

## RP INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATED WITH THREE BIG EVENTS IN GREECE AND CYPRUS



Ambassador Tiglao greets Cyprus President Dimitris Christofias and Mrs. Elsie Christofias at the Philippine National Day reception in Nicosia on June 24 (left). The ambassador and Mrs. Getsy Tiglao (center photo) lead embassy officials and the Filipino community in a parade at the Independence Day celebration at the Fokianos National Gymnasium June 21, and the diplomatic reception at the ambassador's residence on June 12 (right photo).

The Philippine Embassy in Greece, led by Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao, successfully celebrated the 111<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence with two very successful events in Athens.

In the evening of June 12, Ambassador Tiglao and Mrs. Getsy Tiglao hosted a well-attended diplomatic reception at the Ambassador's residence at Paleo Psychico.

Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao welcomed some 300 guests from the Greek government, the diplomatic corps, representatives from the Greek business sector, and leaders of the Filipino Community in Greece and members of Greek media.

Capt. Panagiotis Tsakos, who is one of Greece's biggest ship owners, Olympic Gulf Tankers owner Adonis Antoniou, and Elvictor Group owner Stavros Galanakis were among the many shipping-industry magnates and executives at the celebration of the national day of the Philippines, whose nationals now make up about thirty per cent of the total officers and seamen in Greek-owned and managed ships. Some fifty resident ambassadors from Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and Africa enjoyed Filipino food at the reception together with honorary consuls, officials of the Greek Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and other government institutions.

Two top-rating television channels in Greece, Star Channel and Antenna (ANT1) covered the event and interviewed Ambassador Tiglao together with Ilias Psinakis, a popular television personality. Ilias' uncle, Steve Psinakis, is a prominent Greek corporate executive in Manila married into the country's richest families and renowned as an anti-dictatorship fighter in the 1980s in the Philippines.

The guests were treated to servings of Filipino dishes such as *pancit bihon*, *chicken adobo*, *spring rolls*, *pork barbecue* and *spicy chicken wings*. The world-famous Philippine beer, *San Miguel*, in its original brew and in modern low-calorie and single-malt brews, became a favorite drink at the party, as well as *Coco Magic* virgin coconut juice produced and manufactured by Consolidated Dairy.

"Best seller" of the evening was also the Filipino concoction called the *halo-halo*, with almost everyone lining up to sample a taste of the hugely popular Filipino summer dessert.

A video presentation about the Philippines and all-Filipino music put together by Philippine Embassy played all night.

## New Greek Ambassador to the Philippines



The new Greek Ambassador to the Philippines Stefanidou with Ambassador Tiglao.

Greece has appointed veteran diplomat Mrs. Polyxeni Stefanidou as its new ambassador to the Philippines, replacing Ambassador Yorgos Nicolaidis.

Ambassador Stefanidou will be in Manila starting 20 September 2009. She has more than twenty years of experience in the foreign service. From 1995 to 2005, she has served various positions in Greece's resident missions in Germany, Bulgaria. Her last post was as Consul-General in San Francisco, U.S.A.

H.E. Stefanidou graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the School of Archaeology and History at the University of Athens. She also holds Masters degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

She is married to retired Vice Admiral Konstantinos Kanavariotis. They have a daughter, who is now in college.

(Continued on page 2)

**INDEPENDENCE (Continued from page 1)**  
In a separate celebration held on 21 June, the Philippine Embassy in cooperation with Filipino community organizations in Athens, held day-long festivities for the Filipino community at the Fokianos National Gymnasium in Zappeio.

For the second straight year, the stage and venue were covered with a huge marquee and four big tents to shade people from the hot summer sun.

*Athens News*, once again the Philippine Embassy's Communications Sponsor, distributed free newspapers and flyers at the event and beverages and other products provided by Coca Cola, San Miguel Beer and Coco Magic from Consolidated Dairy. Prizes for the raffle and other contests were provided by various companies in Greece.

The day-long event kicked-off with the parade of various Filipino community associations in Greece. Prior to the singing of the national anthem, selected students from the Philippine School in

Greece (PSG) and (formerly known as KAPHILCA or Katipunan Philippines Cultural Academy), presented a *biorama* or a "living diorama" titled "*Balik Silip sa Landas Tungo Sa Kalayaan*". It consisted of three parts: the cry of Balintawak, execution of Dr. Jose Rizal in Bagumbayan, and the proclamation of Philippine independence in Kawit, Cavite.

Officials of the Philippine Embassy led by the ambassador, read the Independence Day messages of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and other Philippine officials.

The occasion was highlighted by singing, dance and national costume competitions and superb cultural performances from PSG students and representatives of various Filipino organizations.

