



AWARD FOR PROMOTING  
PHILIPPINES-CHINA  
UNDERSTANDING  
中菲相知奖

## MESSAGE FROM FORMER PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO APCU CHAIRMAN EMERITUS



Former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo

The Association for Philippines-China Understanding or APCU is a private association promoting friendship between the Philippines and China. I am the Chair Emeritus of APCU, which means honorary chair. During APCU's formative years, I helped formalize and register it with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The first chairman of APCU was Alejandro Roces, who was the Secretary of Education of my father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal. In the early 70's when I heard that Chairman Roces was organizing a trip to China at that time, I asked him if I could go along. He invited me to join APCU.

APCU was informally organized after China sent aid to the Central Luzon flood victims in July 1972, and it was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1974. APCU helped in the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and China in the sense that it was an advocacy group.

As an organization, APCU helps facilitate and strengthen Philippines-China relations by promoting non-government exchanges. Non-government exchanges are keys to Philippines-China relations. At the end of the day, the government is the body of the country, but the people are the heart. Thus, fostering exchanges at the people level, like what APCU does, as opposed to the government levels, is the natural way to create ties between nations.

Philippines-China relations are important. When I became President, relations between the Philippines and China entered a golden age. The continuing friendship between our two peoples enhances the mutually beneficial relations between our two countries and contributes to the peace and harmony in the Asia Pacific Region. That is the significance of my Presidential Proclamation declaring June 9 of every year as Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day.

Under President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, bilateral ties between the Philippines and China have reached new heights.

The relationship between the Philippines and China is important for the Philippines. One major reason is geography. The Philippines and China are located within each other's backyard, so to speak, good relations between neighbors are always a priority. A second major reason is that China is involved not only in bilateral dealings but also collectively, such as the ASEAN. The third reason is that China's economy remains the most dynamic and fastest-growing among the major nations, and soon, it may become the world's largest economy. The fourth reason is that domestically, the Philippines has a vibrant Filipino-Chinese community for whom business dealings with China are natural. Lastly, infrastructure will continue to be important for the Philippines in the coming years, and no country in the world matches China's recent track record and capability in this area.

The Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding or APPCU is expected to help further promote the friendship between our two peoples.

My wish for APPCU is that it will encourage further work to constantly develop bilateral friendly cooperation, accelerate post-pandemic economic recovery and inject new vitality into the Philippines-China friendship.

Thank you!

# MESSAGE FROM H.E. CHINESE AMBASSADOR HUANG XILIAN



H.E. Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian

I am delighted to see the Chinese Embassy and the Association for Philippines-China Understanding (APCU) jointly launching the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU). This partnership timely commemorates two momentous occasions, the 46th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of the Philippines and the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of China-Philippines Friendship Day.

As neighbors separated only by a strip of water, China and the Philippines have enjoyed a long history of amicable exchange. From the historical visit of Sulu's Sultan Paduka Pahala to China and Chinese navigator Zheng He's great voyages to the Philippine islands, our intertwined past transcends ages as the ancient friendship between China and the Philippines cements our present ties.

Under the guidance of President Xi Jinping and President Duterte over the past five years, China-Philippines relations have ushered in a new golden age. Our bilateral cooperation in various fields has indeed yielded fruitful results. China is the Philippines' largest trade partner, the second-largest source of foreign investment, and the third-largest export market. To date, 12 major government-to-government projects have been completed across the Philippine islands, ranging from food security, drug rehabilitation, counter-terrorism to radio and television services. Another seven projects are currently under implementation and more than ten projects have been mapped out to cover big-ticket infrastructure projects like highways and railways as well as livelihood projects such as flood control, irrigation. In addition, a thriving number of Chinese companies are making heavy investments in the Philippines, creating more than 150,000 jobs and promoting Philippine economic growth.

Facing the COVID-19 pandemic, our two countries and peoples have been fighting the virus in solidarity, forging an even closer partnership. A friend in need is a friend indeed. China will never forget the help the Philippines rendered and reciprocating it in good faith has been the way for China to show its gratitude. Apart from being the only country that sent a medical expert team to the Philippines, China has donated a large quantity of much-needed medical supplies of PPEs, testing kits, and ventilators. China is the first country to donate and provide vaccines to the Philippines and by the end of May 2021, the Philippines has received more than 5.5 million doses of Chinese vaccines, with more supplies coming on the way.

To further promote the development of China-Philippines relations, mutual understanding of the two peoples need to be enhanced. As a Chinese saying goes, "Friendship, which derives from close contact between the people, holds the key to sound state-to-state relations". To this end, the APPCU is proposed and endorsed by State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

This award is meant to acknowledge and pay tribute to those who have made great contributions in enhancing mutual understanding between our people and promoting cooperation in various fields. I commend all the nominees as the motivation to build better ties between our two countries is one of the greatest catalysts for change that one could dedicate themselves to. I sincerely hope that more and more people will follow the nominees' footsteps and devote themselves to the great cause of strengthening mutual understanding and friendship between our people and fostering a closer China-Philippines relation.

Long live the friendship between the Chinese and Filipino peoples!

## MESSAGE FROM APCU CHAIRMAN SECRETARY RAUL L. LAMBINO



APCU Chairman  
Secretary Raul L. Lambino

At the outset, I'd like to acknowledge the distinguished APPCU 2022 Awardees, nine men and two women of our multicultural society who are among the leaders in shaping our people's thoughts, opinions, cultural tastes, and attitudes.

They are here among us today because each represents the best of our aspirations and intentions to promote mutual understanding between the Philippines and China. They are here not by chance but by dint of hard work, inspiring faith in ourselves and the future that we share with our Asian neighbors.

They have, bit by bit, helped build and shape who we are, and will be, in our relations with China by their deeds and by their actions taken in their fields of endeavor. This is why our ten guests have been chosen from a large field of nominees to become the 2022 Awardees for Promoting Philippine-China Understanding. They will be honored today in ceremonies organized by the Association of Philippine-China understanding and the Chinese Embassy in Manila. Let me congratulate you all on reaching this milestone, and may your outstanding work continue.

In last month's Philippine presidential elections, the state of Philippine-China relations gained a fair share of the spotlight during the campaign period as never before in our electoral history. Some sought to fan the fires of misunderstanding between our two nations over festering disputes in the West Philippine Sea. Even more extremely, a few strident voices vowed to defend every inch of Philippine territory as though our two nations were gearing up for war. But clearly and evidently, those views fell on fallow ground.

The Filipino electorate rejected them by voting overwhelmingly for the candidate for president who promoted diplomacy as the best way for our two nations to move forward. In a sense, the election outcome validates our organization's long-term advocacy and enriches the context in which the awards ceremony today is being held.

My view is that the sense of mutual understanding that our awardees, and APCU itself, have propagated through these years has taken root in the Filipino consciousness. It has taken hold so deeply that it found full and meaningful expression in a particular candidate's view during the last elections.

The rhetoric may have been harsh, but the ground has become fertile more than ever for promoting greater understanding between our two nations. I can say that as of today, mutual understanding between the Philippines and China has never been better than at any time in the past two decades.

For the shared future of our two countries, this portends well enhanced bilateral relations as Manila and Beijing prepare to transition from the administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to that of President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Even as we prepare to meet that moment not many weeks ago, we cannot rest on our achievements, for promoting mutual understanding is a tricky and demanding task. We must meet that moment of transition to a new leader more determined than ever to do more, do better, and win more adherents over to our cause.

For APCU and our laureates, I believe this is one compelling moment to move significantly forward. And so we should. And so we must.

Again, congratulations to the awardees.

Thank you.



# MESSAGE FROM APCU PRESIDENT JEFFREY NG

It is indeed too early for me to boast of the success that the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) may have achieved, though, we take pride in the efforts given by the Association for Philippines-China Understanding (APCU) and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of the Philippines, in ensuring the growth of this initiative. Now in its second year, we are just as honored and delighted as we were in its launching last year to see how we at the Association for Philippine-China Understanding, or APCU, and the Chinese Embassy in Manila can work systematically in collaboration with various groups, communities, and organizations in bringing into realization the mission and goals of APPCU as an award-giving body.

