

PGMA CHRISTENS FIRST RP-MADE GREEK SHIP

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became the godmother of the first ever Greek ship made in the Philippines, the *C/S Argolikos*, ordered by the Hellenic shipping conglomerate Dioryx Maritime Corp from Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Philippines.

“*C/S Argolikos* shows off to the whole world the excellence of the Filipino workforce in building vessels to sail the seven seas,” President Arroyo said in her

speech at the christening ceremony July 4 at the Subic Freeport Zone in Zambales province of the Philippines.

“Mabuhay ang Dioryx! Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! (Long live Dioryx! Long live the Philippines!),” the President said as she pulled the ribbon that triggered the traditional champagne bottle to break at ship’s bow.

Other than being the very first Greek ship to be built in the country, President Arroyo noted that the building of the



Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao greets President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at the christening of first Greek ship ever made in the Philippines, C/S Argolikos.

C/S Argolikos represents several firsts:

- At 512,400 metric tons, and a cargo capacity of 4,360 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units), 258.9

meters long, 32 meters wide, and 19 meters high, it is the largest ship ever built in the Philippines;

- It is the first ship to be built in the Subic Freeport Zone by the Korean-owned Hanjin Heavy Industries, which started its operations in Subic only two years ago with a \$1 billion investment;
- It is the first of six ships ordered by Dioryx from Hanjin in Subic, the total cost of which is reported at about \$1 billion.



Amb. Tiglao and Dioryx Maritime Chairman Dimitri Papadimitriou at the naming ceremony of the first Philippine-made Greek ship, C/S Argolikos (right), in Subic.

(Continued on page 3)

SPECIAL FEATURE

Taguig City Hosts P35B Hotel Projects

(Excerpts from an article by Nic Legaspi and Vic Lopez published in BizNewsAsia, July 7-14, 2008)

Taguig City, which the World Bank recently named the best city to do business in the Philippines, is hosting three big hotel projects with a combined investments of more than P35 billion. These are the \$250-million (P11.25 billion at P45 to \$1) Shangri-La Hotel of Hong Kong-based Shangri-La Asia

(Continued on page 4)

Kaphilca Surges Ahead

Two years after its near-collapse due to both internal and external problems, the Katipunan Philippines Cultural Academy (Kaphilca) has fully recovered its former strength and continues to surge ahead to provide the educational needs of Filipino youth in Athens. Renamed the Philippine School in Greece (PSG) by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, under the aegis of the Philippine Embassy, it opened the school year 2008-2009 with nearly 200 students, and plans are already afoot to either relocate to a bigger building or

establish an extension facility.

The school was established in 1997 by then Ambassador Norberto Basilio, under orders from President Fidel Ramos himself, with much of its growth in the succeeding decade supervised by Dr. Marcos Fojas, who is presently Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao’s Consultant for Kaphilca Affairs. Education professional Mr. Roberto Fresnido, who became school director and principal in 2006, has very successfully steered the school’s turnaround and raised its academic

(Continued on page 6)

AMBASSADOR TIGLAO GRACES LAUNCHING OF PSINAKIS BOOK IN MANILA



Ambassador Tiglao delivers a speech at the launching of the book of Steve Psinakis at the Rockwell Center in Manila.

H.E. Rigoberto Tiglao, the Philippine Ambassador to Greece, was one of three guest speakers at the launching of Steve Psinakis' book, "A Country Not Even His Own" at the Rockwell Center in Metropolitan Manila in July. The other two speakers were former close comrades of the hero Ninoy Aquino — former senators Heherson Alvarez Jr.

and Sergio Osmena III.

The book-launching was practically a jampacked reunion of anti-Marcos dictatorship activists — including President Corazon Aquino, Senator Joker Arroyo, and former Vice President Teofisto Guingona — representing the entire political spectrum.

Mr. Psinakis' ancestors were from Crete, although they settled in the greater area of Sparta. As fate would have it, he ended up in the Philippines in the 1950s working for Meralco, and marrying Precy Lopez, the only daughter of the tycoon Eugenio Lopez. With the Marcos dictatorship persecuting the Lopez family starting 1972, with the Lopez scion Eugenio II put in prison, Psinakis, in exile in the US with his wife, became a key figure in the anti-Marcos movement to the extent that the dictator Marcos labeled him a 'terrorist'. Mr. Psinakis' book is both a personal memoir and an account of the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship. The book's title, "A Country Not Even His Own," is actually President Corazon Aquino's words as

inscribed in her formal citation to Mr. Psinakis in 1986 for his "Outstanding Service to Philippine Democracy."

