



INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Embassy makes Official Cantonal Visits to St. Gallen, Schwyz and Appenzell

The Embassy continued promoting economic, political and social exchanges between the Philippines and Switzerland at the cantonal level by making three official cantonal visits to the Cantons of St. Gallen, Schwyz and Appenzell-Ausserrhoden.



Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino (second from left) with Governing Council President Dr. Josef Keller (center) and Councillor Hans Ulrich Stöckling (leftmost) during her Official Cantonal Visit to St. Gallen on 25 August 2004. With her are Second Secretary and Consul Mardomel Celso D. Melicor and Minister and Consul General Marilyn J. Alarilla.

Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino, accompanied by Minister and Consul General Marilyn J. Alarilla and Second Secretary and Consul Mardomel Celso D. Melicor, was received on 25 August 2004 by Governing Council President Dr. Josef Keller and State Councillor Hans Ulrich Stöckling in St. Gallen. During the working visit, Ambassador Tolentino sought to promote closer cultural and business linkages and to explore potential academic exchanges between St. Gallen and the Philippines.



Ambassador Rora Navarro Tolentino and Minister and Consul General Marilyn J. Alarilla with Governing Council President Kurt Zibung (second from left) and Councillor Dr. Georg Hess (leftmost) during her Official Cantonal Visit to the Canton of Schwyz on 01 September 2004.

On 01 September 2004, Ambassador Tolentino called on Governing Council President Kurt Zibung and State Councillor Dr. Georg Hess at the Schwyz Capitol during her Official Cantonal Visit to Schwyz. After the reception and exchange of gifts, Ambassador Tolentino discussed with her hosts the Embassy's aim to promote closer cultural and business linkages with Schwyz. They also visited the Museum of the Swiss Charters of Confederation

Embassy congratulates Secretary of Foreign Affairs Alberto G. Romulo

Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino and the Embassy personnel congratulated Hon. Alberto G. Romulo upon his appointment as the new Secretary of Foreign Affairs. He assumed office in simple ceremonies on 24 August 2004.



Secretary Alberto G. Romulo

As a statesman and an economic manager, Sec. Romulo carries with him his vast experience in the Cabinet and the Senate in pursuing and implementing the country's foreign policy. Secretary Romulo first joined the government service in President Corazon Aquino's economic team as Secretary of Budget and Management. As Senator, he was Majority Leader for five years and chairman of the Senate Committee on Banks, Currencies and Financial Institutions.

Secretary Romulo holds a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from the De La Salle University, and a Bachelor of Laws as well as a Doctor of Laws from the University of Madrid. Married to the former Rosie Lovely Tecson of Davao City, he is blessed with five children and six grandchildren.

for a viewing of the original 1291 document that founded the Swiss Confederation.

Finally, Ambassador Tolentino made a joint cantonal visit to the Canton of Appenzell-Ausserrhoden with 7 Asia-Pacific Group (ASPAG) Ambassadors on 08 September 2004. After the reception at the Ceremonial Hall of the Herisau Museum by Governing Council President Alice Scherrer, they visited the Folklore Museum at Urnäsch, and ascended to Säntis for lunch, where they held talks on Appenzell-Ausserrhoden as a business location.



Ambassador Rora Navarro Tolentino is shown a copy of *Adventuras Filipinas* at the Herisau Museum by Governing Council President Alice Scherrer during the Joint Official Cantonal Visit of ASPAG Ambassadors to the Canton Appenzell-Ausserrhoden on 08 September 2004.

Liechtenstein National Day Ceremonies in Vaduz



Ambassador Rora Navarro Tolentino and Her Serene Highness Hereditary Princess Sophie of Liechtenstein during the National Day Ceremonies of the Principality of Liechtenstein at the Castle Grounds in Vaduz.

Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino attended the National Day Ceremonies of the Principality of Liechtenstein on 15 August 2004 at the Grounds of the Vaduz Castle. The traditional National Day Speech was delivered for the first time by His Serene Highness Hereditary Prince Alois, as representative of the Reigning Prince. By virtue of the Princely Ordinance of 15 August 2004, His Serene Highness Reigning Prince Hans Adam II, while remaining Head of State, entrusted to his son and future successor, HSH Hereditary Prince Alois, the exercise of sovereign rights as his representative, in preparation for the latter's succession to the throne.

HEKS sponsors Swiss federalism study tour



Ambassador Rora Navarro Tolentino (seated, center) receives the Philippine delegation led by Sec. Teresita Quintos Deles (seated, left) and HEKS Southeast Asia Desk Officer Maya Doetzki at her Residence for a dinner on 14 September 2004.

A Philippine delegation of decision-makers visited Switzerland to study the Swiss system of federalism upon the invitation of HEKS and the Swiss Embassy in Manila as HEKS' way of providing an active contribution to the promotion of peace in Mindanao. The one-week study program from 12 to 18 September 2004 was conceptualized with the cooperation of the Institute of Federalism of the University of Fribourg and brought them to the cities of Aarau, Berne, Geneva, Murten and Zurich as well as the Cantons of Jura and Fribourg. They also met with representatives of the Swiss federal government, who briefed them on aspects of federal coordination and cooperation.

The eight Philippine delegates were selected from the fields of politics, science/research, church and civil society, and represented Muslim and Christian personalities who play a decisive role in the work for peace in Mindanao. Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita "Ging" Quintos Deles, who led the Philippine delegation, was accompanied by Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino when she officially called on Federal Councillor and Foreign Min-

ister Micheline Calmy-Rey. The Philippine delegation and their program officers were invited by the Ambassador to a dinner at her Residence on 14 September 2004. They held a media conference in Zurich before leaving Switzerland, where they reported on their impressions during the study week and on possible features of Swiss federalism that could be adapted to the Philippine setting.

The Embassy is actively pursuing its initiative for closer linkages between the University of Fribourg's Institute of Federalism (IFF), a world famous competence center for federalism, and the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) towards the organization of a workshop on federalism and multiculturalism in Manila in the near future.

Second RP-Swiss Bilateral Consultations in Manila



Secretary Alberto G. Romulo receives Ambassador Blaise Godet for the Second Philippines-Switzerland Political Consultations in Manila.

The second round of the Philippines-Switzerland Political Consultations was held at the Manila Diamond Hotel on 18 October. DFA Undersecretary for Policy Sonia C. Brady led the Philippine panel that met with the Swiss panel led by Ambassador Blaise Godet, Head of the Directorate for Policy of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The consultations touched on bilateral relations, migration, human rights, money laundering, and other regional issues of mutual interest. The two panels were convinced that holding such consultations regularly can forge closer links between both countries. The first round of political consultations was held in Berne in 2001.

Senator Drilon and Senator Gordon visit Berne



Senate President Franklin M. Drilon (second from right) and Senator Richard Gordon (leftmost) are welcomed in Berne by Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino. Mrs. Mila Drilon (rightmost) accompanied them.

While in Geneva to attend the 111th Interparliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly 2004, Senate President Franklin M. Drilon, who led the Philippine delegation of ten parliamentarians, and Senator Richard Gordon, visited the Embassy in Berne on 30 September 2004. Their attendance in Geneva demonstrated the commitment of the Senate to host the 112th IPU Assembly 2005 from 03-08 April 2005 in Manila. At the end of Geneva convention, 472 parliamentarian-delegates from 39 IPU member-countries confirmed their attendance in the forthcoming 112th IPU Assembly 2005 in Manila.

The President's Christmas Message

Malacañan Palace
Manila



The promise of hope and salvation is both a gift and inspiration to all of us as we celebrate Christ's birth in this world. The joy the Holiday season brings offers us a chance to rekindle our ties with our families and friends, while revisiting fond memories of Christmases in the recent past.

This Christmas, I join the Filipino people in extending our Holiday cheers to Filipino communities abroad. Let the sweet melody of Christmas transcend the oceans that divide us and fill your hearts with tranquil joy.

