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SECRETARY LAZARO AND AMBASSADOR ROMUALDEZ LEAD CELEBRATIONS OF THE 128TH INDEPENDENCE DAY AND THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AT THE HISTORIC LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



(L-R) Philippine Ambassador to the U.S. Jose Manuel Romualdez, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ma. Theresa Lazaro, Under Secretary of State for Policy Allison Hooker, Congressman Robert "Bobby" Scott, and Congressman James Moylan raise a toast during the Embassy's diplomatic reception to commemorate the 128th Philippine Independence Day and 80th Anniversary of Philippines-U.S. Diplomatic Relations.

PRESS RELEASE

WDC-35-2026

05 June 2026

Embassy Press and Information Section

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Philippine Embassy commemorated the 128th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence and the 80th Anniversary of Philippines-U.S. diplomatic relations with a reception, bringing together senior Philippine and U.S. government officials with Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro and U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Allison Hooker, as well as members of Congress, diplomatic envoys, and business leaders.

Held in the Library of Congress' iconic Great Hall, the celebration highlighted both the enduring foundations and evolving character of the Philippines-U.S. partnership. Drawing on two powerful symbols in her remarks—the Murillo Velarde Map, a historic representation of Philippine identity and sovereignty, and the Filipino jeepney, born from postwar ingenuity and adaptation of the US military jeeps — Secretary Lazaro reflected on how the two nations have continually transformed their shared history into an enduring and forward-looking alliance.

Philippine Secretary Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro, Under Secretary Allison Hooker, and U.S. Representatives Robert "Bobby" Scott and James Moylan, Co-Chairs of the U.S.-Philippines Friendship Caucus in the U.S. Congress, served as Guests of Honor at the reception.

In her remarks, Secretary Lazaro lauded the many achievements across eight decades of Philippines-U.S. relations, spanning political-security and economic cooperation, as well as the deepening of people-to-people ties with the recognition of the contributions to US society by members of the Filipino diaspora. She described the Philippines-U.S. relationship as a "tried and tested partnership built on shared sacrifices" that continues to grow stronger as both countries work together to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Addressing Filipinos and Filipino Americans marking Philippine Independence Day, the Secretary added, "I therefore call on all Filipinos to find inspiration, today and every day, to continue protecting the freedoms our forebears fought so hard for, and to work for the betterment of our people and nation. You are our diplomats, you are our hope, and you are our future. Each year of nationhood is your success."

In her remarks, Under Secretary Hooker extended warm congratulations to the people of the Philippines and reaffirmed the United States' commitment to strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation, regional security, and joint economic initiatives. She highlighted the two countries' expanding collaboration on maritime security, economic resilience, critical minerals, health cooperation, and emerging technologies, while underscoring the enduring strength of the Alliance. "The United States and

the Philippines are not just allies, we are friends and we are family," she said.

The strong bipartisan support for the Philippines-U.S. relationship in the U.S. Congress was on full display during the reception through the participation of Representatives Robert "Bobby" Scott and James Moylan, Co-Chairs of the U.S.-Philippines Friendship Caucus.

Reflecting on the enduring people-to-people ties that underpin the bilateral relationship, Congressman Scott, the only serving Member of Congress of Filipino ancestry, shared his family's journey from the Philippines to the United States. "The fact that more than a century later his grandson came back to the Philippines to represent his adopted country as a Member of Congress is one example of the deep bond shared between our two peoples," he said. Congressman Scott also underscored the importance of protecting democracy and liberty, and highlighted a recently introduced bipartisan congressional resolution commemorating the 80th anniversary of Philippines-U.S. diplomatic relations.

Congressman Moylan, for his part, emphasized the longstanding bonds between Guam and the Philippines as a testament to the broader strength of Philippines-U.S. ties. Highlighting the shared history, culture, and resilience of the two island communities, he remarked: "Our islands share a profound connection shaped by our shared history, geography, and unbeatable resilience."

Also in attendance was newly confirmed U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Lee Lipton, joined by senior officials from the U.S. Government and friends of the Philippines.

Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel G. Romualdez offered a toast to the Philippines and Philippines-U.S. relations to close the program. "We reflect on the deep friendship and strong partnership between the Philippines and the United States, founded on shared values and longstanding people-to-people ties. May these bonds endure for decades to come," he said.

Touches of Filipino culture and heritage were integrated into the program and cultural presentations. A live performance of traditional Rondalla music was given by the University of the Philippines Alumni & Friends Rondalla. A modern cultural exhibit showcased Philippine textiles, mother-of-pearl and basket-weave artisan crafts, and mannequins donning formal Filipino attire, including garments worn by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos, and former First Lady Imelda Marcos, highlighting the richness and diversity of Filipino creativity, innovation, and identity across generations.

Complementing the cultural showcase was a virtual exhibit tracing milestones in Philippine independence and self-governance, and Philippines-U.S. relations, from the formal independence ceremonies of 1946 to presidential visits across eight decades of enduring friendship, the military alliance, and the evolution of the security alliance from mutual defense to a stronger economic-security partnership between the two nations.

The National Day reception for this year, which coincided with the 80th year anniversary of PH-US diplomatic relations, was held at the Library of Congress, the oldest federal cultural institution in the U.S., to commemorate the enduring alliance and the strong bond of friendship between the Filipino and American people. ###

PHOTO RELEASE

WDC-159-2026

05 June 2026

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Secretary Lazaro delivers remarks during the reception, lauding the Philippines-U.S. alliance and partnership and calling on Filipinos and Filipino-Americans to contribute to nation-building.

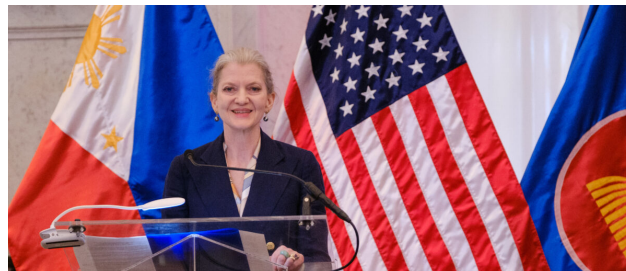
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Under Secretary Hooker congratulates the Philippines and highlights Philippines-U.S. cooperation during her remarks.

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WDC-161-2026

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Secretary Lazaro (center), Ambassador Romualdez (2nd from right), and Undersecretary Hooker (2nd from left) with Co-Chairs James Moylan (rightmost) and Robert "Bobby" Scott (leftmost) of the U.S.-Philippines Friendship Caucus in the U.S. Congress.

PHOTO RELEASE

WDC-162-2026

05 June 2026

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The University of the Philippines Alumni & Friends Rondalla performs the Philippine and U.S. national anthems, and a Filipino piece entitled "Palo Sebo" to open the program.

PHOTO RELEASE

WDC-163-2026

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The reception featured a Filipino halo-halo dessert bar, and Philippine dresses and handicrafts.

Post Views: 1,215

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Embassy Of The Philippines

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