

# PRESS RELEASE

## Philippine Embassy, Canberra

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### Canberra Celebrates Christmas the Filipino Way



*H.E. Minda Calaguian-Cruz, Philippine Ambassador to Australia, lead the Filipino community in singing Christmas carols with music by Rondanihan, 04 December 2016.*

CANBERRA, Australia – The 13<sup>th</sup> Pasko sa Canberra or Christmas in Canberra, the biggest annual Filipino festival in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), was held at the Philippine Embassy grounds on 04 December 2016 with around a thousand people in attendance. The event was organized by the Filipino Community Council of the ACT (FCCACT).



*Ms. Cecilia Flores, President of the FCCACT, opens the Pasko sa Canberra program with her welcome remarks, 04 December 2016.*

Ms. Cecilia Flores, President of FCCACT, thanked the Filipino community for supporting the event and for coming together in celebration of the Christmas season. She thanked the members of the organizing committee for their time and effort and putting together another successful Pasko sa Canberra.



In her message, H.E. Minda Calaguian-Cruz, Ambassador of the Philippines to Australia, said Pasko sa Canberra is especially meaningful this year as we mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Philippines and Australia. She said the Filipino community is the partner of the Philippine Embassy in nurturing and developing the historic linkages and friendship between Filipinos and Australians.



Alistair Coe MLA, Leader of the Opposition of the ACT Legislative Assembly, commended the Filipino community for their contributions to Canberra and the whole of Australia. He said Filipinos have a wonderful way of celebrating their culture while also embracing Australia as their second home.

Chris Steel MLA, representing Chief Minister Andrew Barr MLA, also thanked the Filipino community for organizing the event to sharing the Filipino culture with Canberra.

*(L-R) Mr. Chris Steel MLA, representing Chief Minister Andrew Barr MLA, Mr. Alistair Coe MLA, Leader of the Opposition of the ACT Legislative Assembly, Ambassador Minda Calaguian-Cruz and Consul General Anne Jalando-on Louis, 04 December 2016.*

The program was filled with several musical and dance numbers by Filipino local community organisations, Filipino martial arts demonstration, and a special subli dance by the children of the Philippine embassy personnel. The Department of Tourism (DOT) of the Philippines sponsored a free photo booth with Filipino Christmas background. Santa Claus also made a special appearance to greet the kids. There were more than



30 stalls selling traditional Filipino food such as crowd favorites pork barbeque, lechon and halo-halo, and Filipino products and Christmas items. The Philippine Embassy in Canberra looks forward to seeing you all again for next year's Pasko sa Canberra. END



*A long line to meet Santa as Pasko sa Canberra 2016, 04 December 2016.*