Your well-being remains our utmost concern, as it has been for the entire year that we have worked for your welfare as well as those of your loved ones back in the Philippines. In my visits abroad, I always make it a point to spend precious time with the Filipino community. It is my personal way of assuring you that the welfare of our compatriots wherever they are in the world is foremost in my mind.

My family and the rest of the Filipino nation join you in spreading the spirit of Christmas throughout the world. No matter where you are, you could never be alone because the thoughts and prayers of all of us here in the Philippines always include you and your loved ones. From this spirit of oneness comes genuine optimism that our better future is at hand.

Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon sa lahat ng ating mga kababayan sa iba't ibang sulok ng daigdig!

(Sgd) **GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**

Manila, 24 December 2004

Another Banaag Awardee from Switzerland



Ms. Imelda Vollenweider

For the third time in a row, another nominee from Switzerland was among the recipients of the Y2004 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas given every two years. Ms. *Imelda Berdos Vollenweider*, a Filipino community leader from Zurich, was among the 22 individuals and organizations who were honored with the *Banaag Award*. This year, a total of 45 awardees received the *Banaag, Lingkod*

sa Kapwa Pilipino and the *Pamana ng Pilipino Awards* from 150 nominations submitted to the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) from 29 countries.

During the Awarding Ceremonies and Testimonial Dinner on 15 December 2004 at Malacañang's Ceremonial Hall, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo paid tribute to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) for their valuable contribution to the nation's economy.

"With the support, you, Filipinos overseas, have been giving me, I am able to have the political will to add to my experience, to fight, to improve the lives of the average Filipino, which is what many of you got awards from for tonight: improving the lives of the average Filipino," she said.

The President encouraged Filipino overseas to act as marketing agents, by telling friends and associates abroad about the reform agenda to clean up government, to cut red tape, to reduce crime, to promote a friendly and predictable business climate.

She expressed her pride at the contributions of the OFWs to nation building, adding that "while you do what you do abroad that many of you get these awards, but in the end, we would like you to come back home to your loved ones when you are ready to rest."

In the previous years, there have been six awardees from Switzerland in this biennial search. In 2000, Ms. *Lily Angelical* from Berne, the organization *Theresa Lädeli* from Jegenstorf, and Sr. *Olive Racinez* from Geneva received the *Banaag Award*. In 2002, two organizations, *Maharlika Switzerland Basel* and *Babaylan Switzerland* received the *Banaag Award*, while Dr. Manolo Abella from Geneva received the *Pamana ng Pilipino Award*.

Theresa Lädeli continues its engagement in Mindanao



Theresa Lädeli funds its projects by selling wares in antique fairs and flea markets. Its founder, Ms. *Monika Baumann*, is seen here in action at an activity in Jegenstorf to celebrate its 10th anniversary.

Theresa Lädeli, a Banaag Awardee in the Y2000 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas, has been assisting needy people in Mindanao for the past eleven years. It has been implementing social projects there in cooperation with various Philippine NGOs and religious organizations.

Ms. *Monika Baumann* spearheads *Theresa Lädeli's* fund-raising activities and supervises its projects. The residents of the village of Jegenstorf, about 16 kms away from the city of Berne, support the operations of *Theresa Lädeli* through donations in goods, cash gifts or volunteer work. A major source of its funding comes from its participation, with the support of its volunteers, in flea markets and antique fairs held all over Switzerland once or twice a month. In 2004, *Theresa Lädeli* donated a total of CHF 99,760 to support its humanitarian projects in Mindanao: a school for indigenous people (lumad) and a pharmacy/clinic in Davao.

New immigration rules for Filipino citizens with dual citizenship who visit the Philippines

The Embassy wishes to inform all Filipino citizens having dual citizenship and holding both Philippine and foreign passports, that the following rules on arrival, length of stay, and departure will be observed by Philippine immigration officers pursuant to M.O. No. AFF-04-025 dated 14 December 2004 issued by the Bureau of Immigration, as directed under CIR-04-OCA-2005 dated 21 December 2004 of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

Arrival

Upon arrival in Manila or any port of entry in the Philippines, the Filipino citizen needs to present either a Philippine or a foreign passport.

