

PRESS RELEASE

Philippine Embassy, Canberra

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Ambassador Belen F. Anota Successfully Concludes Official Visit to South Australia, 2-3 November 2015

H.E. Belen F. Anota successfully concluded a two-day official visit to the State of South Australia, which culminated with the courtesy call on His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AO, Governor of South Australia, and a luncheon hosted by the Governor and Mrs. Le for the visiting delegation.

During her official visit, Ambassador Anota was accompanied by Ms. Nina Cainglet, Minister and Consul General, Mr. Kenneth Yap, Senior Trade Representative, Mr. Mark McBriarty, Honorary Consul General for South Australia, Mr. Eduard Alcordo, President, Australia-Philippines Business Council (APBC), and Mr. Tho Lim, exclusive importer and distributor of 7D dried mangoes in Australia. During the Business Roundtable on *“Existing and New Opportunities in the Philippines”* and a dinner hosted by Mr. Michael Guerin, Director, Southeast Asia of the Department of State Development (DSD), the PH business delegation held a networking meeting with Australian business people. Both sides were hopeful that economic relations will improve by taking advantage of the bilateral and regional opportunities.

As part of the official program, the Ambassador called on the Honorable Zoe Bettinson MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Mr. Stephen Marshall, Leader of the Opposition, the Honorable Mark Hamilton-Smith MP, Minister for Trade and Investment representing the Premier of South Australia, and the Honorable Gail Gago MLC, Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills. During her calls, the Ambassador underscored the strong, historic and steadfast friendship between the Philippines and Australia, which will be marked by the celebration of the 70th anniversary of bilateral relations in 2016. She also expressed appreciation for Australia’s kind hosting of Filipinos in Australia who have contributed to the economic and multicultural fibre of Australian society.

To strengthen the Embassy’s economic diplomacy initiatives, the Ambassador met with the Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) to discuss opportunities to cooperate towards minimizing post-harvest losses in the Philippines, as well as in research and development in food waste, disaster-resilient grains, aquaculture and sustainable fisheries, cattle feed and agri-technology. During the luncheon hosted by TAFE SA, there were discussions on possible collaboration in the delivery of distance education and e-learning in view of the strength of the Philippine IT-BPO sector and harmonization of skills curriculum for possible delivery in the Philippines and in third countries. The SA Government also organized a meet and greet with skills and training representatives in SA hosted by Mr. Peter Klar, Executive Director, Skills and Employment, DSD.

The Ambassador and her delegation also met with Prof. Alan Reid, Head, and other board members of the Australian Foundation for Fostering Learning in the Philippines (AFFLIP), as well as three visiting teachers from Davao, Philippines who observed learning through the outdoor environment model adopted by Australian schools. AFFLIP is a voluntary, non-government, not-for-profit Foundation based in South Australia, which seeks to make a

contribution to the educational development of young people living in some of the poorest areas of the Philippines. At present, its work is located in Mindanao in southern Philippines.

The Ambassador also met University representatives from the University of Adelaide, University of South Australia and Flinders University of South Australia and some of the Filipino students studying in these Universities. The Ambassador informed the group about Philippine participation in Australia's New Colombo Plan and encouraged the Universities to send more Australian students to Philippine schools. Australian Universities are growing popular among Filipino students and Australians have expressed hope that this will increase.

Mr. Mark McBriarty, Honorary Consul General for South Australia, organized a dinner for the Ambassador and her delegation together with the Filipino Community in South Australia, which featured Filipino cuisine, songs and dances. The Ambassador thanked FilCom for their continuing contributions to Philippine and Australian societies, updated them on relevant developments in the Philippines and gave a presentation on the West Philippine Sea.

There is an estimated 8,000 Filipinos in South Australia.



