



VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 5 | 2020

DEFENSE CHRONICLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE



ROBUST PHL - AUS DEFENSE TIES

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LORENZANA EXPRESSES DND
INTENT TO ACQUIRE SOUTH KOREAN
HELICOPTERS

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A CREDIBLE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION,
A RELIABLE PARTNER IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
AND A STRATEGIC PLAYER IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION



Continuity of defense ties amid pandemic

This issue of the Defense Chronicle covers a period where we can have a glimpse of the robust international relations of the defense department. The continuity of the country's defense ties with its friends and partners, despite the pandemic, augurs well for the future of defense and security cooperation with other countries and the anti-COVID measures of the government.

Headlining the succession of Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana's international engagements was the visit of Senator Linda Reynolds on her first visit to the Philippines as Minister for Defence of Australia on 22 October 2020. The bilateral meeting held at the Colonel Jesus Villamor Air Base follows the previous meeting of the two Ministers at the sidelines of the 6th ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus in Thailand in November 2019 as well as a virtual meeting in May 2020.

The virtual meetings of Secretary Lorenzana during the period included a meeting with Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi through a video teleconference on 23 October 2020. The two Defense Chiefs met to discuss various aspects of the defense partnership between the Philippines and Japan, especially on the two countries' capacity-building efforts, regional security cooperation, and measures undertaken to counter the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Secretary Lorenzana welcomed New Zealand's new ambassador to the Philippines Ambassador Peter Kell in a virtual call held on 27 August 2020. The meeting served as an introductory call for Ambassador Kell, following the postponement of their meeting last March due to the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

The Vietnam Ambassador to the Philippines, Ambassador Huang Hoy Chung, also paid a virtual courtesy call on Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana on 27 August 2020.

The Kingdom of Thailand helped augment the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic through its donation of two Negative Pressure Isolation Rooms. Secretary Lorenzana, together with Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) Medical Director Dominador M. Chiong, Jr., M.D., received the donation from the Kingdom of Thailand, Ministry of Defence of Thailand, Royal Thai Armed Forces, Siam Cement Group (SCG) Public Company, and Mariwasa Siam Ceramics, Inc., represented by His Excellency Vasin Ruangprateepsaeng, Royal Thai Ambassador to the Philippines on 25 September 2020.

More activities of this nature are on the pipeline, some of which are scheduled for the remaining part of the year. **DC**



AUS DEFENCE MINISTER VISITS THE PHILIPPINES

The Secretary of National Defense (SND) met with Senator Linda Reynolds on her first visit to the Philippines as Minister for Defence of Australia on 22 October 2020. The bilateral meeting held at the Colonel Jesus Villamor Air Base follows the previous meeting of the two Ministers at the sidelines of the 6th ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus in Thailand in November 2019 as well as a virtual meeting in May 2020.

Discussions focused on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) with the SND expressing appreciation for Australia's \$1 million support for the expansion of the infectious diseases ward of the Victoriano Luna Medical Center as well as the donation of \$2 million in medical and personal protective equipment that will capacitate hospitals under the AFP Health Service Command.

The said support is anchored on the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Program, which expanded the defense cooperation between the two countries following Australia's contributions to the Philippines' counter-terrorism efforts.

Both sides expressed their satisfaction that the Philippines and Australia have been able to sustain and further enhance the two countries' defense relations despite the pandemic through the virtual conduct of defense and military dialogue. It was highlighted that preparations for Philippines-Australia activities next year have continued, and that such activities will

be conducted once conditions allow, subject to the approval of Philippine and Australian authorities.

In view of the pandemic, the SND reaffirmed support for Australia's co-chairmanship of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group (EWG) on Military Medicine with Brunei Darussalam. The SND also expressed appreciation for Australia's support for ASEAN centrality and lauded Australia's 2020 Vision for Defence Engagements with ASEAN.

The two Ministers also exchanged views on developments in the region and agreed on the importance of maintaining freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea as well as compliance with international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Health protocols set forth by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) were strictly implemented throughout the visit. **DC**





Photo Credits: Source: www.nippon.com [Copyright The Jiji Press, Ltd.]

SND AND JAPAN DEFENSE MINISTER IN VIRTUAL MEET

Philippine Secretary of National Defense Delfin N. Lorenzana met with Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi through a video teleconference on 23 October 2020.

The two Defense Chiefs met to discuss various aspects of the defense partnership between the Philippines and Japan, especially on the two countries' capacity-building efforts, regional security cooperation, and measures undertaken to counter the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Secretary Lorenzana conveyed the commitment of the Department of National Defense to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries, extending his invitation to Minister Kishi to visit the Philippines for an official visit when conditions improve and travel restrictions are lifted.

During the meeting, Minister Kishi also expressed Japan's initiative to pursue cooperation for infection control measures. "We would like to share information about how to prevent the cases of infection during disaster relief activities amid the pandemic," Minister Kishi said.