Length of Stay

Filipino citizens who present a foreign passport upon entry to the Philippines may be admitted for an *indefinite period of stay* provided that they also possess or show a genuine and valid Philippine passport and/or Identification Certificate issued by the Bureau of Immigration. In the foreign passport, the immigration officer shall put either of the following notations on the space provided by the arrival stamp for authorized stay: "PP" - if a Philippine passport is presented, or "IC" - if an Identification Certificate is presented.

Departure

Filipino citizens who presented a foreign passport upon arrival may be cleared for departure without need of surrendering a certificate, permit or proof of payment of impossible immigration fees, provided that they show a genuine and valid Philippine passport and/or Identification Certificate. Those who do not have a Philippine passport *shall be charged an Emigration Certificate of Clearance (ECC) fee* for using a foreign passport upon departure.

The Embassy requests Filipino citizens in Switzerland with dual citizenship and holding both Philippine and foreign passports to please be guided accordingly.

CGMA classroom project well received and supported

The *Classroom Galing sa Mamayang Pilipino Abroad* (CGMA) project of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Department of Education (DepEd), has been well received and supported in Switzerland. The Filipino Community of Switzerland has donated one (1) classroom to the Dalipe Elementary School in M'lang, North Cotabato. The donated classroom was inaugurated and turned over to the school authorities concerned on 07 September 2004.

For 2005, there is a good possibility that the Filipino Community of Switzerland will be able to donate one (1) classroom with the cash donation of CHF 1,100 from Ms. Nida Gubler of the Adopt-A-Family-Movement as the latter's contribution to the CGMA

project. Likewise, the Samahang Pilipina Lucerne has pledged to donate one (1) classroom, and hopes that from the proceeds of the joint celebration of Philippine Independence Day, the Filipino community will decide promptly to donate a classroom to complete a pair, in time for SP Lucerne's 20th anniversary in October 2005. For economic reasons, the construction of a classroom can start only if there are at least two classrooms donated to the same school.



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* (fourth from right) and Administrative and Cultural Officer *Maria Manglo-Simmons* (fourth from left) with SP Lucerne officers led by Ms. *Liza Lohr-Ceniza* (third from left) during its Annual Christmas Party in Stans on 04 December 2004.

For the information of interested donors, the CGMA project has been extended beyond June 2004. DOLE continues to appeal for assistance in donating more classrooms under this project.

Ambassador Tolentino guest speaker at Swiss American Golf Championship of the American Club of Zurich



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* expressing thanks to SAGC organizers and participants for supporting the SOS Children's Village in Iloilo.

Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino was invited by the American Club of Zurich to be the guest of honor at the awarding ceremony of the 7th Swiss American Golf Championship (SAGC) 2004 at the Golf and Country Club Sempachersee in Hildisrieden, Lucerne on 17 September 2004. In her address, she thanked the organizers and participants of the golf contest for devoting the entire proceeds of the 2004 tournament to help finance the fledgling SOS Village for orphaned children in Zarraga, Iloilo.

Opened on 15 September 2003, this SOS Village is the seventh and newest in the Philippines, having facilities for 12 family houses (of which 5 are operational), a social center and a kindergarten school. The first SOS Village in the Philippines was opened in Lipa City, Batangas in 1967.

Among the sponsors and patrons of the annual event were Prince Albert of Monaco, former Swiss Federal Councillor Dr. Adolf Ogi, American Ambassador Pamela Willeford, and Zurich City Councillor Monika Weber.

Generous golfers and guests who participated in this year's SAGC tournament raised CHF 36,000 (approximately US\$29,000) for the SOS Children's Village in Zarraga, Iloilo.

