



PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL
P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Consul General Rebong introduces the community to Vice President de Castro

New York – Vice President Noli de Castro met with the Filipino community in the Northeast USA during a cocktail reception hosted by the Philippine Consulate General New York on 3 October 2007, on the occasion of the visit of to New York, on the sidelines of his participation as Head of the Philippine Delegation to the United Nations High Level Dialogue on Inter-religious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace and Development.

After a brief meeting with the members of the Mindorenos Association, many of who knew the Vice President and his family, Consul General Cecilia B. Rebong and Ambassador Hilario Davide, Jr. led the honoree to Kalayaan Hall. Over 200 members of the Filipino community were eager to meet and have photos taken with the Vice President. Also present were members of the media, as well as the officers and staff of the Philippine Consulate General, the Philippine Mission and the Philippine Trade and Investment Center New York.

In his speech, the Vice President tackled controversial issues hogging headlines in the Philippines such as the reopening of the “hello Garci” investigation, the Senate investigation of the NBN ZTE deal and the judgment on the cases of Former President Estrada. The Vice President expressed confidence that tackling these issues can only make the Filipino people more politically mature, leading to a stronger democracy.

In contrast to these issues, he enumerated some of the good results from the strong political will administered by this Government; news that may not have made the headlines such as the steady growth of the economy; the budget surplus of 13.9 billion pesos as of August 2007 which resulted in lower interest rates, improved peso-dollar exchange rate, and a healthier business climate helped by continuous dollar inflows from overseas Filipinos and investors; the infrastructure program of the Government – directed toward the super-regions; and moves to improve the delivery of basic services such as housing and other anti-poverty initiatives, of which he, as HUDCC Chair, is the proponent.

The Vice President appealed to the Filipino community to continue helping the country through investment, tourism promotion and support for projects that uplift the lives of the Filipinos. END