Secretary Lorenzana and Minister Kishi also agreed to further the bilateral cooperation, especially on technology transfer and capacity-building.

"I welcome the outcomes of the Philippines-Japan Joint Working Group (JWG) on Logistics and Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation during the inaugural Defense Industry Forum last year, which served as venues for developing logistics and defense industry collaboration between our ministries," Secretary Lorenzana said.

The two Defense ministers also discussed the various multilateral security and defense efforts facilitated through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). "We recognize Japan's efforts to support the defense initiatives of ASEAN Members States through its active engagement in the ADMM-Plus and its updated Vientiane Vision 2.0," Secretary Lorenzana said.

Both sides also reiterated the importance of upholding the principles of freedom of navigation in the region, with Secretary Lorenzana stating that the Philippines firmly promotes addressing territorial and jurisdictional disputes in the South China Sea/West Philippine Sea (SCS/WPS) by peaceful means.

"We call on concerned parties to desist from any action and activity that contravenes the ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), as these generate tension, mistrust and uncertainty, and threatens regional peace and stability," Secretary Lorenzana said.

Secretary Lorenzana added that as the Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-China Dialogue Partnership from 2018 to 2021, "the Philippines remains firmly committed to working with other ASEAN Members and Plus Countries, and China towards the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct."

The video teleconference was the first meeting between Secretary Lorenzana and Minister Kishi since the appointment of the latter as the Defense Minister of Japan on 18 September 2020. **DC**



VIET NAM AMBASSADOR CALLS ON SECRETARY LORENZANA

Viet Nam Ambassador to the Philippines, Ambassador Huang Hoy Chung, paid a virtual courtesy call on Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana on 27 August 2020.

Ambassador Chung expressed his sympathies and condolences to Secretary Lorenzana and the families of the soldiers who died in the recent Jolo bombing and conveyed Viet Nam's strong condemnation of terrorism. Secretary Lorenzana thanked Ambassador Chung and assured that the government is taking its best effort to apprehend the perpetrators of the attack.

Ambassador Chung complimented the friendliness of the Filipinos while recalling his previous visits in the Philippines. He acknowledged the Philippine government's effort in assisting the stranded Vietnamese fishermen.

Both representatives also talked about the upcoming ASEAN Defense Ministries' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus. Ambassador Chung expressed his anticipation of the Philippine delegation's attendance at the ADMM-Plus, which will be held on 09-11 December 2020, in Hanoi, Viet Nam.

"We are praying, His Excellency, that by December 9-11, maybe when the situation has improved a lot, I will be there for the ADMM-Plus," Secretary Lorenzana said. 

Sec Lorenzana speaks with NZ Ambassador to PH

Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana welcomed New Zealand's new ambassador to the Philippines Ambassador Peter Kell in a virtual call held on 27 August 2020. The meeting served as an introductory call for Ambassador Kell, following the postponement of their meeting last March due to the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).

Ambassador Kell condoled with Secretary Lorenzana and the families of the military personnel who died in the recent Jolo incident. He then updated Secretary Lorenzana about the COVID-19 situation in New Zealand, where new cases were reported in Auckland following a period of 102 days of having no active cases. He further emphasized the significant role of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), specifically in managing isolation facilities, planning, and assisting police forces in checkpoints.

Secretary Lorenzana commended New Zealand's proactive response in monitoring and controlling COVID-19 cases. He also gave updates about the situation in the Philippines, as well as the government's efforts in combatting the ongoing pandemic.

"We hope to flatten the curve sometime in September," Secretary Lorenzana noted, as he explained the measures taken by the national government and LGUs in containing and managing the infectious disease.

New Zealand government provided US\$1.5M assistance for people affected by COVID-19 in Mindanao; and contributed funding for the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTi), and the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) to support 15 LGUs in their response to COVID-19. 





DND passes Surveillance Audit for its continued ISO 9001:2015 Certification amid lockdown

by Jessamine Ver

Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, QC – Despite the imposition of lockdowns which limit the movement of people and the course of operations due to COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of National Defense successfully passed the First Year Surveillance Audit conducted by SGS Philippines, Incorporated on October 22 and 23 after demonstrating its continuous conformance with the requirements of the ISO 9001:2015 Standard.

The two-day Surveillance Audit covered the process of top management, internal audit, human resource, assessments and international affairs, plans and programs, infrastructure management, public affairs, financial management, acquisition and logistics, and procurement management system.

In compliance with the health protocols mandated by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-IED) to prevent the spread of coronavirus, the surveillance audit was conducted virtually or off-site wherein the interviews with the concerned personnel and the presentation of documented evidences were done via video-teleconference using the Cisco Webex platform. This was performed by Ms. Ellen Cruz and Ms. Magdalena Balingit of SGS Philippines, Incorporated.