The recipients of this year's APPCU awards are the very evidences of the openness of the Philippines and China to go beyond the limiting constructs of politics, ideologies, and even ethnicities, if only to accommodate, promote, and instill the more valuable aspects of amity, cooperation, and understanding between the Filipino and the Chinese peoples.

This year, we created a first-of-its-kind Special Award called the Gawad Sultan Paduka Pahala, the highest honor we can bestow posthumous to the late Ambassador Jose Santiago "Chito" Sta. Romana, who, at the age of 74, passed away recently while in the call of his noble duty.

Perhaps, unknown to many, Sultan Paduka Pahala of Sulu was just one of the few unheard stories of valiant chieftains of the early sultanates in the southern region of the Philippines. Along with his household, he braved the seas to meet with the Yongle Emperor, Zhu Di, to forge friendly ties between their peoples. The Emperor was kind enough to accommodate the Sultan and his family in his territory. It is said that such friendship established between the two peoples extended through generations that even to this day, there are still people in China who recognize the saga of the brave Sultan. Unfortunately, the Sultan never made it back home as he contracted a mysterious disease and met his fate in China.



APCU President Jeffrey Ng

In light of this epic saga of Sultan Paduka Pahala, we created this Highest Honor and Special Award to recognize the indubitable contributions of people who, like the late Amb. Chito Sta. Romana has devoted their lives to their very last breath, to serve and uphold the cause they had lived with.

I have said this before, but as APCU's President, it has always been my honor to represent the Association in all its undertakings, more so with the APPCU as we work hand in hand with the Chinese Embassy here in Manila in sustaining and ensuring the successes of this joint initiative not only in reinforcing relations between the two countries, but more importantly, in raising the awareness, and the reappraisal of the Filipino-Chinese historical roots and ties. We take pride in every small step we make in this initiative as a learning experience to help us thrive in our shared culture, as a people, and as a nation.

# MESSAGE FROM SIXTO T. BENEDICTO

First and foremost, it is with great honor and privilege to be a part of the Association for Philippines-China Understanding (APCU) and the prestigious Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU), which is now in its second year.

As Vice-Chairman of APCU, and Chair of the APPCU Organizing Committee, I have never been truly delighted and proud of all the accomplishments, big or small, that we as a growing community and organization are able to achieve. Progress is still progress regardless of how it is measured. Furthermore, it is not so much about how quickly we are able to meet our goals but what it is that we do to reach such goals.

As we have been trying to underscore, the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding was established primarily to recognize, acknowledge and appreciate individuals who are committed to the improvement and advancement of Philippines-China bilateral relations, friendship, and mutual understanding in the various sectors of our communities, and the global society at large. Beyond this vision, however, is the more significant aim for the Association, through APPCU, to open channels and opportunities for a better appreciation of the shared history and culture of the Filipinos and the Chinese that would facilitate the strengthening of mutual understanding, as well as in overcoming unwarranted prejudices and differences between the two countries.

Over the years that I have been a part of APCU, I have seen the commitment of many who believe in this same cause we try to uphold in the Association. Now with APPCU, I am very hopeful that the Association and the award-giving body itself would be able to encourage more people to join in this initiative and, more importantly, to render due recognition to individuals who truly deserve it.

The second year of APPCU undeniably posed some challenges for us in the Association and the Organizing Committee. Still, I am grateful nonetheless for all members and staff who have made an effort to ensure our endeavors' success.

It is with pride that I congratulate this year's APPCU Laureates, wishing everyone for their continued commitment and for serving as an inspiration to our fellow Filipinos. However, I am also saddened by the passing of a great statesman, the late Ambassador Jose Santiago "Chito" Sta. Romana, whose life he had committed to the cause of bringing mutual understanding between the Filipinos and the Chinese. My heartfelt and sincerest condolences to the bereaved family of the late Ambassador.



APCU Vice-Chairman and APPCU Committee Chairman Sixto T. Benedicto

# **SPECIAL AWARD, THE GAWAD SULTAN PADUKA PAHALA AWARD FOR PROMOTING PHILIPPINES-CHINA UNDERSTANDING (APPCU)**



## **H.E. JOSE SANTIAGO “CHITO” L. STA. ROMANA**

**Esteemed envoy and statesman, the late Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana was an activist by heart who fought his way to success through diligence and industry.**

**He completed elementary and secondary school at De La Salle University. He obtained his degree in AB Economics and BS in Commerce from the same university in 1970; and immediately after pursued a graduate degree course in Economics at the University of the Philippines for a year, from 1970 to 1971. However, his academic pursuit was put to a halt with the declaration of martial law in the Philippines. At the time, he was out of the country heading a Youth**

**Delegation in China. It was not advisable for him to return to the Philippines as he was among the activists who were vocal about their views on various socio-political issues of the day. He obtained a Master's of Arts degree in International Relations in 1987 from the Tufts University, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.**

**His exile in China had not been easy for him, yet he thrived out of his ingenuity and diligence despite the isolation from family and friends. He learned Mandarin at the Beijing Language Institute to cope with day-to-day living in China, allowing him to immerse in the study of works that required fluency in both Chinese and English languages. Earlier in his career, he worked as a translation editor for a Chinese publishing house at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, where he was given an opportunity to edit and translate into English two economics books and several other articles by noted Chinese economists at the time.**

**After this brief stint at the publishing house, he landed a job in ABC News that opened up more significant opportunities for his professional career. As a correspondent and producer, he reported on major stories such as the crisis in US-China relations in 1999 and 2001, the economic rise of China, and the Beijing Olympics in 2008. He worked with esteemed ABC anchors Peter Jennings and Diane Sawyer when they reported from China. From a correspondent to a Reporter/Producer, and much later as Beijing Bureau Chief of ABC News, this was a career he held from 1989 until his retirement in 2010.**

**He served as Professorial Lecturer at the University of the Philippines Asian Center in 2015, handling courses on Politics and Governance in China. He was a Trustee of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) and Teach for the Philippines from 2016 through 2022. He was also an esteemed member of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies (PACS) Advisory Board from 2016 thru 2022 and was the former President of PACS from 2014 to 2016.**

**He was appointed as a Non-resident Philippine Ambassador to Mongolia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, concurrent with his appointment as Philippine Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, from December 2016 thru April 2022.**

**Over the years, Amb. Chito Sta. Romana had received several distinctions, such as the Emmy Award, News and Documentary Category in 2000; an Emmy Nomination, News and Documentary Category in 2001 & 2006; the Award from the Overseas Press Club of America for his team's coverage of the massive China earthquake in 2008; and the Presidential Award, Gawad Mabini with the Rank of Dakilang Kamanong in 2020 for his "instrumental role" in the strengthening of Philippine and China ties. President Duterte posthumously awarded him the Order of Sikatuna, Rank of Datu, as he lay in state at the Heritage Chapel on April 30.**



To have lived, worked, and thrived in China for the most part of his life, it may be said that Amb. Chito Sta. Romana had the advantage of knowing and understanding China better, from its leadership to its culture and people, than many Chinese and Filipino Chinese in the Philippines.



Gleaning from his life, works, and advocacies, he had been an effective instrument in educating people about the Chinese culture and China in terms of its leadership, politics, and development goals. Furthermore, it may be said that perhaps his best work and legacy are that of his dedication to promoting people-to-people interaction by sharing his appreciation, knowledge, and perception of China, and ideals in maintaining amity amidst and despite disputes through diplomatic means and channels, considering that China and the Philippines share important historical roots.

This year, the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes all these efforts and relevant contributions by the late Ambassador Chito Sta. Romana, and for being instrumental in maintaining a healthy friendship and cooperative relations between China and the Philippines.