A Greek edition of Mr. Psinakis' book is scheduled to be launched this October in Athens, published by the prestigious publishing company, Publications Fereniki. Mr. Psinakis has two nephews living in Athens, businessman Mr. Yorgos Psinakis, who has been very supportive of the Philippine Embassy, and the entertainment-industry executive, Mr. Ilias Psinakis. ■



Steve Psinakis' life and his book "A Country Not Even His Own" was extensively featured in the upscale Athens magazine Life & Style August 2008 issue. The article ran for ten full pages with nearly two dozen pages of Psinakis' photos from the 1950s in Greece, the Philippines, and the US.

Following is a speech delivered by Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao at the launching of the book of Steve Psinakis titled, "A Country Not Even His Own," in Manila.

It is my honor and pleasure to speak on a book I and my wife Getsy enjoyed very much reading in the past few days, written by somebody whom I respect very much.

When Yorgos Psinakis, Steve's nephew, who has become a dear friend of ours in Athens asked me to be one of the speakers tonight, there was no way for me to excuse myself. Steve probably doesn't know that this but I owe him.

I had used Steve's name without permission in Athens.

You see, when an ambassador presents his credential to the head of state of the host government, it is customary to have an audience with the head of state. This usually lasts at the most only 10 minutes, with the conversation really a ritual of sorts involving general statements, with each party trying hard not to appear bored.

I presented my credentials to President Karolos Papoulias in May 2006, and I was one of four ambassadors who did so in that morning.

When I remarked to him that there is a

Greek who played a major role in our revolution against a dictatorship, his face brightened, and that was the start of a very lively conversation, with the President becoming keenly interested in the Philippines. This Greek of course is none other than Stavros Psinakis.

To appreciate Papoulias' delight in hearing a Greek's role in a revolution against a dictatorship, you have to remember that and Greece and the Philippines share parallel histories.

Both countries were under colonial masters for four centuries. We, by the Christian Spanish. Greece, by the Muslim Turks. This is one reason why both Greeks and Filipinos are passionate about freedom, why Filipinos and Greeks, I would say, are soul-brothers.

In modern times, Greece was under martial law for seven years under a junta of colonels, which was overthrown in 1974. We had our martial law era, about which Stavros' book tells about.

Greek President Papoulias was a well-known socialist and an activist against the Junta. Similar to Stavros' experience when he campaigned against the Marcos dictatorship in the US, Papoulias was abroad, in Germany, when the colonels grabbed power and he campaigned against the junta all over Europe.

So when I told President Papoulias that somehow there has been a strong Philippine

Greek connection through Mr. Psinakis here, he was delighted and told me to get in touch with him if there is anything the Philippine embassy needs.

One big reason I found reading Stavros' book extremely interesting is that I discovered something I didn't know before, which is of personal interest to me.

In chapter 5 of Steve's book he relates the hunger strike in November 1974 of Mr. Geny Lopez and Senator Osmena after two years in a Marcos prison, and how Marcos broke his word when the two political prisoners ended their strike and the dictatorship, instead of freeing them, accused them of attempts to kill him.

To counteract the negative political impact to the regime of Mr. Lopez and Senator Osmena's hunger strike, Marcos released 622 political prisoners to project an image that his was a humane dictatorship. To quote Steve's book:

"The hunger strike of the two prisoners did not result in their own release, but it was not in vain. It resulted in the release of 622 other political prisoners"

One of those prisoners was my late wife Raquel, who was released that December. The other one was yours truly, although I was released months later, in March the next

(Continued on page 3)

C/S ARGOLIKOS (Continued from page 1)

It is the first container ship to be built in the Philippines, which marks the country's dramatic entry into the booming global cargo shipping industry.

"C/S Argolikos and the other five ships ordered by Dioryx firmly puts our country into the radar screen of the Greek and global shipping industry," noted Philippine Ambassador to Greece Rigoberto Tiglao, who was at the christening ceremony. "The Philippines will not just be some exotic place with beautiful beaches in the Pacific," he said.