The SGS auditors raised only one (1) minor nonconformity and four (4) observations which resulted to the continued ISO 9001:2015 Certification of the Department's core processes – Defense System

of Management and DND BAC Procurement System – until 2021.

During the Closing Meeting held on October 23, Usec Cardozo M. Luna, the Undersecretary of National Defense, thanked the SGS auditors for their time, patience, and effort in examining the DND processes despite the physical distancing and commended the One Defense Team for the hard work and commitment in pursuing the quest for improvement and performance excellence.

“The virtual nature of this audit made it quite unique and perhaps more difficult, so, let me congratulate both our auditors and auditees, as well as everyone involved in the successful conduct of this audit. To be able to hurdle an ISO audit during a pandemic is no mean feat, so congratulations to all of us!”, USEC Luna said.

The surveillance audit is part of the ISO 9001 certification process necessary for the maintenance of the ISO 9001:2015 Certification of the Department. This is the second time that the Department underwent a First Year Surveillance Audit for the second cycle of its ISO 9001 certification.

Consequently, the sustenance of this prestigious ISO 9001 certification is in compliance with Executive Order 605 issued in 2008 and is also one of the conditions for the grant of Performance-Based Bonus (PBB) in the government. 



Employees from the Philippine Statistics Authority and members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines simulate loading operations of registration kits in preparation for the establishment of the national identification system (PhilSys).

DND, AFP ready to transport National ID System Kits

The Department of National Defense committed its support for the establishment of the national identification system (referred to as PhilSys) through its assistance in delivering the registration kits to the targeted 32 provincial offices of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in the coming weeks.

Secretary of National Defense Delfin N. Lorenzana approved the request from Acting National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Karl Kendrick T. Chua for assistance from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to transport more than 4,000 registration kits to 655 cities and municipalities in the target provinces.

NEDA and PSA aim to accelerate the implementation of PhilSys nationwide with the registration of at least five million household heads from low-income families by the end of 2020. The national ID system shall enable a more efficient system to implement social assistance programs as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in times of emergencies.

With restrictions on travel by land, air and sea due to the ongoing implementation of the nationwide community quarantine to curb the spread and effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the AFP shall assist in transporting the registration kits to the provinces, strictly following biosafety protocols. The delivery is scheduled prior to the conduct of trainings for the PhilSys registration operations.

The registration kits, each composed of a luggage of equipment and a photobooth kit, will be used during PhilSys registration Step 2, specifically in capturing the biometric information of applicants at the registration center.

The establishment of the national ID system is pursuant to the implementation of Republic Act No. 11055, otherwise known as the Philippine Identification System Act, with the PSA as the lead implementing agency. **DE**



Photos : Courtesy of Philippine Air Force

AIR FORCE RECEIVES BRAND NEW CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AIRCRAFT

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Gilbert Gapay together with the Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana and Commanding General, Philippine Air Force Lieutenant General Allen Paredes led the turn-over and blessing ceremony of six Super Tucano A-29B Close Air Support (CAS) Aircraft at Clark Airbase, Pampanga on October 13, 2020.

The newly delivered Super Tucano A-29Bs of Brazil's Embraer are fixed-wing, light-attack turboprop powered aircraft, adorned with a traditional World War II-era shark face art work are capable to be fitted and loaded with 50-caliber machine guns, precision guided bombs, air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles, and electro-optical infrared and laser-firing technology.



These aircraft are also capable to reach a maximum speed of 590 kilometers per hour, a flight ceiling of 10,668 meters and a range of 3,055 kilometers. The aircraft are also capable to take off and land on runways that are not fully developed and equipped with a modern cockpit that are also capable of night operation.

The Super Tucanos will be assigned to the Philippine Air Force's 15th Strike Wing of the Air Combat Command and will be primarily used to augment the CAS duties of the ageing North American Rockwell OV-10 Broncos supporting the ground operations of the troops, conduct aerial reconnaissance missions, and will focus on Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Operations.

The contract awarded to Embraer for the Super Tucanos is worth PHP4.968 billion and was issued in late 2017. The delivery of the six aircraft were originally scheduled in July 2020, but due to the COVID19 pandemic all six aircraft arrived and completed last October 1. **DC**

DND INTENDS TO ACQUIRE SOUTH KOREAN HELICOPTERS



UH-1H HELICOPTER

Secretary of National Defense Delfin N. Lorenzana expressed the intent of the Department of National Defense (DND) to acquire UH-1H and MD500 helicopters from the Republic of Korea.