# THE TEN APPCU LAUREATES

## APPCU HALL OF FAME AWARDEES



### FORMER PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA

Actor turned businessman and politician Joseph Ejercito Estrada was the 13th President of the Republic of the Philippines. Unlike most leaderships borne from a political lineage, former President “Erap,” a name which he is popularly identified with, had only his charms and charisma to carry him towards success in his professional and political career.

His educational background has nothing to boast of since he has been known for his notoriety in secondary and tertiary schools being a dropout. However, such experiences did not hinder him from proving to himself that of which he could do his best.

As an actor, he had made a name for himself in the movie industry by being among the most loved actors during his time. He had won several FAMAS Best Actor awards for movies such as *Markang Rehas* in 1962, *Geron Busabos* in 1964, *Ang Batang Quiapo* in 1965, *Ito Ang Pilipino* in 1966, *Patria Adorada* in 1969, and *Kumander Alibasbas* in 1981, the same year that he was conferred the FAMAS Hall of Fame Awards. Other awards won by the former President include the Metro Manila Film Festival Best Actor for *Diligin Mo ng Hamog ang Uhaw na Lupa* in 1975 and the GMMSF Box-Office Entertainment Awards for Government Service in 2014.

Beyond the film industry, President Erap was also recognized by various award-giving bodies for his exemplary works as a politician and civil servant. Among these include recognitions as One of the Three Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) in Public Administration conferred by the Philippine Jaycees in 1989; as an Outstanding Mayor and Foremost Nationalist by the Inter-Provincial Information Service in 1971; as One of the Three Outstanding Senators of the Year conferred by the Free Press of the Philippines in 1972; as the Most Outstanding Metro Manila Mayor conferred by the Princeton Poll in 1973; and as Most Outstanding Citizen of San Juan in 2007.

His engagement in politics began when he was first elected as San Juan’s Mayor in 1969, a position in which he served the longest in his entire political career, from 1969 to 1986. In between these years, he founded the Movie Workers Welfare Foundation (MOWELFUND) and the MOWELFUND Film Institute in 1974 and 1979, respectively; and together with Guillermo de Vega, he co-founded the 1st Metro Manila Film Festival in 1975.

Following his career as Local Chief Executive of the City Government of San Juan, he then ran for a seat in the Senate and became a Senator from 1987 to 1992. As a Senator, he chaired the Committee on Public Works and was elected as Vice-Chair of the Committee on Health, Natural Resources, Ecology, and Urban Planning. After serving one full term in the Senate, he ran for higher office and was elected as Vice President in 1992, which he held thru 1998. Concurrent as Vice President, he was appointed as Presidential Adviser for Crime Prevention and Law Enforcement and as Chair of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC) from 1992 thru 1997.

The height of his political career brought him to the highest position in the government when he was elected as the 13th President of the Republic of the Philippines in 1998.

President Erap is reckoned as one of the most loved Presidents of the Philippines, owing not only to his innate charisma but perhaps to being identified as a hero of the masses largely owed the roles he had portrayed in films over the years.

As a politician, he has proven himself worthy of respect and esteem for being diligent in his tasks and campaigns against crime, an effort recognized by leaderships of neighboring and western countries alike. His openness to building friendly relations that goes beyond politics and ideology is perhaps one that is admired by countries like China and others.

The Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada for his continuous efforts in supporting the Filipino-Chinese community locally by acknowledging their valuable contributions to the Philippine economy and nation-building. Furthermore, APPCU likewise recognizes the former President’s vocal expression of support and cooperation with China as a regional partner in Asia and the ASEAN member countries.



## **AMBASSADOR FRANCISCO L. BENEDICTO**

**Renowned and esteemed public figure in the Philippines, Ambassador Francisco L. Benedicto is a multi-awarded individual celebrated not only for his accomplishments in Government Service but likewise in his academic and entrepreneurial endeavors. Born and raised in the province of Cebu, he came from a family of business magnates devoted to philanthropy and the promotion of the rich Filipino culture through advocacies in education and business enterprise. To date, he is the Founding Chairman of the Benedicto College, Inc., and Chairman of the FLB Prime Holdings, Inc. Before his debut in government and consular services, he was the Former Chairman and General Manager of the Benedicto Development Corporation and Former President of the B. Benedicto & Sons Co., Inc.**

**His active involvement in public sector activities began in the '70s when he was elected President of the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which he held for three terms from 1971 thru 1974. Concurrent with said position, he also served as President of the Cebu Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Inc. for seven terms, from 1972 thru 1986; as the Regional Governor for the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with its central office in Manila, from 1977 thru 1983; and as President of the Mandaue Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. for six terms, from 1980 thru 1986.**

**Other distinct positions held by the good Ambassador Benedicto in the government sector include his membership in the Cebu City Planning and Development Board in the City Government of Cebu from 1974 thru 1978; and as Co-Chair for the Cebu Host Council, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), specifically for the Senior Officials and Ministerial Meetings in 1986.**

**His rich experience in government service may also be gleaned from the various key positions he held under different Leadership and Administrations over the last decades. He has accompanied various State Officials in their Official Visits to the Philippines, among others, the late Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew in his Official Visit to the Philippines in July 1986; the former Singapore Prime Minister H.E. Goh Chok Tong during his Official Visit to the Philippines in April 1991; and Republic of Korea President Kim Young-Sam during his State Visit to the Philippines in 1994. Conversely, he has handled various preparations for State Visits of former Presidents like the late President Corazon C. Aquino during her visit to Singapore in August 1986; former President Fidel V. Ramos during his visit to Singapore in February 1993; and former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during her visit to Canada in January 2002 to name a few.**

**His Consular mission began around the mid-80s when he was appointed as Honorary Consul of Belgium, a position in which he served from 1982 thru 1986. Concurrent with this appointment, he also served as Dean of the Diplomatic & Consular Corps of the Republic of Singapore from July 1989 thru June 1993. This was followed through by a series of appointments as Chief of Mission & Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Singapore from 1986 thru 1993; as Chief of Mission & Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Korea from 1993 thru 1995; as Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Korea from 1995 thru 1996; as Chief of Mission & Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary to the Federative Republic of Brazil, concurrently accredited to Republic of Venezuela, Republic of Colombia and to the Republic of Suriname from 1996 thru 1998; as Chief of Mission Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary to Canada from 1998 thru October 2005; as Undersecretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs from December 2005 thru 2008; as Chief of Mission & Ambassador Extraordinary Plenipotentiary to Republic of India concurrently accredited to the Federal Democratic of Nepal from 2008 thru January 2010; and as Chief of Mission and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the People's Republic of China concurrently accredited to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Mongolia from February 2010 thru April 2011.**



Over the years, Amb. Benedicto has received several recognitions for his exemplary works as a public figure and a public intellectual. Among the recent accolades include the Most Outstanding Individual Award by the Cebu City Government given on February 24, 2010, for exemplary services as the country's top diplomat earning the distinction as the longest-serving politically appointed Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary of the Philippines covering Four Presidencies; the Grand Chamber Award of Distinction for his commendable leadership, integrity and service as a respectable diplomat in National & International Affairs by the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry given on June 27, 2007; the Cebu City Council Resolution No. 05-1465 which recognizes his excellent record in diplomatic service and giving much pride to Cebuanos, enacted on November 23, 2006; the Outstanding Cebuano Award by the Province of Cebu, particularly in the field of Foreign Service, given in August 2000; and the Kwangwhajang Award, A Diplomatic Service Medal awarded by H.E. President King Young-Sam of the Republic of Korea given in 1995.

At present, Ambassador Francisco Benedicto is recognized by the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) for his relevant contributions in opening and promoting amity and harmonious channels for trade and cultural exchanges between the Philippines and China. His vast experience in the fields of education, business and trade, and positions held in Government and Diplomatic Services undoubtedly enabled him to observe the needs of his own country keenly and to identify the opportunities available for its economy to thrive in the years to come through the support and cooperative ties with China.