PSG students in colorful costumes wowed the crowd with their impressive performance of *Singkil*. PAMANA, a group of young Filipino children playing string instruments - mandolinata and

guitar -- under the watch of Atty. Humabon Orlanes, a long-time Filipino resident in Greece, delighted the audience with their rendition of *Bayan Ko Tanging Ikaw*, *Hotel California* and *Faithful Love*. The children's parlor games and the modern dance contest also gave the event a very festive mood as the crowd continued to increase even towards the afternoon.

Various kinds of Filipino food like siopao, barbecue, caldereta, adobo, goto and halo-halo were available and sold from more than 30 food stalls set up by Filcom co-organizers especially for the event.

About 1,200 Filipinos, Greeks and other nationalities and even tourists attended this year's celebration at Zappeio.

Last June 24, Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao and Philippine Honorary Consul Shemaine Bushnell-Kyriakides hosted a diplomatic reception in Nicosia which was attended by no less than the President of Cyprus Dimitris Christofias. **Full story and photos on page 7.**

## Diplomatic Reception

*Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao and Mrs. Getsy Tiglao greeted distinguished guests at the Philippine National Day reception held on June 12 at the Ambassador's residence in Paleo Psychico, Athens.*



*From left: Tsakos S.A. owner Capt. Panagiotis Tsakos and Olympic Gulf Tankers CEO Adonis Antoniou and his wife, Grace.*



*From left: Consul a.h. Nikolaos Margaropoulos, Consul a.h. Anastacia Manalopoulou and her husband, former MP Nikolaos Nikolopoulos*



*Indonesian Ambassador and Mrs. Ahmad Rusdi and Chinese Ambassador Luo Linquan.*



*Indian Ambassador and Mrs. Dillip Sinha and Japanese Ambassador and Mrs. Takanori Kitamura.*



*Korean Ambassador and Mrs. Young-han Bae and Pakistani Ambassador and Mrs. Iftikhar Hussain Kazmi.*



*Amb. and Mrs. Tiglao with media celebrity Ilias Psinakis and businessman Yorgos Psinakis, nephews of Steve Psinakis.*



Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao welcome Ambassador and Mrs. Alexis Christophoulous, A10 Director of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Around 250 guests enjoy an evening of good food, music and Filipino hospitality at the Philippine Independence Day reception held at the Ambassador's residence in Athens.



Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao is being interviewed by reporters from Star Channel and ANT1 (Antenna) as Mrs. Getsy Tiglao and popular Greek television personality Ilias Psinakis look on.



Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao flanked by Filipino Community leaders Roy Endrozo, David Quidangen, Joel Capuz, Abe Valdez, Aurora Mallo, Tess Conde and Emy Solis.



San Miguel beer of all types, drinks from Coca-Cola, and coconut juice from Consolidated Dairy were served.



Mrs. Marichu Britteon, Lita Obispo, Mrs. Getsy Tiglao, Ramon Caldino, and Adele Caldino cooked most of the Filipino food served at the reception.

Consul General Constancio Vingno Jr. and Mrs. Yoko Ramos-Vingno pose with Mrs. Diplas, wife of Shipping Finance editor Petros Diplas and Consul and Mrs. George Miroyannis.



The POLO's halo-halo stand, complete with the traditional ice-shaver, courtesy of Mr. Danny Robles (sixth from left), was a hit among the guests.



Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao with Tina Peralta, Jesusa Justo, Tess Doe, Manny Basingan, Sonia Ahmed, Mr. Leonardo Bravo and his wife, Welfare Officer Atty. Venus Bravo, Benilda Ponce, Jane Muslad Raisakis (from Chania, Crete) and Lydia Mustard.



PSG students reenact three significant events in history culminating in the proclamation of Philippine Independence on 12 June 1898 in Kawit, Cavite.



Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao lead Embassy officials and staff and members of the Filipino community in singing the national anthem.



Amb. Tiglao reads the National Day message of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.



Joshua Escalante and Marichu Britteon Singing 'Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang?'.



Hosts Shirley Manigbas, Jesusa Justo, and Joel Capuz.



Renowned Greek cardiologist Dra. Helen Marcoyannopoulou-Fojas conducts a health advisory.



Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao with the Accredited Community Partners (ACPs), the Embassy's partner in the celebration with the Filipino community in Zappeion.



PSG students perform the elaborate and colorful Muslim dance, 'Singkil'.



Contestants of "Best in Philippine Terno" (left) and "Best in Regional Costume" competition.

Photos of the diplomatic reception and Filcom celebration are courtesy of: Byron Villanueva, Carlo Montenegro and Costas Costakis of the Greek Diplomatic Life.



Special awards were also handed out during the event. Left photo shows Philippine School in Greece (PSG) Director Roberto Fresnido accepting the award from Amb. Tiglao on behalf of PSG which was awarded for having the most number of participants in the parade. Also shown in photo are members of the Committee on Parade. Timpuyog Ti Daya, on the other hand, was awarded Best Group National Costume.