"The construction of C/S Argolikos could mark the start of the Philippine ship-building industry. Remember

that ship-building had been one of the engines of growth of Japan in the 1960s and Korea in the 1970s."

(Argolikos refers to a gulf in the east coast of the Greece's Peloponnese region, with Dioryx adapting a practice of naming its managed ships with the names of Greek gulfs.)

President Arroyo at the ceremony thanked Mr. Dimitri Papadmitriou, chairman of Dioryx Maritime Corp., for his confidence that



Clockwise from top: President Arroyo delivers a speech at the christening of C/S Argolikos in Subic; Amb. Tiglao with Greek Charge d'Affaires Nicolaos Verghis; and Mrs. Getsy Tiglao, with Argolikos at the background.

the Filipino workforce would be able to build his company's six container ships at Subic.

The delivery of the C/S Argolikos was actually made six months ahead of schedule, President Arroyo pointed out. A twin ship ordered by Dioryx was launched 3 September, named 'Turquoise', and chartered by CMA CGM, the biggest container transportation and shipping company in France.

Such efficiency in delivery has been crucial in the shipping industry starting in the past few years, when the global shipping requirements have boomed so much that demand has outpaced delivery capacity. This has resulted in

the drastic rise in the prices of new container ships. C/S Argolikos was ordered at a reported price of \$60 million two years ago, although industry estimates say such a ship now costs easily \$100 million.

Including the six ships contracted by Dioryx, 43 huge container ships have been ordered from Hanjin in Subic by shipping companies all over the world, for delivery in the next two years.

"There are three shipbuilding and ship-related establishments in Subic," President Arroyo said in her speech. "Our vision is to develop the Clark-Subic corridor into the most competitive international service and logistics center in the region," she said. ■



The landmark event brought together high-level Philippine officials, who are shown with Amb. Tiglao, from left: Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Chairman Edgardo Pamintuan, Senator Richard Gordon, and Presidential Management Staff Director General Cerge Remonde.

PSINAKIS BOOK LAUNCHING

(Continued from page 2)

year - nearly two years after I was imprisoned.

So it's never too late to express gratitude: thank you Senator Osmena, and I thank the late Geny's family, and of course I thank Steve, the man who planned the Great Escape.

This brings me to why I think Steve's book is important to our national consciousness, that it is not merely your ordinary memoir.

I had lived through much of the political turmoil Steve described in the book, and I spent two years of my life in Marcos prisons.

Many lives were lost, many lives were destroyed during those years, many of

whom in the prime of their youth, really teen-agers or in their early twenties dreaming of creating a prosperous society of justice and freedom.

It is said that many of the best and the brightest of that generation of youth in the 70s were either killed or imprisoned by the regime, went underground to fight the dictatorship, or escaped abroad in a move that started the phenomenon of massive Filipino migration abroad.

And I find it extremely revolting that some who were propagandists or officials of that dictatorship claim that we have martial law today, or a version of it.

The reason for such rather falsehoods is that we have started to forget what Steve called in his book as the Dark Years. We have forgotten how ugly a martial law

regime is, so much that some even taunt adventurers in the military to take over our democratic system.

Steve's book indeed is a major contribution to our collective memory. His chapter on the assassination of Ninoy Aquino is a manifesto demanding for our nation to finally solve that murder that sparked a revolution.

But Steve's book is also an account of a truly authentic life, how a human being can celebrate life in all its facets, from enjoying the magical days with one's beloved, children, and friends to struggling for a noble ideal. What more in life can you ask for?

Thank you, and congratulations again to Steve, to Precy, and also to their daughter Geni and their nephew Yorgos. ■



Bonifacio Global City — Taguig City's booming business district.

(Source: www.skyscrapersity.com/edmundtanso)

TAGUIG CITY *(Continued from page 1)*

Limited, the P20-billion Grand Hyatt of George S.K.Ty's Federal Land and the P3.8 billion The Maxim's Hotel of Andrew Tan's Alliance Global Group Inc.

All three hotels will be built at the Bonifacio Global City, which has become a top investment destination in the country.

The Shangri-La Hotel project, which broke ground last July 3, will be 60 stories high and will have 500 guestrooms and 234 apartments. Slated for completion by 2012, it will complement the five existing hotel properties of Shangri-La Asia Limited in the Philippines and the Shangri-La's Boracay Resort & Spa, which is scheduled to open late this year.