## APPCU AWARDEES UNDER THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS CATEGORY



### WILSON LEE FLORES

Wilson Lee Flores is a multi-awarded writer, educator, poet in English and Filipino languages, a columnist in English and Filipino languages, author of five books, economics/pop culture/politics/geopolitics analyst, and entrepreneur. He also describes himself as a “social worker” in his undertaking various philanthropic and cultural projects either in his capacity or as an officer of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Among his unique civic and cultural projects include donating several public school buildings to rural communities such as historic seaside Balangiga town in Eastern Samar province, Tarlac province, Barangay Dinalaoan in Calasiao in Pangasinan province, etc.; moderating the non-partisan “Pandesal Forum” which hopes to help elevate the public discourse on national and global issues; celebrating the annual “World Pandesal Day” every October 16 by giving tens of thousands of free loaves of bread and free medical/dental/optical services to the urban poor; celebrating UNESCO’s World Poetry Day every March 31; having his 83-year-old Kamuning Bakery Café cooperate with Quezon City Hall in baking many thousands of bread every day for one month in 2020 pandemic hard lockdown to be distributed free to all Q.C. government hospitals, medical and security front liners and shelters for the homeless; etc.

As a writer, Wilson Lee Flores has written on diverse topics ranging from business, economics, pop culture, humor, and arts to politics, winning him a record 15 Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA), including three CMMA Hall of Fame Awards for Best Opinion Column, Best Business Column and even Best Entertainment Column for his pop culture writings. This is the highest number of CMMA ever won by a person in the history of this prestigious award.

Some of his most notable writings promote better Philippines China understanding, such as these examples:

1. Many of his writings in newspapers and magazines, also local and international TV and radio interviews through the decades, tackled economic, cultural, diplomatic, and gastronomic exchanges, even anti-colonial revolutionary and World War II cooperation as allies between the Philippines and China, and how Chinese entrepreneurs contributed to Philippine progress;
2. As a first-year college student, he had won three Don Carlos Palanca Awards for Literature. His first prize-winning work was about the struggles and socio-economic contributions of ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs to Philippine national life since the Spanish colonial era. His two other prize-winning works were on the Filipino people’s revolutionary struggles against colonial oppression.
3. Also, while a college student, he was commissioned by the late intellectual Dr. Doreen G. Fernandez to write about Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs throughout Philippine history for her groundbreaking “Kasaysayan” encyclopedia project on the history of the Filipino nation.
4. For over two years in his college years, he pioneered writing about the often misunderstood and unheralded immigrant Chinese entrepreneurs. He humanized their stories of struggles in his weekly Monday column called “Roots of Philippine Business” for the “Manila Chronicle” newspaper with Joaquin “Chino” Roces as the publisher who invited him to write and Rigoberto Tiglao as his editor. These works were pioneering. They were translated into the Chinese language and published first on the front page of “Chinese Commercial News” and weekly in “World News.” He believes centuries of Chinese immigrants’ struggles and positive contributions to Philippine nation-building are priceless stories integral to Filipino national heritage. That column featured Chinese entrepreneurs and all pioneer entrepreneurs in Philippine history.

Here are just some of the numerous civic projects Wilson Lee Flores helped spearhead as an officer of various NGOs which promoted Philippines-China understanding:

1. During the 2020 pandemic lockdown, he, as chairman of Anvil Business Club, contacted the Shenyang City government in Northeast China to solicit its donation of medical supplies for the Philippines' biggest city Quezon City which Q.C. Mayor Joy Belmonte received;

2. In the 2020 pandemic lockdown, he, as chairman of Anvil Business Club, led fund-raising among the Chinese community and donated P38 million worth of medical supplies for Metro Manila's 15 largest hospitals;

3. In the 2021 pandemic period, he, as Anvil Business Club chairman, contacted the Guangzhou City government in Southeast China to solicit its donation of P6 million pesos worth of school supplies as gifts for 10,000 public school children of Manila City, which Mayor Isko Moreno received;



4. In the March 2021 pandemic period, he, as chairman of Anvil Business Club, led the donation of 2,000 bags of rice for urban poor communities in Tondo, Manila, and Quezon City;

5. In Chinese New Year 2019, he, as chairman of Anvil Business Club, spearheaded the distribution of 10,000 tikoy gifts for two urban poor communities of Barracks and Camarin in Caloocan City;

6. In June 2019, he, as chairman of the Public Information & Media Committee of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Inc. (FFCCCII), spearheaded FFCCCII's timely humanitarian assistance for Mindoro fishermen whose boat was damaged in a mishap with a Chinese ship near Recto Bank at sea. This quick aid to fully repair the boat, plus donations of rice sacks and a public school building, helped calm down the weeks of daily, acrimonious media frenzy. This project had the support of the late Philippine Ambassador to Beijing, Jose Santiago "Chito" Sta. Romana, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, FFCCCII President Dr. Henry Lim Bon Liong, and FFCCCII Vice-President and Media Committee Adviser Jeffrey Ng;

7. As chairman of Anvil Business Club, he proposed and spearheaded the donation of a larger-than-life granite monument of the great teacher and philosopher Confucius for the Chinese Garden of Rizal Park. Special thanks to then Tourism Secretary Ace Durano for his support. The project included the annual honoring of all teachers on Confucius' September 28 birth anniversary and Anvil donations of college scholarship grants for students of Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP);

8. He---with the support of his late uncle philanthropist Manuel O. Chua of Tulay Foundation, Inc.---researched, traced, and verified the ancestral roots of Philippine national hero Dr. Jose Rizal in the village of Zhang-Guo (pronounced "Siongque" in Hokkien or south Fujian language) in Jinjiang of Fujian province, Southeast China. In his articles, he proposed the installation of a Rizal monument in Fujian, which was eventually realized with the world's largest Rizal monument of 18.61 meters in height and even a huge Rizal Park. Both are now symbols of the ancient bond of friendship between the Philippines and China.

9. Even in college at Ateneo de Manila University, he was active in many diverse extra-curricular organizations, such as being the founder and first president of Ateneo's multi-awarded Celadon organization, which promotes better education and appreciation of Chinese culture and also undertakes civic endeavors. Up to this day, among the noble projects of Celadon is the annual "Spring Film Festival," where world-class China-produced movies are shown for free to the public at a major shopping mall like Shangri-la Mall or SM North Edsa for a week during the Chinese New Year to promote better Filipino understanding of life in modernizing China. Various award-giving bodies have likewise recognized him for his exemplary work as a writer, a media practitioner, and an entrepreneur with socio-civic endeavors. These recognitions include the Quezon City's highest honor for most outstanding citizens, the 2018 Manuel L. Quezon Gawad Parangal Award, and the 2012 "Maestro Award" from Grace Christian College.

This year, the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes Wilson Lee Flores as one of its worthy recipients for his efforts and contributions to facilitating a better understanding of the Chinese culture and the Chinese community in the Philippines through his writings as well as through his many socio-civic and cultural initiatives. As a media practitioner, Wilson has done much not only to promote Chinese culture but also opened up avenues for Filipinos to appreciate better the ethnic Chinese community and their positive role in the development, nation-building, and sustained cooperation between the Philippines and China.



## **RODRIGO “ROD” KAPUNAN**

Columnist-writer Rodrigo “Rod” Kapunan is the voice behind the popular “Backbencher,” a column previously featured in the Daily Tribune from April 2001 thru March 2010 but later became a regular item in the Manila Standard Today from 2011 thru the present. He is also a regular contributor of the China Daily Global Edition and the Global Times, both internationally circulated newspapers.

Academically speaking, Rod earned his undergraduate degree course in Political Science and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of the East. He has also earned some Master’s units in

Political Science at the University of the Philippines in Manila. Having a background in politics and the law, it is not difficult to see where his interests and leanings toward various political issues might have been rooted.