With The Honorable Zoe Bettinson MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, SA



With Mr. Stephen Marshall MP, Leader of the Opposition



With The Honorable Mark Hamilton-Smith MP, Minister for Investment and Trade



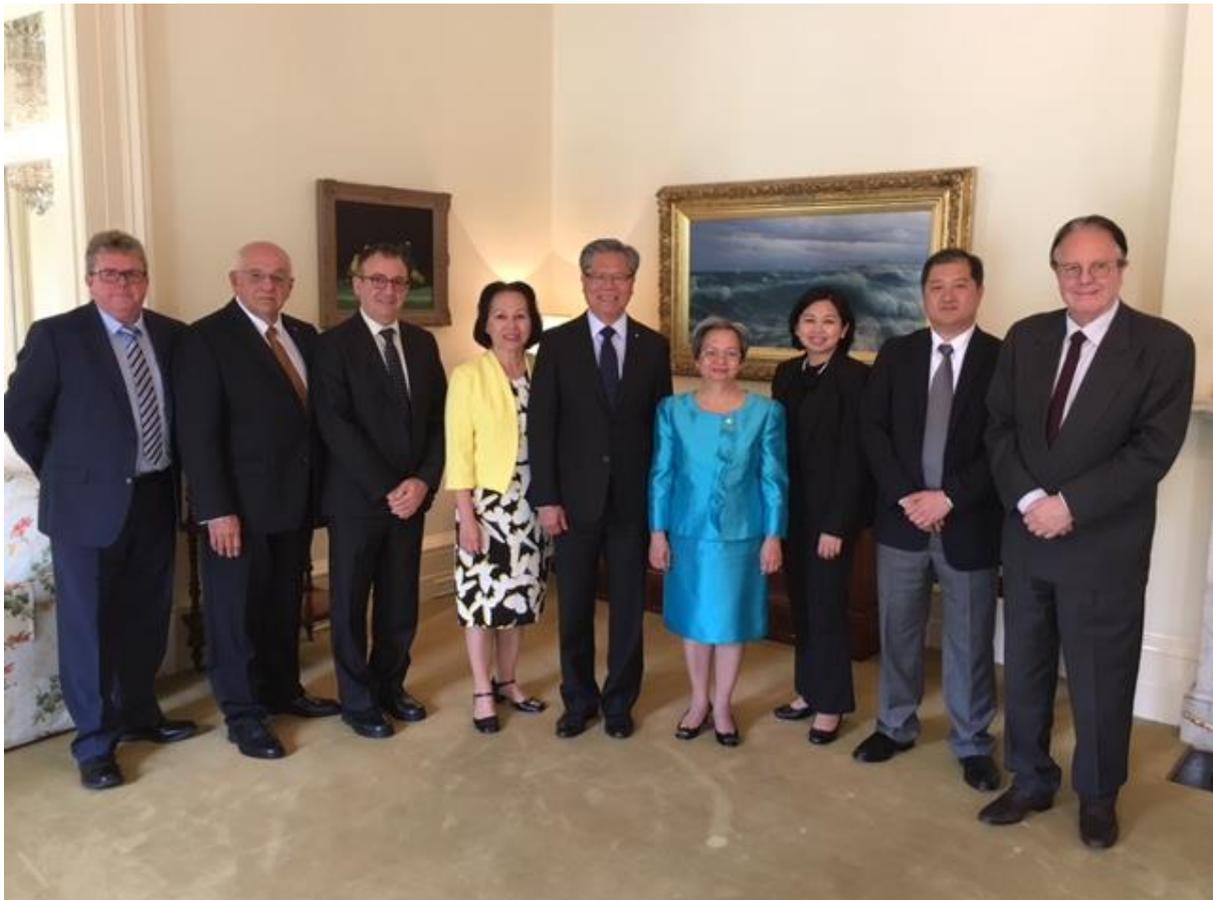
With the Australian Foundation for Fostering Learning in the Philippines (AFFLIP) and visiting teachers from Davao, Philippines



The Ambassador with Filipino students studying in the University of Adelaide, University of South Australia and Flinders University of South Australia



Ambassador Anota addressing the Filipino Community during her official visit.



Luncheon hosted by His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AO, Governor of South Australia, and Mrs. Le at Government House, Adelaide