"Shangri-La at the Fort will not only be a striking new addition to the Manila skyline, but a demonstration of our firm commitment to the Philippines," notes Edward Kuok, president and CEO of Shangri-La Asia Limited. "Our presence and confidence in this market continues to grow with an expanding portfolio of business and leisure properties."

Shangri-La Asia Limited currently owns and/or manages 55 hotels under the deluxe Shangri-La and mid-market Traders brands, with rooms inventory of over 28,000. The group has more than 50 ongoing projects in Austria, Canada, mainland China, France, India, Japan, Macau, Maldives, Philippines, Qatar, Seychelles, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Alliance Global Group's hotel project, which will open in 2010, is an all-suites hotel, that will be undertaken by its tourism arm, Travellers International Hotel Group Inc., in cooperation with Star Cruises Ltd., which is also a partner in a planned development within the Manila Bay Tourism City project. The project will be named The Maxim's Hotel, a luxury hotel brand of the Genting Group, sister company of Star Cruises Ltd. The Maxim's Hotel will be the country's first all-suites luxury hotel. Topping the hotel projects is Federal Land's Grand Hyatt, which is actually part of a mixed-use facility that will be built on a 27-hectare property beginning this year. With 66 stories, Grand Hyatt will be the tallest building in the Philippines. "Choosing Taguig was an

Taguig City, which is fast becoming the country's premier economic hub as it continues to draw in foreign investments, is also gaining the stamp of approval of foreign embassies and educational institutions.

This year, two diplomatic missions have relocated to Taguig City – the Embassy of Singapore and the Embassy of the United Kingdom. It is expected that with the dynamic economic activity in the city, other embassies will soon follow suit. Taguig City is also home to foreign schools such as the International School, British School, Japanese School, and Victory Leadership International.

In a recent study by the World Bank, Taguig City ranked as the country's most competitive city.

easy decision to make, especially with its rapidly growing developments, as a result of forward-looking urban planning schemes," company President Alfred V. Ty said in a statement. ■

For additional information on Taguig City and Bonifacio Global City, you may wish to visit: the following sites: www.taguig.gov.ph www.fbdcorp.com

Taguig City's Bonifacio Global City adopted a Public Art Program that aims to enhance its aesthetic quality and give it a distinct quality and style. Below are some of the varied art works prominently displayed along the city's streets. (Source: www.fbdcorp.com)



BONIFACIO HIGH STREET
SPECIFIC GRAVITY (by Reg Yuson)



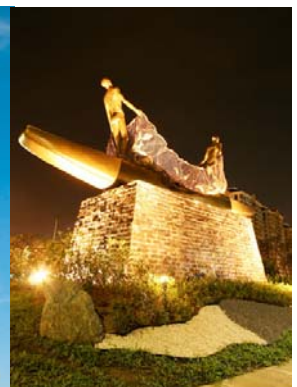
BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY
THE TREES (by Reynato Paz Contreras)



BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY
BALANGHAI (by Leo Gerardo Leonardo)



BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY
ANG SUPREMO (by Leo Ben-Hur Villanueva)



BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY
PASASALAMAT (by Ferdie Cacnio)

Consular Matters

Guidelines on the Entry of Temporary Visitors to the Philippines

Nationals of Greece and Cyprus are among those who may enter and stay in the Philippines for business or tourism purposes without visas for a period of and not exceeding twenty-one (21) days. At present, there are 147 countries in this list.

Should nationals of these countries decide to stay for more than twenty-one (21) days, they have to secure an entry visa at the Philippine Embassy in Athens. Following are the minimum requirements in obtaining a temporary visitor's visa to the Philippines for business and tourism:

BUSINESS:

1. Passport valid for at least six (6) months beyond the intended period of stay in the Philippines
2. Duly-accomplished visa application form
3. Letter from the company stating the purpose of the applicant's travel to and duration of stay in the Philippines, OR proof of bonafide status as businessman
4. One (1) Passport-size photograph
5. Confirmed tickets for return or onward journey to the next port of destination
6. Payment of corresponding visa fee (€24,00)

TOURISM:

1. Passport valid for at least six (6) months beyond the intended period of stay in the Philippines
2. Duly accomplished visa application form
3. One (1) Passport-size photograph
4. Confirmed tickets for return or onward journey to the next port of destination
5. Payment of corresponding visa fee (€24,00)

IMPORTANT:

- ☑ Application must be made in person.
- ☑ Visa application forms can be downloaded from www.athenspe.net.
- ☑ For queries, call 210.6721.837 local 112 or 116.