In a congratulatory letter to newly-appointed Republic of Korea Minister of National Defense Suh Wook, Secretary Lorenzana said that the DND also plans to conduct a Joint Visual Inspection (JVI) in the fourth quarter of 2020. The JVI will be conducted following strict biosafety protocols amid the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, by a team composed of representatives from the DND and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The acquisition project for the South Korean UH-1H and MD500 helicopters is still in the exploratory stage, with the details yet to be finalized including the timeline and quantity of the assets to be acquired. **DC**



MD 500

Photo Credits: REDDIT.COM



Secretary of National Defense Delfin N. Lorenzana and His Excellency Vasin Ruangprateepsaeng, Royal Thai Ambassador to the Philippines, sign the Deed of Donation and Acceptance for the turnover of two Negative Pressure Isolation Rooms to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center during a ceremony on 25 September 2020, in Quezon City.

VMMC receives donated Negative Pressure Isolation Rooms from Thailand

The Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) received two Negative Pressure Isolation Rooms from the Kingdom of Thailand today, 25 September 2020, at the VMMC in Quezon City that can help augment the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Secretary of National Defense Delfin N. Lorenzana, together with VMMC Medical Director Dominador M. Chiong, Jr., M.D., received the donation from the Kingdom of Thailand, Ministry of Defence of Thailand, Royal Thai Armed Forces, Siam Cement Group (SCG) Public Company, and Mariwasa Siam Ceramics, Inc., represented by His Excellency Vasin Ruangprateepsaeng, Royal Thai Ambassador to the Philippines.

The donated isolation rooms will aid in preventing the spread of contagious diseases, allowing health care staff to perform critical medical procedures without the need to transfer the patient/s or equipment within the hospital.

"Specially dedicated to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, this equipment will enable life-saving services to Filipino veterans who will need care during this COVID-19 pandemic, being the most vulnerable to the virus," Secretary Lorenzana remarked, thanking the Royal Thai government for the donation to the Filipino people.

Ambassador Ruangprateepsaeng shared that the Thai community in the Philippines continues to cooperate and provide support to the Philippines' COVID-19 efforts.

"With the number of infections having reached 32 million people worldwide, it is now more important than ever that we stand together to ensure the safety of our people," Ambassador Ruangprateepsaeng said.

"On behalf of the Royal Thai government, I would like to reaffirm Thailand's commitment to working closely with the Republic of the Philippines to build further upon the cooperation between us and to tackle the challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic," the Thai Ambassador added.

For his part, Secretary Lorenzana highlighted the strong Filipino-Thai relations through the years and the importance of regional cooperation in overcoming the present health crisis.

"Early this week, President Duterte called for global alliance to combat this pandemic. Today's turnover shows strong ASEAN regional effort in our ardent and collective desire to lessen the adverse effect of the virus to our people. May our countries sustain this enthusiasm and cooperation, as we transition to the new normal," Secretary Lorenzana concluded. 

GAD *in* FOCUS

ACTRESS CHALLENGES GENDER TRADITIONS AS AIR FORCE RESERVIST

Arci Muñoz, now SGT Ramona Cecilia D Muñoz PAFR, has officially joined the Philippine Air Force Reserve PAFR Command as she completed the Program of Instruction of Special Basic Citizen Military Training CL-2020 on 25 October 2020 at a graduation ceremony held in Clark Airbase, Pampanga. The actress-singer is the sole woman among the line of celebrities who recently completed rigorous training and earned ranks at the military reserve force under the different branches of service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

In a Facebook post on 26 October, the 1st Air Reserve Center announced that SGT Muñoz PAFR “learned the basic knowledge and skills of soldiery” during a 30-day training on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, marksmanship, Obstacle Course, Field Training Exercise and other activities designed to mold a reservist of the Air Force.

Meanwhile, SGT Muñoz PAFR shared with pride on her Instagram and Facebook the gratifying accomplishment, along with photos taken during trainings.

“I just want to say I’m very proud of myself for finishing such a great feat. Training with the military was really tough specially with a pandemic looming. I did things I didn’t know I would (and could),” Muñoz wrote in the caption.

“I will forever cherish and hold on to the learnings and core values that this institution instilled. I will remain a snappy composure and continue to serve in the best interests of my nation,” she added.

The singer-actress also conveyed her utmost respect to her colleagues in the service and the value of her experience.

“Getting here hasn’t been traversed overnight; although what I went through is nothing compared to my colleagues—I feel great admiration for them. I also found myself humbled and it made me gain a renewed self-respect. That being said, I hope that I’ll never have to use what I learned for violence instead be an inspiration to many to have a sense of comradeship so we call all live in peace.”

It must be noted that aside from SGT Muñoz, actress, dancer, and beauty queen Winwyn Marquez has also started the Basic Citizen Military Training in the Philippine Navy Reserve Force on 01 August and was even elected class president of her batch.

SGT Muñoz PAFR, along with other “female challengers”, proved that she can also choose fatigues over a dress to expand her role beyond the television. Indeed, women can assert themselves in positions that are dominated and traditionally taken by men, and the military is just one of the venues where it can be realized. **DE**





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