Successful IT Services & BPO Mission to Switzerland



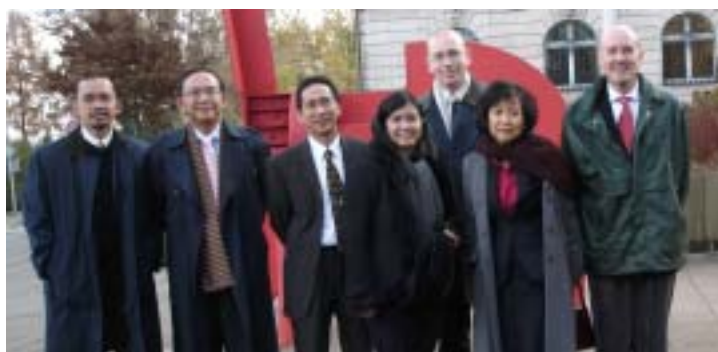
Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* is flanked by DTI Secretary *Cesar V. Purisima* (right) and Mr. *Herbert K. Wight* (left), Chairman of the SEA Philippine Committee, at the Zürcher Kantonalbank headquarters in Zurich for the Mission's first meeting.

A Philippine delegation successfully promoted Philippine IT Services and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) on 9-10 November 2004 in Zurich. The two-day Mission to Switzerland was planned and organized by the Philippine Embassy in Berne under the leadership of Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino, with the support of IBR AG, the Swiss-South East Asian Chamber of Commerce SEA, the Zuellig Group and Philippine Honorary Consul General Daniel Andreas Vogel in Basel.

The delegation was headed by DTI Secretary Cesar V. Purisima and comprised 7 executives from various IT and BPO companies in the Philippines. Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino and Minister and Consul General Marilyn J. Alarilla from the Philippine Embassy in Berne joined the Philippine delegation and were present in all activities of the Mission.

On 09 November 2004, a roundtable discussion with Swiss IT executives was held at the Zürcher Kantonalbank followed by a lunch, which allowed interaction among the participants. In the afternoon, Mr. Markus Ackermann, CEO and Mr. Urs Bleisch, CIO of Holcim Ltd., called on DTI Secretary Cesar V. Purisima. Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino and Minister Marilyn J. Alarilla were present during the call.

In the evening, Secretary Cesar V. Purisima spoke on Philippine economic policies and business opportunities in an Evening Event sponsored by SEA. Selected members of the Philippine delegation did presentations on IT opportunities in the Philippines. Swiss executives from companies such as ABB Switzerland Ltd.; Alstom Switzerland Ltd.; APM Technica AG; Crédit Suisse AG; Delma Watch Ltd.; ICCI Consulting Center for Environment; Trivox GmbH; and the Zuellig Group were present. The next day, a meeting and working lunch with Swiss Re and Crédit Suisse executives took place at the Swiss Re headquarters in Zurich.



Minister and Consul General *Marilyn J. Alarilla* (second from the right) and members of the Philippine IT Services and BPO Mission to Switzerland with some of their Swiss counterparts at the Swiss Re Headquarters in Zurich during the Mission.

The IT Services and BPO Mission to Switzerland was a return mission to the visit on 8-12 November 2003 of the Swiss business and trade mission to Manila led by Ambassador Jörg Reding, Head of Bilateral Economic Relations at the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco). It was the first leg of the Philippine Swing Investment Promotion Mission to Europe from 9 to 19 November 2004 that also visited The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway.

Sec. Sto. Tomas in Berne for Migration Conference

DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas visited Berne on 16-17 December 2004 to attend the Berne Initiative II Conference. The Berne Initiative was launched by the Swiss government in June 2001 to establish a reference system for inter-state cooperation in international migration management. A series of regional consultations with governments, international organizations, academic & research institutes and NGOs have been held after the initial international symposium in 2001.



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* (left) receives DOLE Secretary *Patricia Sto. Tomas* at her Residence in Berne.

At the Berne Initiative II Conference, whose main theme was the International Agenda for Migration Management as a common framework for international migration management, Secretary Sto. Tomas delivered a well-received speech on "Labor, Regular and Irregular Migration and Inter-State Cooperation". The 280 participants from 120 countries were honored with a reception at the historic Berne *Rathaus* (Town Hall), where official visitors to Switzerland are usually received.