MGA PAALALA SA PAGKUHA NG MACHINE READABLE PASSPORT (MRP):

- ☑ Kinakailangang **personal** na mag-*renew* or mag-*apply* bagong *passport* sa Embahada, maliban kung ang aplikante ay 7-taon pababa or 60-taon pataas).
- ☑ Dalhin ang *passport* na ire-*renew*. Kung kukuha ng bagong *passport*, dalhin ang *original Report of Birth* na in-*issue* ng Embahada.
- ☑ Magdala ng **tatlong (3) passport-size photos** na may **royal or dark blue background**.
Siguraduhing disente ang suot na damit sa larawan at nakahawi ang buhok.
Mahigpit na pinagbabawal ang pagsuot ng hikaw sa mga kalalakihan.
Sa mga kababaihan, iwasan ang pagsuot ng malaking hikaw.
- ☑ Sa kadahilanang aabutin ng higit-kumulang **45-araw o isa't kalahating buwan** ang pagproseso at pag-*release* ng *Machine Readable Passport*, inaabisuhan ang lahat na kung maaari ay mag-*renew* ng *passport* **anim (6) na buwan bago ito mag-expire** o kaya ay **anim (6) na buwan bago ang nakatakdang paglalakbay palabas ng Gresya o Cyprus**.
- ☑ Tumawag sa Embahada makalipas ang **anim na linggo o isa't kalahating buwan** mula sa *date of application* ng *passport* para makatiyak kung dumating na ang *Machine Readable Passport (MRP)* mula sa Pilipinas. Sa pag-*claim* ng bagong *passport*, dalhin ang lumang *passport* para makansela.

*Para sa kaalaman ng lahat, ang Embahada ay nag-iissue ng **libreng certification** sa English at Greek bilang katunayan na ang aplikante ay nag-renew or nag-apply ng bagong passport sa Embahada at ito ay pinoproseso pa sa Pilipinas.*

Para sa karagdagang impormasyon, magtanong sa Consular Section or tumawag sa telepono bilang:(210) 6721.837 local 112 at 116.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Sunday Consular Service

Since December 2006, the Philippine Embassy has conducted consular services every second Sunday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., to accommodate *kababayans* in Greece who are not able to apply for consular documents such as passports, affidavits, marriage and birth reports, and certifications during regular working days.

Following is the schedule of Sunday consular services for the next six months:

- 11 October 2008
- 08 November 2008
- 13 December 2008
- 11 January 2009
- 08 February 2009
- 08 March 2009

DFA TO OPEN 6 ADD'L RCOs

The Department of Foreign Affairs is set to open six (6) additional Regional Consular Offices (RCOs) to fast-track the delivery of passport and consular services to outlying areas in the country, in line with the Arroyo administration's policy to effect efficient delivery of basic services and to bring these closer to the people.

Last August, Secretary Alberto Romulo directed the creation of RCOs in the following areas:

- Bacolod City
- Butuan City
- Puerto Princesa, Palawan
- Baguio City
- General Santos City
- Cotabato City

They are mandated to process machine-readable passport applications; render public assistance services on passport issuance and consular-related matters, perform Assistance-to-Nationals (ATN) functions, link with relevant government agencies for developmental projects in the region, and gather and disseminate information about DFA's activities vis-à-vis foreign policy/economic diplomacy issues and government thrusts.

PSG-KAPHILCA (Continued from page 1)

standards, boosted by the sacrifices of teachers and parents who remained loyal to the school through its crisis in early 2006. Ambassador Tiglao had closely supervised the school's efforts to hurdle its obstacles ever since he arrived in Athens May 2006.

Located at 64 Pontou St. in Ambelokipi for two years now, PSG-Kaphilca is the only Filipino school granted a permit to operate by the Greek Ministry of Education. It is the only Philippine School in the whole of Europe accredited by the Philippine Department of Education to offer Basic Education Curriculum for the pre-elementary and elementary levels. Complying with Greek education regulations, Greek-language classes are part of its curriculum, taught by an accredited Greek-language teacher.

