

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Filipinos in Paris to build school in Mindanao

[Paris, France] Overseas Filipinos are hailed as modern day heroes. They sacrifice the happiness of relationships and the comforts of home to venture abroad to work, live and provide for the family's future. Now they are even directly contributing to the cause of education and nation-building.

In an inspiring meeting with Secretary of Education Jesli Lapus who came here to represent the country at the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the leaders of the Filipino community announced their school-building project. They chose the Anungan Elementary School in Sibuco, Zamboanga del Norte with 390 students as the school site.

"We in government are humbled by this collective effort of our fellow Filipinos who are literally donating their blood and sweat money because they believe in the Philippines. *Para sa bayan* is a theme that binds us," said Lapus. He also gave a briefing on the country's stimulus package implementation and assured the community that the economy is relatively well in the midst of the global crisis.

This latest school under the Department of Education's (DepEd) Adopt-A-School Program was initiated by Ambassador to France Rora Navarro-Tolentino who expressed her gratitude to the Filipinos in attendance and to Secretary Lapus for his leadership in education.

The leaders of some thirty plus Filipino organizations in Paris in turn gave various statements of support to the project and noted that it will not be the last. They cited the care and concern showed by Ambassador Tolentino who is on her second stint in the French capital.

The event with Ambassador Preciosa Soliven as witness was highlighted by the signing of the deed of donation and the turn-over of the ceremonial check. The Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (FFCCCII) will construct the school building. The DepEd will provide regular status report for monitoring.

Secretary Lapus called on Filipinos everywhere to continue to give top priority to human resource development through education.

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