Filipino community organizations in Switzerland donate to the typhoon and flood victims

In response to the Philippine government's appeal for humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of typhoon and flood victims in the Philippines, various Filipino community organizations in Switzerland and other groups and individuals have sent cash donations to the Philippines, like the following:

Bruder Klaus English Speaking Community, Berne (thru the Papal Nuncio) - CHF 7,000; *Personnel of the Philippine Embassy* (thru the DFA) - CHF 360; *Hiligaynon Group*, Berne (thru NDCC) - CHF 500; *El Shaddai Chapter*, Zurich (thru NDCC) - CHF 300; *Barangay Pilipino Switzerland*, Zurich (thru CARITAS) - CHF 1,500+; *Samahang Pilipino Berner Oberland*, Interlaken (thru the Integrated Rural Development Foundation) - CHF 1,000; *Samahang Pilipina Lucerne*, Lucerne (thru NDCC) - CHF 500; *Lohr-Ceniza Family*, Stansstad (thru NDCC) - CHF 200; *Walliman-Sasakit Family*, Stansstad (thru NDCC) - CHF 150; and *Zumbühl Family*, Stansstad (thru NDCC) - CHF 20.

The following Filipino community leaders have signified their intention to donate to typhoon and flood victims in the Philippines:

Ms. *Edessa Ott-Ramos*, President of IMAFP-Switzerland; and Ms. *Rosalinda Sauter* of Pinoy-Swiss Services GmbH Zurich and Pag-ibig Overseas Program (POP).

The Philippine Embassy in Berne gratefully acknowledges the generous donations and pledges made in the spirit of humanitarian solidarity with our distressed Filipino brethren during the Christmas season.

ACTS *Teatro* visits Switzerland



Bright and lively colors fill the St. Peter and Paul's Church in Berne as *Teatro* presents the history of the Philippines in dances, drama and songs.

The Aglipay Central Theological Seminary (ACTS) *Teatro* group visited Switzerland to perform at the St. Peter and Paul's Church in Berne on 31 October 2004. Founded in 1999 and composed of 14 seminarians from the Philippine Independent Church (PIC), the group was on its first tour abroad that took them to Sweden, The Netherlands and Switzerland. An enthusiastic Swiss and Filipino-Swiss audience watched *Teatro* depict the history of the Philippines in dances, drama and songs.



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* delivering her remarks as guest of honor at the awarding ceremony of the Philippine Basketball Association of Switzerland (PBAS) at the Telli Sportsanlage in Aarau on 31 October 2004.



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* poses with the chairpersons of the working committees for the 106th Joint Philippine Independence Anniversary Celebration 2004 at Utendorf during the Appreciation Dinner tendered in their honor at her Residence on 06 November 2004.

Apo Hiking Society performs in Switzerland



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* poses with the famous Apo Hiking Society trio and Ms. Mae Vinluan-Dolonius, President of OPM Lausanne, during the group's concert tour in Switzerland on 12 November 2004 at Swissôtel in Oerlikon (Zurich). They performed the next day in Geneva.

Protocol Division honored with an Appreciation Lunch



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* conversing with Ambassador *Willy Hold* (right), Chief of Protocol, and Vice-Consul *Marcus Stadelmann* (center), Deputy Director of Ceremonials and Visits of the Office of Protocol of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, during the appreciation lunch in honor of the Protocol Division at her Residence on 15 December 2004.

Embassy commemorates Rizal's martyrdom

The Embassy commemorated the 108th anniversary of Dr. José P. Rizal's martyrdom with simple but solemn ceremonies at the Embassy's Conference Hall. After the flag raising and the Panunumpa sa Watawat, Ambassador Rora Navarro-Tolentino read a summary of the national hero's life, his ideals and convictions, and especially recalled his brief visit to Switzerland in June 1887.



Ambassador *Rora Navarro-Tolentino* reading a short biography of Dr. José P. Rizal during simple ceremonies to commemorate the 108th anniversary of his martyrdom. Dr. Rizal's bust (partly hidden behind the Ambassador) stands in the middle of the Conference Hall's center table.