Rod has been vocal about his views on many issues that continuously confront Philippine politics and government as a writer and political analyst. He has written and published relevant articles and pieces that offered alternative views towards understanding the Philippine political culture and economy. These publications include “Reflections on Martial Law: Saving the Republic,” which is an analysis of the circumstances that led to the imposition of martial law by the late President Ferdinand Marcos; “Revolution from the Center: A Quest for Peace and Progress, Vol. I” which is a political and historical analysis of the achievements of the late President Ferdinand Marcos; and “Labor-Only Contractors: New Generation of Cabos” published in the Philippine Law Journal, Vol. 65 Nos. 5 & 6 in March 1991.

Rod Kapunan is also an active member of the Huaren Society Association of the Philippines, Inc. and the Philippines-China Friendship Club. As a member of the Huaren Society Association of the Philippines, he has given a talk on the issue of the conflict in the South China Sea, and on several occasions, as a guest speaker and resource person on topics involving Philippines and China relations, at the GNN Talk News, with Mr. Herman Tiu Laurel as host.

As a columnist, he has written several articles on China’s foreign policies, culture, and shared community principles enunciated by Chinese President Xi Jinping and other important issues involving the South China Sea disputes. In fact, on various occasions, he has accepted invitations to speak as a political analyst and resource person on the critical issues involving the Philippines and China. To name a few, he was a resource speaker at the Jinan University in Guangzhou, China, in 2018, where he talked about the current development of domestic policies in the Philippines and its implication to the Sino-Philippine Relation; as resource speaker at the South China Sea BOAO Sub-Forum for Asia in 2019 held at Hainan, China, an invitation extended by H.E. Ambassador Zhao Jianhua of the People’s Republic of China thru the National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NICSS). For the latter, he delved into the topic of opportunities available to the Philippines and for “Further Cooperation at the New Stage of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.”

As may be gleaned from his writings, Rod is keen on the support and aid extended by China to the Philippines as an Asian neighbor. Contrary to the mindset that has blinded many Filipinos today, he sees the Philippines-China cooperation as an opportunity more than a threat to the country’s economy and security. As he wrote in his column back in August 2019, there are five critical areas that the Philippine government must look closely at if it is indeed sincere in enabling the economy to thrive, to wit:

“One is building bilateral financial cooperation in which both sides agreed to revisit the current currency swap arrangement to manage foreign exchange risk.

Two, exploring areas of cooperation in infrastructure, education, tourism, technology, power, ports, and information technology.

Three, enhancing agricultural and trade cooperation and assessing the growth potential in the agricultural sector and shared opportunities where the countries can mutually gain benefits such as the export of Chinese-made agricultural equipment, expansion of Philippine export to China such as tropical fruits such as banana, coconut and pineapple; and “high-end” marine and fishery products like Lapu-Lapu, Bangus, tuna, crab and shrimps.



## MAURO GIA SAMONTE



Mauro Gia Samonte is a self-taught literary craftsman, screenplay writer, film director, and a practicing journalist into his octogenarian years. In the early sixties, he dropped out of a civil engineering course at the Mapua Institute of Technology and, through sheer hands-on methods, proceeded to give vent to his literary pursuits. His first fiction, “Forests of the Heart,” published by the Weekly Graphic in 1965, became the germ of a screenplay titled “Tag-ulan sa Tag-araw,” which teed off a phenomenal film scriptwriting career spanning more than two decades and contributed a remarkable number of the most memorable blockbuster movies of Philippine cinema totaling more than fifty. His “Burlesk Queen” was not only the top box-office hit but also the grand winner of awards in the 1977 Metro Manila Film Festival, garnering 11 out of the 12 awards in the competition, including the Best Screenplay award for himself. He again won the Best Screenplay award for “Lumuhod Ka Sa Lupa” in 1987.

Samonte has always striven to inject his films with touches to arouse awareness of social ills. His “Daluyong at Habagat,” made in 1975 – in times of expected repression by the martial law regime – was cited by literary critic Petronilo Bn. Daroy. His “Daluyong at Habagat” is today what El Filibusterismo was during the Spanish colonial era.” His “Walang Panginoon” mirrored the life of someone who had truly lived the hard life of a red fighter.

In 1970, Samonte had already established a name as a movie journalist and as Editor of Movie Confidential and Entertainment Editor of the Weekly Nation, signature publications of the Amado Araneta-owned Makabayan Publishing Corporation. He also has a stature of an entertainment journalist and pursued a career in film.

Of the more than a hundred articles he has written in his column that deal with China, fifty have already been published in an anthology titled China, “The Way, The Truth, and The Life.” The book, evidently the main credentials for Samonte’s nomination to this year’s APPCU Awards, is just one of the things he has intended to do to help better Philippines-China

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Among the things that remain a frustration for Samonte is the filmization of Laurel, a screenplay by which he intends to straighten out the many distortions of the real history of the Second World War in the Philippines. His firm belief is that Sinophobia among Filipinos is caused less by their actual anti-Chinese sentiments than by the continuing cultural enslavement by Americans. Filipinos easily believe false American yarns against China. To destroy American credibility is key to curing Filipino ill will toward China, and Laurel exposes the entire breadth and width of American atrocities in the Philippines, from the time of its colonization of the country in the 1890s to the so-called liberation of Manila in 1945 in which the actual bombing by MacArthur was what reduced the city to rubble, killing 200,000 civilians and turning Manila into the second most ravaged city in World War II next only to Warsaw, Poland.

At 81, Samonte cannot but feel he is running out of time to do the film still. But, with China, hope springs eternal.



# PRINCESS JACEL H. KIRAM



As her title implies, Princess Jacel Kiram is born to nobility as the daughter of Jamalul Kiram III and a descendant of the Sultan of Sulu, Paduka Batara. Her innate interest in her ancient roots led her to what seems to be lifelong advocacy that she now pursues not only as an individual but as a leader and representative of her people.

As young as she may be, Princess Jacel has held leadership and key positions in the various organizations she is involved with. An AB Interdisciplinary Studies graduate from De La Salle College of Saint Benilde in Manila, she has already obtained several distinctions over

the years of her active engagements and participation in important missions and events, such as being a resource speaker in the United Nations-sponsored Conference on Drug Control Program held at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, Austria; as one of the delegates to the 600th Year of Sulu-China Friendship celebration in Guangxi; and as head of the Philippine Delegation to the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students held in Sochi, Russia in 2017, to name a few.

She has also served as President of the Philsilat Sports Association and as Deputy Chief of Mission to the 18th Asian Games for Team Philippines. Other significant involvements include her as a founding member of Kristyano't Islam Repormang Agapay sa Mamamayan (KIRAM), as Co-Founder and President of the International Center for Peace, Reconciliation and Development (ICPRD, formerly KIRAM); and as Chair of People's Coalition for Peace among others.

Like much of the sultanates in Mindanao, Sulu is rich in its culture and history. In her pursuits of retracing her roots, Princess Jacel has been instrumental in bringing to the fore evidence of ancient ties between China and the people of Mindanao, particularly the Sultanate of Sulu, which goes beyond trading also alliance and cultural assimilation.

Her commitment to the furtherance of the legacy of her ancestors has not only led to an increased awareness of



Philippines-China historical ties among her people, but such efforts greatly facilitated in promoting of more people to people interactions between the two countries by way of skills, knowledge, and human resource exchanges. She hopes not only for the Philippine government to find means of supporting efforts of preserving the legacy and historical alliance that many sultanates in Mindanao, like that of Sulu, have long started. For her, history is not only there to render evidence of long-standing amity with China but also to lay the basis and grounding for our own identity both as Filipinos and as Asians.

This year, the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes Princess Jacel Kiram for her efforts and initiatives in facilitating the strengthening of friendship between the Philippines and China and for her vocal expression of amity and gratitude, especially concerning the preservation of the history and legacy of her ancestor, the Sultan of Sulu.

## APPCU AWARDEES UNDER THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS CATEGORY



### PAUL M. GUTIERREZ

Multi-awarded journalist and media practitioner Paul Gutierrez was a two-term director and president and is currently the Secretary of the National Press Club (NPC) of the Philippines, one of the country's oldest but biggest organization of active members of the Philippine

His career in mass media and journalism took off by the turn of the millennium in 2000 when he served as the Editor of The Pilipino Reporter, a magazine in the vernacular for Filipino Overseas Workers.