According to the PSG-KAPHILCA Director Fresnido, this school year, students' extra-curricular programs will be strengthened and intensified, to provide them a well-rounded education. The school will intensify the training of the "Tinig ng Kabataan" Choir Group and Dance Troupe.



School Director Roberto Fresnido (seated) with the faculty members and staff of KAPHILCA: (seated from left) Luz Ta-a, Shirley Manigbas, Bernadette Smyrniotis, Beatriz Mendoza, Mae Candelaria; (standing from left) Walter Orpilla, Geraldine Rafanan, Cristina Bareng, Carol Bravo, Ana Thanopoulou, Sabino Francisco, Lane Parale, Jeanelyn Lobaton, Marcelina Tanqueco, Aniceto Reyes, and Ramelito Maligaya.

These two groups, consisting of PSG-KAPHILCA elementary and secondary students, delivered superb performances at the highly-successful June 12 celebration of the Filipino Community in Zappeio, and at the First Athina Festival of Cultures last June 28.

Director Fresnido added that the school will encourage athletic competition by organizing teams in basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and other sports. This will culminate in a sports competition during the school's Foundation Day celebration. For this reason, the school management is setting

aside one day a week for outdoor activities to be held at the Zografou gymnasium and athletic grounds.

While extra-curricular programs will be intensified, Director Fresnido stressed that academic excellence is still and will be the school's top priority. Brand-new textbooks, ordered by the school from Manila, have been acquired and will be used starting this school year. Its computers will soon be made operational this school year to provide its students with computer literacy and introduce them to the internet, which is becoming virtually the world's

biggest and most accessible library.

In July, the Greek Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Education, and Employment gave the school's teachers and their families the privilege of being issued individual residence permits. This approval puts PSG-KAPHILCA in the category of the American Community College and the Japanese School, the only other schools given such privilege by the Greek government. ■

For inquiries, please call: 210.748.0825 and 6934.923.950

KAPHILCA IN FOCUS

SY 2007-2008 was a banner year for KAPHILCA and its students as they raise the image of the Philippines in Greece through various activities that included singing Christmas carols to Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis and Ambassador Tiglao, guesting in a popular Greek TV show, performing at the First Athens Festival, performing at the 110th Philippine Independence celebration, and taking part in a football game sponsored by the Municipality of Athens.



Cyprus Corner

Consulate, POLO to Open Second Sunday of the Month

In response to the clamor of members of the Filipino community, particularly those in the areas of Pafos, Paralimni, Larnaca and Limassol, the Philippine Honorary Consul in Nicosia Shemaine Bushnell-Kyriakides will provide consular services every second Sunday of the month beginning 12 October 2008.

Filipinos in Cyprus, who are unable to go to the Office of the Honorary Consul during regular working days to avail of passport services, can now do so every second Sunday of the month. The Honorary Consul will accept applications for renewal of passports and replacement of lost passports as well as release new passports. The Honorary Consul will also accommodate passport applicants who need to affix their signatures and

thumbprints (second appearance) on the machine-generated passport application form. In addition to passport services, Labor Attaché Jaime Gimenez will also provide welfare counseling and services to our *kababayans*.

Honorary Consul Kyriakides and Labor Attaché Gimenez are pleased that this public service would also provide an opportunity for our kababayans in other parts of Cyprus to visit their relatives and friends in Nicosia.

For additional information, please contact the Honorary Consul at these numbers: (+357) 2268-0806 and 2275-4420.

The Office of the Philippine Honorary Consul is located at 36 Grivas Dighenis Avenue, #4C, Nicosia, Cyprus 1648. ■

ASSISTANCE-TO-NATIONALS

Filipino Seaman Acquitted of Drug Charges

After more than a year of detention, Filipino seaman Narciso Garcia was acquitted on 17 July 2008 by the Court of First Instance of Patras of the charge of importing, possessing, and trafficking cocaine into Greece.

Like millions of Filipinos working abroad, Narciso endured being away from his wife and son to provide them with a better and brighter future. Narciso, who hails from Batangas, has been a seaman for twenty years.

