In her separate messages during the induction ceremonies, Ambassador Ruiz congratulated the officers and members of the two organizations and encouraged them to continue actively working towards the fulfillment of their mission and collaborating with the Embassy in promoting and protecting the rights and welfare of the Filipinos in Lebanon. **END**