Between 1988 and 2000, Paul rose to the ranks to become Technical Assistant to the Senior Vice President of Refractories Corporation of the Philippines (RCP), a member of the Alcantara Group of Companies (Alsons). In this role, he served as RCP's official representative to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PCCI), the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), and the Industry Development Council, as well as PCCI Industry Commodity Expert

(ICE) at the Bureau of Customs. Prior to his career in the mass media, Paul had also served in various positions in both public and private sector agencies and institutions.

In October 2000, prior to the start of the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada, Paul became a part of Estrada's Media Bureau. This engagement also saw him help strategize in the political and electoral campaigns of Estrada's 'Partido/Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) until the 2007 elections. Paul also became a correspondent of The Daily Tribune with a special focus on political issues.

From 2005 to the present, Paul has been connected with the Philippine Journalists, Inc. (i.e., the publisher of the People's Journal and the People's Journal Tonight) as a regular columnist and Senate reporter.

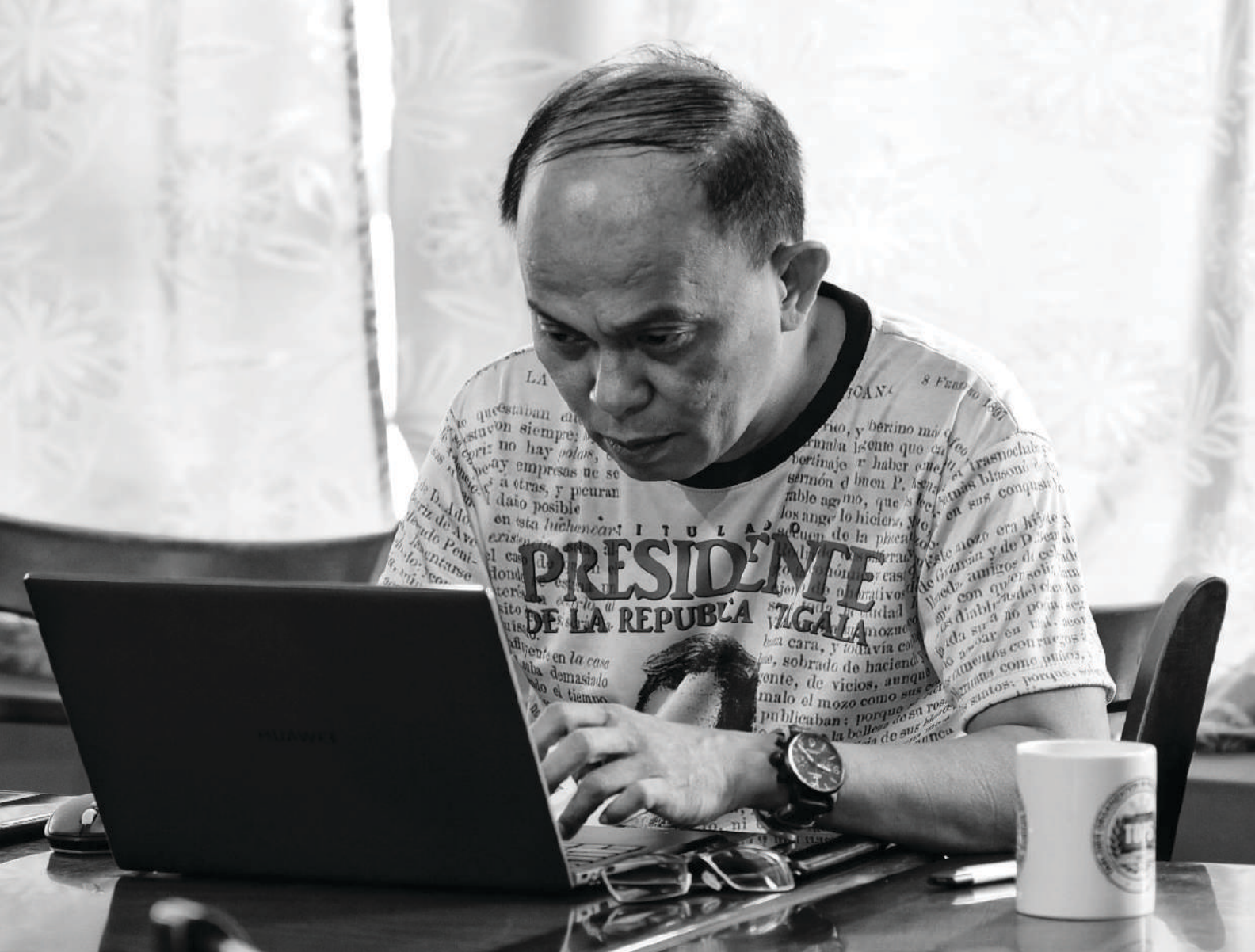
Among his awards as a journalist include the Plaque of Appreciation given by the Region 4B Police Office in 2006 and 2009 and the Most Enterprising Reporter of the Year given by the PJI in 2017. Paul was also given the Outstanding Journalist Award during the 16TH MCLE Convention hosted by the Public Attorney's Office.

Paul Gutierrez is reckoned to be one of the few journalists in the country who has been vocal in expressing his favor for strengthening Philippines and China relations. In his own words, he wrote the following not only to lay down his conviction and views of China but mainly to correct all misconceptions and biased stances made against China over the years owing to the overbearing influence of the West, primarily the US.

"Even before I became a student activist during the martial law years, I was always drawn to the study of history, especially the history of other countries in the fight against the abuses and rapacity of Western/US Imperialism, of which the most absorbing is the history of China and its struggle for independence from foreign domination. Thus, at an early age (Grade 6), I was already reading the works of Chairman Mao Zedong ('On Contradiction,' 'On Practice,' 'People's War,' among others)."

"For me, China and the Philippines are 'brothers' bound by their shared history and their common struggle for national independence and against Western/US Imperialism. I had always noted that long before Western colonialists arrived on Philippine shores, China and the Philippines had always been friends and trading partners. They fought together during the Filipinos' struggle for independence, first against Spanish Colonialism, US Imperialism, and then against Japanese militarism."





“In 2017, as NPC President, I immediately signed a partnership agreement (memorandum of agreement) with the All-China Journalists Association (ACJA) that made the NPC a member of the broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China. I made it a point that officials of the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) and the Chinese Embassy were among the witnesses to make the ceremony ‘semi-official.’

“Aware of how Western Imperialism and their local cohorts manipulate the Philippine mainstream media, in May 2020 and even as the COVID-19 pandemic rages, I established Pinoy Exposé, primarily as an avenue to counter Western propaganda and help promote the views of China knowing they represent the truth in any issue as well as other articles that promote global peace, common prosperity, and understanding.”

This year, the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes all efforts and contributions made by Paul Gutierrez through his craft, not only in facilitating a greater awareness of the historical ties between the Philippines and China but promoting every aspect of strengthening their friendly and brotherly relations.

**PINOY EXPOSE**  
Vol. 1 No. 5 • June 15-21, 2020

**COVID-19 savages BOC**

**COVID-19 CRISIS**  
As of June 12, 2020 (4:00 PM)

	Confirmed Cases Today	Total
Confirmed cases	615	24,787
Deaths	16	1,052
Recoveries	289	5,454

615 confirmed cases vs 4 pm  
Fresh Cases = 336  
Late Cases = 279  
Total Confirmed = 615

**CHINA FREEZES DEBT PAYMENT**  
77 countries to benefit  
Story on page 2

**Droga 'bumabaha' pa rin P2.5 BILYON SHABU HULI NG PNP SA CAVITE**  
basahin sa page 4



## **PROF. CAVIN FRANCO PAMINTUAN**

Devoted language teacher and educator Cavin Franco Pamintuan has already achieved much personally and professionally. Now almost 30 years old, Cavin is currently the Philippine Director of the Confucius Institute at the Angeles University Foundation, which he has held since May 2019. Like anyone else, his career had its humble beginnings when he first worked for the Superl Philippines Incorporated as a Bilingual Practitioner from April to September 2013. This led to his employment at the Confucius Institute of Angeles University Foundation as a faculty member from 2015 through 2017. This opportunity proved to be an early breakthrough in his career and profession. From a faculty member, Cavin then served as the Institute's Administrative Officer for a year from 2017 to 2018, and later as Assistant Director from 2018 to 2019 before he was appointed Philippine Director.