He had been on board the Bahamas-flagged vessel, M/V Coral Sea, as a bosun for only three months when he, along with the ship's Croatian master and Lithuanian chief mate, was arrested and detained by Greek Police on suspicion of trafficking into Greece 51.6 kilograms of

cocaine, estimated to be worth 8 Million Euros. The vessel had sailed from Ecuador with 200 boxes of bananas for distribution in several countries in Europe. Philippine Embassy officials monitored and closely coordinated the case with the private counsel of the accused. The Embassy was also in constant communication with the Mr. Garcia's wife, Mina, who was brought to Greece by her husband's employer, to provide him with emotional support.

Philippine Embassy officials, led by Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao, were very pleased upon learning of the decision of the court.

Mr. and Mrs. Garcia are now back in the Philippines ■

The Philippine Embassy in Athens, Greece

welcomes...



Joanne M. David
Cultural Attaché

Joanne arrived in Athens on 25 August 2008 to replace outgoing Cultural Attaché Analydia Turiano.

Joanne has been in the foreign service for ten years. She has attended various seminars and conferences in the Philippines and has worked at the Office of Consular Affairs and Office of the Undersecretary for International Economic Relations at the DFA Home Office prior to being posted to Athens.

Born on 16 October 1976 in Angeles City, Pampanga, Joanne graduated from the University of Sto. Tomas (UST) with a degree in Tourism in 1998.

She is married to Anthony David and has two sons, Ziv Gabriel, 2, and Kali Mikael, 10 months. ■

and bids farewell to...



Analydia A. Turiano
Cultural Attaché

Analy ended her tour of duty in Athens, Greece on 27 August 2008.

During her 6-year tenure as Cultural Officer, she helped organize various cultural activities in Greece including the performances of the world-renowned Bayanihan Dance Troupe in 2004 and 2006, and the annual gathering of the Filipino Community at the Fokianos gym in Zappeio to celebrate the anniversary of Philippine independence.

Analy has been in the foreign service for 14 years. She is a graduate of B.S. Foreign Service at the Lyceum of the Philippines. Born on 03 August 1970 in San Luis, Batangas, Analy is married to Egmedio Turiano Jr., and they have a son, Joseph Noel. ■

Philippine Embassy, Athens

Tel. Nos.: (210) 6721.837/ 6721.883
Fax No.: (210) 6721.872



H.E. RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO
Ambassador



MARIA FE T. PANGILINAN
Deputy Chief of Mission
Ext # 105



CONSTANCIO R. VINGNO JR.
Minister and Consul General
Ext # 114



HERMOGENES P. GARCIA
Administrative Officer
Ext # 102



EULOGIO G. COMAYA
Finance Officer
Ext # 103



NESTOR C. MAGALLONES
Communications/Records/
Property/ Protocol Officer
Ext # 111



JOANNE M. DAVID
Cultural Officer
Ext # 108



NATHALIE A. FAJARDO
Consular Assistant -ATN
Ext # 113



CIELO L. GAMAYON
Secretary of the Ambassador
Ext # 101



LINA G. CATBAGAN
Collecting Officer
Ext # 116



ELENI LAIOS-PELEKIS
Interpreter
Ext # 110



PERLITA C. CACATIAN
Consular Clerk
Ext # 112/116



ROLANDO T. CARDONA
Security/ GUM
Ext # 115



GEMMA Y. COLOMA
Consular Clerk
Ext # 112/116



BYRON B. VILLANUEVA
Consular Clerk/ Driver
Ext #112/ 116

Makabayang BALITA sa Gresya at Cyprus

is published quarterly by the Embassy of the Philippines in Athens, Greece.

H.E. Ambassador Rigoberto D. Tiglao
Adviser

Minister Constancio R. Vingno Jr.
Editor-in-Chief

Nathalie A. Fajardo
Managing Editor

Joanne M. David Cielo L. Gamayon
Editorial Staff

Carlos Montenegro II Byron Villanueva
Photographers

Bamboo Martinez
Art Consultant

Address: 26 Antheon St., Paleo Psychico 15254 Athens, GR

Tel. Nos.: (0030) 210 6721837 or 883

Fax No.: (0030) 210 6721 872

Email: philembnewsletter@athenspe.net

info@athenspe.net

Website: www.athenspe.net

We welcome Pinoy news!

Send us your letters, news stories, press or photo releases for publication in the newsletter via regular mail, e-mail or fax.