Children enjoy the parlor games prepared by Committee members for the celebration.



Members of BIMAK Hellas perform an ethnic Cordillera dance to the delight of the audience.



PAMANA delighted the audience with their rendition of Bayan Ko Tanging Ikaw, Hotel California and Faithful Love.



Members of the El Shaddai Group and their 'Itik-Itik' dance number.



The Filipino Christian Fellowship International (FCFI) choral serenades the audience with 'Bayani Ka'; Bicol Saro members dance the 'Pandango Rinconada'; and grandson of Mrs. Katia Fillipou wearing the 'barong tagalog' at the celebration.



**CYPRUS CORNER**

**First Philippine Independence Day Diplomatic Reception in Cyprus**

Philippine Ambassador to Greece and Cyprus Rigoberto Tiglao, Mrs. Getsy Tiglao, Nicosia Consul a.h. Mrs. Shemaine A. Bushnell-Kyriakides, and her husband Alexis Kyriakides hosted a well-attended diplomatic reception in Nicosia, Cyprus 24 June to celebrate the 111th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence.

Cyprus President Dimitris Christofias and Mrs. Elsie Christofias led the guests in congratulating the Philippines on its national day. President Christofias engaged the Ambassador, Consul Kyriakides and guests in lively conversation at the reception held in a prominent restaurant in Nicosia.



Ambassador Tiglao with (from left) Mr. Alexis Kyriakides, Philippine Honorary Consul Shemaine Kyriakides, Mrs. Getsy Tiglao and Cyprus President Dimitris Christofias.

Many of the resident ambassadors in Nicosia, including the US Ambassador Frank C. Urbancic, Jr., and the Ambassador of the Russian Federation Vyacheslav D. Shumskiy, officials of the Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs, prominent Cypriot businessmen attended the reception. Filipino food, such as spring rolls and barbecue were also served among other dishes in the

reception.

It was the first time that a diplomatic reception to celebrate the anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence was held in Cyprus.

Consul a.h. Bushnell-Kyriakides was appointed Consul, a.h., for Nicosia in May 2007.



Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao with (from left) Consul a.h. Shemaine Bushnell-Kyriakides and Kate Clerides, daughter of Cyprus' former President Glafkos Clerides.



Ambassador and Mrs. Tiglao with (from left) Consul a.h. Shemaine Bushnell-Kyriakides, Mr. Alexis Kyriakides, and US Ambassador to Cyprus Frank C. Urbancic Jr.

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Left photo: Amb. and Mrs. Tiglao, Consul Kyriakides with Mr. and Mrs. Kornelios Corneliou, Director of the Office of the Foreign Minister of Cyprus.

Photos courtesy of the Office of the Philippine Honorary Consul in Cyprus

## LABOR PAGE

## OFWs in Thessaloniki welcome POLO team

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Labor Attache George Eduvala (extreme right) talks about rights of overseas Filipino workers under Greek labor and immigration laws, while panelists Glad Tidings Fellowship Pastor Ernesto Gutierrez and Filipino Organization in Greece President Rowena Magnaye look on.

Ms. Rowena Magnaye, president of Filipino Community in Northern Greece, and more than a hundred Filipino workers in Thessaloniki welcomed the POLO team, headed by Labor Attache George A. Eduvala, Tito Baldago and Pag-Ibig Representative Jean V. Santos, who came to visit them on May 17.

The Philippine Honorary Consul in Thessaloniki, Nikolaos Margaropoulos also met with the POLO team.

During the visit, the team held a forum

on workers' rights under the labor laws of Greece, the new EU directives on immigration, and highlights of the Pag-ibig Overseas Program. Ms. Magnaye presented the common problems encountered by the workers, particularly on wages, residence permits and the practice of employers of unfairly holding the workers' passports.

After the forum, 27 OFWs signed up as new members of Pag-ibig as the rest formed a queue to update their contributions.

## 34 OFWs got diplomas on caregiving and computing

Thirty-four (34) OFWs graduated from separate courses on Basic Computing and Care Giving last May and received certificates signed by Ambassador Tiglao.

The courses were offered free by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO), each consisting of 20 training hours.

They were held two hours each every Sunday at the POLO's Filipino Workers Center at Ambelokipi district in central Athens.

The care-giving course orients the trainees on the proper care of the elderly, the young, even household pets, and the rudiments of medical first aid. The computer course walks the trainee through the stages of computer literacy and into the modern



Labor Attache George Eduvala (center) with some OFW graduates, and from right instructors Mr. Howard Sibuyo and Ms Hope Torres.

practical uses of computing, like communicating with relative back home and taking advantage of the internet.

Their trainers are veterans in the field, Ms. Hope Torres in care-giving and Howard Sibuyo in computing.