Born and raised in Angeles, Pampanga, Cavin completed his secondary education at the Holy Angel University. He pursued an undergraduate degree for the Bachelor of Secondary Education in Filipino and Chinese Language Teaching at the Angeles University Foundation and successfully graduated in 2013 Cum Laude. Immediately after graduation, Cavin pursued his graduate studies, obtaining his Master's in Teaching Chinese Speakers of Other Languages in 2015 and a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management degree in 2022.

As an educator, Cavin has been actively involved in advocacies to promote the Chinese language and the culture of the Philippines in secondary schools. He has been a member of the Philippines-China Friendship Club (PCFC) and has written and published a number of researches and resource materials. Among these educational resources include *Bukal ng mga Kasanayan sa Filipino: Panitikan ng Rehiyonal*, a textbook published by Ibong Adarna; *Reading Comprehension Strategy Use in Filipino and Chinese among Chinese Language Teaching Scholars of Angeles University Foundation* published in TESOL Online Journal; *The Use of WeChat Application on CLT Scholars' Vocabulary Acquisition* (2018) published in TESOL International Journal; *The Students' Perceptions on Mandarin Classes and their HSK (Chinese Proficiency Test) Results* (2019), in *The Asian ESP Journal*; *A Communicative Analysis of Language Functions in the Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) Textbooks: The Case of Happy Chinese* (2020) in the *Universal Journal of Education Research*; and *Reducing the Impacts of Pandemic to the Chinese Language Education through Localization* (2021) in the *International Journal of Language Education*.

Apart from his full-time career as Philippine Director of the Confucius Institute in Angeles, Pampanga, Cavin has also been engaged in local and international consultancy and advocacy works. These include participation and serving as Resource Speaker at the 5th National Conference on Teaching Chinese Mandarin as a Foreign Language organized by the Department of Education in January 2016; as Trainer for the 2016 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Summer Training Program by the Department of Education from March to April 2016; as Resource Speaker at the 6th National Conference on Teaching Chinese Mandarin as a Foreign Language in July 2017; as Representative for the Sub-Forum on Volunteers for Chinese Teachers during Connectivity and Benefit-Sharing between China and Southeast Asia held in Fujian, China in November 2017; as Consultant for the Development of Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL) Curriculum Guides for Grades 7-12 in October 2017; as Resource Speaker in the Special Program in Foreign Language National Conference in December 2017; as Consultant to the Consultative Workshop for the Special Program in Foreign Language in February 2018; as Resource Speaker at the Orientation on Special Program in Foreign Language Curriculum Guides, and the 7th National Conference on Teaching Chinese Mandarin as a Foreign Language in October 2018; as Representative to the Joint Conference of Confucius Institutes in Southeast Asia held in Laos in November 2018, and to the 2019 International Chinese Language Education Conference held in Changsha in 2019.





His recent professional engagements include participation as Resource Speaker to an online forum on How to Effectively Use SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Learning Modules organized by the Department of Education in October 2020; as Resource Speaker to The 1st International Seminar on Chinese Language Education 2020 organized by the Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia in November 2020; as Consultant to the Webinar Workshops on the Special Interest Program (SIP) Principles and Guidelines in November 2020; as Resource Speaker to the “Pillar 4: Systems” of the Internationalization Roadmap, and the Sino-foreign Joint Development of Native Chinese Teachers Training in November and December 2020 respectively; as Consultant and Resource Speaker to the Workshops on the Development of ADM Prototype Self-Learning Modules for SPFL, and Online Training-Workshop on Development of Supplemental Learning Materials for SPFL in August 2021; as Consultant to the Workshops on the Validation of ADM Prototype Self-Learning Modules for SPFL, and the Workshops on the Finalization of ADM Prototype Self-Learning Modules for SPFL in October and November 2021 respectively.

This year, the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes Cavin Pamintuan for his dedication and advocacies, particularly in teaching and promoting the Chinese language among fellow educators and secondary students, which is deemed relevant in broadening and strengthening cultural exchanges and ties between Philippines and China.







## PROF. CELSO L. CAINGLET

A vocal academician, and public intellectual, Professor Celso L. Cainglet has been very straightforward with his positions in socio-political discourses. With a background in Philosophy and a Master's Degree in Applied Ethics obtained with honors (Cum Laude) at the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium, Prof. Cainglet deserves every right to Communication Expert and Strategic Analyst titles.

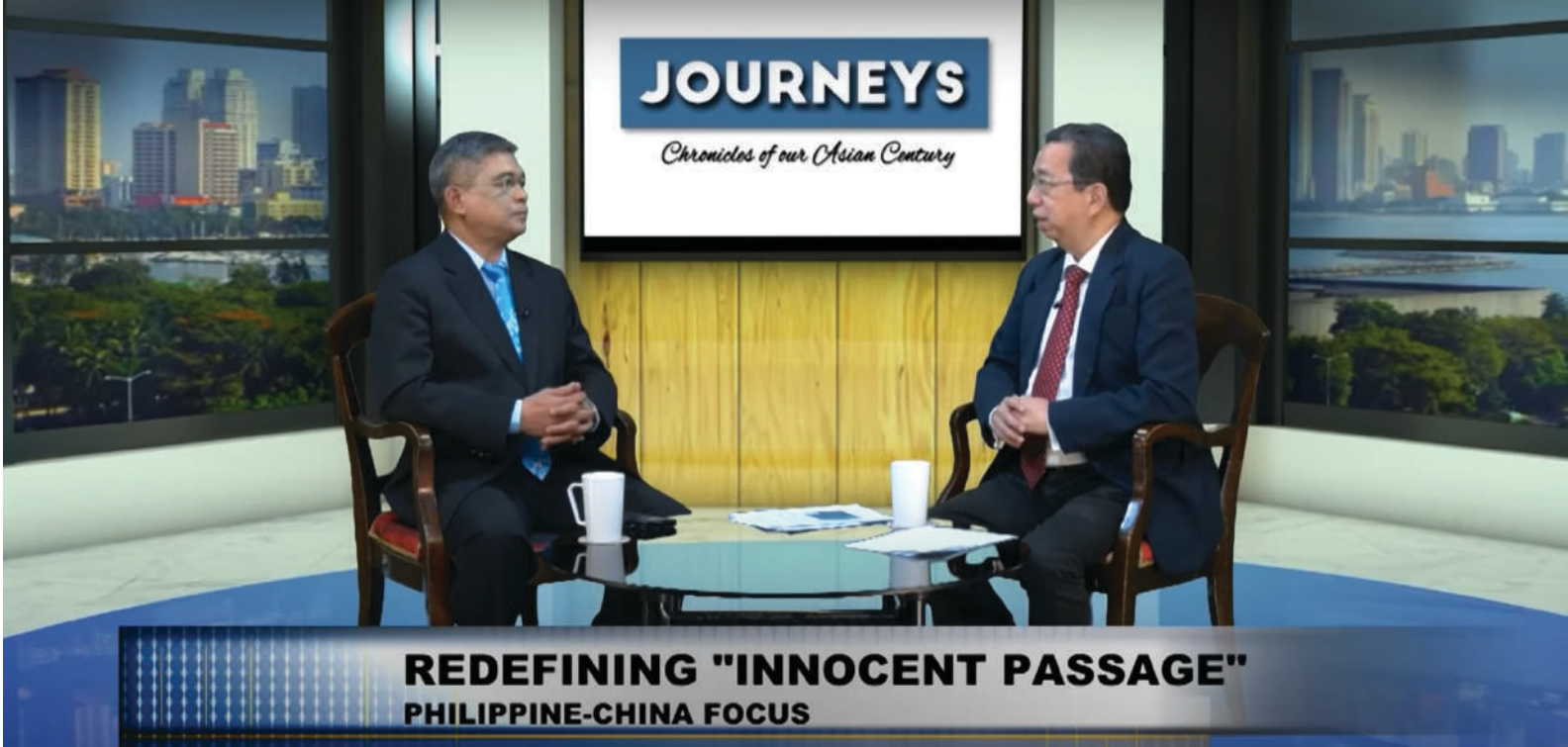
As a Strategic Communication Expert, he has been known for his success and contributions in creating and delivering communication training, tools, programs, guidelines, and evaluations for government agencies, private companies, and corporations. As an academician and a public intellectual, he has not only rendered services as a tri-media consultant, editor, and socio-political analyst

with a long list of publications in newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals; but more importantly, he has been very dynamic with his views primarily where matters of International Relations are concerned, such as the issues on the West Philippine Sea.