LABOR PAGE

Philippine Overseas Labor Office
158 Sevastoupolleos, Ambelokipi, Athens
Tels.: (210)6983335, (210)6983265

SHIPPING: THE PHILIPPINES-GREECE NEXUS

The merchant marine industry, which moves 90% of global trade, constitutes the nexus between Greece and the Philippines, with each country having distinctive, crucial roles in world shipping:

☑Greeks are the biggest private ship-owning nationality, owning 18% of the world's merchant marine fleet (by tonnage);

☑Filipinos, on the other hand, make up the single biggest nationality of seafarers manning the world merchant marine fleet, with the 266,500 Filipinos as of 2007 estimated to account for 10% to as much as 20% of all officers and seamen in the world. (The slightly bigger number of Chinese seafarers is due to the fact that most of them are in Chinese ships mainly on domestic routes.)

☑Contrary to the unfair notion that Filipino seamen are almost entirely only in the lower-skilled work, the Philippines practically ties up with India as the biggest source of officers in the world merchant fleet. Estimates put the number of Filipino officers at the end of 2007 at 55,000 a major increase from the 46,400 level in 2005.

“It is in the shipping industry – one of, if not Greece’s most important industry – that Greece’s and the Philippines’

destinies intertwine,” Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao says. “The development of this nexus therefore is one of the most important tasks of the Philippine Embassy in Athens.”

As Greeks in the past two decades have grown phenomenally to own the biggest merchant fleet in the world, the number of Filipino officers and seamen have doubled from just 115,300 in 2005 to 226,900 in 2007.

The proportion of Filipinos in Greek-owned and -managed ships is estimated to be even higher: estimates indicate that Filipinos make up 20% to as high as 40% of the crew in Greek tankers, cargo ships, and yachts.



Records of the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Athens show that the top Greek employers of Filipino seamen in the last two years were Delfi SA, Costamare Shipping, Dynacom Tankers, Maryville Maritime, Minerva



Photos courtesy of Unicol Management Services (a Manila-based ship crewing company)

Marine, Centrofin Management, and Thenamaris Ships Management. They all belong to the top 40 Greek shipping companies in terms of tonnage and number of ships.

The demand for Filipino officers in Greek-managed ships has been growing phenomenally, as more and more Greek officers retire and less of the younger generation showing interest in the seafaring life.

Filipinos are said to have several competitive advantages in Greek-owned and captained ships: their competence in seafaring skills and their facility in the English language. Filipinos’ English literacy is said to become crucial as more and more crews are being made up of nationalities from various countries, with the Filipino crewman often being the most skilled in English, thereby becoming the ad hoc interpreter for the multi-national crew. Filipinos’ vaunted sociability and friendliness as well as their cheerful temperament even in adversity are also said to be highly valued by Greek ship owners.

The fact that Greeks and Filipinos share the same Christian cultural traditions is

said to be also an advantage. That Greek see Filipinos as among the best seafarers is demonstrated by the fact that there are two dozen representative offices of Greek ship-owners and crewing agencies in Manila.

The reliability of Filipino seamen’s training had been confirmed way back in 2005 when the London-based International Maritime Organization reported that the Philippines has been strictly complying with the 1978 Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW).

At its 80th session in London on May 20-22, 2005, the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee confirmed that the Philippines had communicated the required information on the independent evaluation of its Quality Standard System (QSS), and thus found the country to be consistently implementing the 1978 STCW Convention. That meant the Philippines’ continued inclusion in the IMO White List of countries with competent seafarers, which serves as the benchmark and reference of the global shipping industry in the recruitment of quality seafarers. ■

Top 5 Nationalities of Seafarers in the World Merchant Marine Fleet (2005 data)

Nationality	Number of:			Percentage of:		
	Officers	Ratings*	Officers and Ratings	All Officers	All Ratings	All Officers and Ratings
China (PRC)	42,704	79,504	122,208	9.2	11.0	10.0
Philippines	46,359	74,040	120,399**	9.9	10.3	9.8
Turkey	22,091	60,328	82,419	4.7	8.4	6.7
India	46,497	32,352	78,849	10.0	4.5	6.4
Ukraine	28,908	36,119	65,207	6.2	5.0	5.3
World Total	466,470	721,021	1,187,491	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: BIM/ISF: “2005 Manpower update: World-wide demand for and supply of seafarers.”
*Ratings: shipping industry term for all seamen other than officers.
**Data of the Philippine Overseas Employment Authority show “sea-based” workers of 115,300 in 2005 and 226,900 in 2007.