

PRESS RELEASE

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The Philippines participates in Canberra's ANZAC Parade

On 25 April 2016, active Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) personnel participated in Canberra's ANZAC Parade. This marks the first time that a parading element from the Philippines joined in the ANZAC Day commemorative activities. The Philippine contingent was headed by Colonel Ricardo S. Santiago PA(GSC), Philippine Defense and Armed Forces Attaché to Australia. Philippine Ambassador to Australia H.E. Minda Calaguian-Cruz and her spouse, Ambassador Luis T. Cruz (ret.), witnessed the parade along with the other Heads of Mission invited by the Australian Government to this solemn occasion.

Anzac Day, one of Australia's most important national occasions, marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. Anzac Day pays tribute to all Australians who served and died in war and on operational service. Commemorative services are held across the nation at dawn, the time of the original landing, while later in the day, former servicemen and women meet to take part in marches through the country's major cities.

The Philippine participation is significant as the Philippines and Australia mark the 70th year anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic relations this year, and in view of the many battles where Filipinos and Australians fought together in the name of freedom. Australia served as the alternate headquarters for the Far East Air Force under the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) during WW II, and became the staging ground for the Philippine liberation campaign in 1944-45. Fifteen (15) Australian ships participated in the Battle of Lingayen Gulf. In recognition of Australia's participation in the Philippine liberation campaign, nearly 4,000 Philippine Liberation Medals have been awarded to Australians. On the other hand, sixteen (16) Filipino Merchant Mariners died on board the USS Florence and SS Don Isidro that were sunk or damaged during Japanese air attacks off Bathurst Island, Australia on 19 February 1942.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) contingent to the ANZAC Parade was composed of the following:

Col. Ricardo S. Santiago PA(GSC) - PhilDAFA Australia
Col. Connor Anthony D. Canlas, Sr. PAF(GSC) - PhilADFAFA
Col. Joannis Leonardi B. Dimaano PAF (GSC) - Defense and Strategic Studies Course
LtC Paul Anthony R. Guerrero PA - ACSC Instructor Exchange Program
LtC Harold M. Cabunoc PA - Australian Command and Staff Course
LtC Augusto N. Padua PAF - Australian Command and Staff Course
LCdr Jim Aris V. Alagao PN - Australian Command and Staff Course
Maj. Bernard P. Samin PA - ADF POTC Seconded Officer
Cpt. Ricky Rosalejos PA - Foreign Military Liaison Officer at ADFA
TSgt. Edgar C Villanueva PN(M) - Admin Assistant, OPhilDAFA Australia
Cadet Philip Regnier D Calago - ADFA
Cadet Nill Anthonni B Lo - ADFA
Cadet Jillian J Omac - ADFA



Philippine contingent headed by PhilDAFA Australia



Philippine Ambassador HE Minda Calaguian-Cruz & PhilDAFA



The parading participants