His career and professional life may be described as largely academic, serving as a faculty member in various Universities, Colleges, and Institutes in the country to the present day. His experiences include serving as Instructor, and as a research and technical apprentice at the Institute for Social Research and Development of the University of Saint La Salle in Bacolod City from 1989 to 1991; as Lecturer in De La Salle University-Manila, handling courses on Ethics of Peace, War in International Relations, from 1990 to 1991; as Course Director and Instructor on Military Ethics, and Literature at the Philippine Military Academy from 1991 thru 1995; as a Lecturer on Military Ethics, and Literature at the Philippine National Police Academy from 2002 to 2003; as Lecturer at the Saint Thomas of Villanova Institute in Quezon City from 2006 to 2007; as a Lay Professor at the San Carlos Seminary in Makati, handling courses on Ancient Greek and Medieval Philosophy, and Philosophy of Science, from 1998 thru 2012; Lecturer in the Armed Forces of the Philippines Civil Relations Services; and as Academic Supervisor and Faculty in the Philosophy Department of the University of San Agustin in Iloilo from 2019 to 2020.



Currently, Prof. Cainglet is serving as Philosophy Professor at the University of the Philippines Visayas.



Apart from the academe, his government and consultancy services engagements are equally inspiring. Over the years, he has held important positions in both public and the private sectors, namely as Head Exec. Assistant and Program Director of the National Council on Food Security and Jobs Creation from 2003 to 2004; Executive Director of Global Filipinos from 2004 to 2006; Secretary for Special Concerns in the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus in 2004; Correspondence Director at the Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines from 2008 to 2010; and as Senior Analyst and Assistant Editor in Chief of the Center for Strategy, Enterprise and Intelligence (CENSEI E-Newspaper) in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila in 2012, to name a few.

Other relevant engagements include consultancy services for various government agencies and offices, including the Office of the former Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez, in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources from 2001 to 2002; for the same office at the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Overseas Filipino Communities from 2003 to 2004; Office of the Undersecretary for Transportation, Department of Transportation and Communications from 2004 to 2005; consultant of the Philippine Coast Guard from 2005 to 2007; as Management Consultant for NAGACACORP in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 2013 to 2014; and the Office of the House Speaker of the Philippine Congress from 2019 to 2020. Prof. Cainglet renders consultancy services for the Committee on National Defense of the Philippine Congress.

Given his humble but truly inspiring background and experience, Prof. Celso Cainglet is recognized by the Award for Promoting Philippine–China Understanding (APPCU) for his vocal expression and potent stance in promoting better ties, understanding, friendship, and cooperation with China as a neighbor in Asia, particularly on issues involving the West Philippine Sea and the eastern parts of the South China Sea. For him, there are valuable lessons to be learned from the experiences of Taiwan and Vietnam, especially where international diplomacy is essential. Accordingly, while there may be disputes on territorial claims, as a nation, Filipinos must not be stuck with this discourse as there are other aspects that require immediate attention, such as enabling the economy to thrive for the good and benefit of the majority.





## **APRIL MARIE C. DAYAP**

A civil servant by heart, April Marie Dayap, has been actively engaged in various community works and advocacies to extend aid and support to fellow Filipinos. Born and raised in Davao, she completed her secondary education at the Assumption College of Davao. She has an undergraduate degree in Economics obtained from the Holy Cross of Davao College and a Master's in Business Administration degree obtained from the Ateneo de Davao University.

She is a former city councilor who served for three terms and is now the Davao City Investment and Promotion Center (DCIPC) chief. DCIPC is the first investment promotion unit operating in the country, created through City Ordinance No. 2017 or the Davao City Investment Incentive Code of 1994. The Center is mandated to assist in the growth and development of the city's economy.

As DCIP's Head, April Dayap, who officially took over the office on July 1, 2019, plans to come up with a strategic plan to bring more investors to the city. She also vowed to develop a more aggressive investment promotion program for the city to become a foreign and local investment destination.

April Dayap served the City Council for 14 years. During her 14 years in public service, she was an ex-officio member, the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Federation president for five years, and a nine-year second district councilor. Since 2010, she has served as the City Councilor of the 2nd Congressional District of the City Government of Davao and the Chairperson of the Committee on Cooperatives and Peoples Participation. In 2012, she served as the Member Champion of the Kaya Natin Movement. During her term as councilor from 2013 to 2016, she served as the National Assistant Secretary-General of the National Movement for Young Legislators; and from 2016 to 2019, she became the Executive Vice President of the National Movement for Young Legislator until the end of her term.

Perhaps far from the knowledge of many Filipinos outside of Davao, China and Davao City established a partnership fifteen years ago. The partnership, referred to as the sisterhood cities agreement/pact, aimed at making Davao a chief trading partner of China mainly to boost its already thriving local economy. Among the first sister cities to partner with Davao was the city of Nanning in Guangxi, China, which was signed in 2007 by then-Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte. Later, Mayor Sarah Duterte-Carpio formally established another sisterhood agreement with Jinjian, Fujian, in 2018 to foster bilateral cultural and economic exchange and promote tourism between the two cities.

As Chief of the Davao City Investment and Promotion Center (DCIPC), April Dayap continues to forge closer ties with China through a new sisterhood agreement between the City of Davao and Chongqing City in China. Through her efforts and excellent performance and with the support and hard work of the city's public officials, some Chinese Officials tagged Davao City as the best partner for trade, investment, and people-to-people exchanges. Davao and Chinese officials are also hoping to establish another sisterhood agreement between Sanya of Hainan and Davao City.







It is also worthy to mention that April Marie Dayap, in the performance of her duties as then-City Councilor and currently as Head of the Davao City Investment and Promotion Center (DCIP), has contributed much to the advancement of Davao's and China's bilateral relations, commerce and trade, friendship and mutual understanding. These efforts, which she earnestly began even when she was still in the legislature, have resulted in major partnerships and collaborations between China and Davao City.

She believes in the vision of her former Local Chief Executives, former Mayor and current Philippine President, Rodrigo R. Duterte, and current Mayor Sara Z. Duterte, in that she sees the relationship of Davao City with other sister cities in China as quite beneficial, not only during the economic boom but more so, in the time of health crisis like the pandemic. The sister cities supported the local government in its coronavirus (COVID-19) response, pointing out that the Chinese sister cities were very prompt in sending the needed medical and personal protective equipment.

This year, the Awards for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU) recognizes all efforts made by April Marie Dayap, not only in serving as an instrument for the strengthening of the sisterhood cities pact between China and Davao but, more importantly, in facilitating a renewed view and appreciation of the Chinese people among fellow Filipinos. Like her former Local Executive Chiefs, April shares this same view that such openness to work in partnership with the Chinese is a key to the progress and development of Davao City and the Philippines in its entirety.



# THE AWARDS FOR PROMOTING PHILIPPINES-CHINA UNDERSTANDING



The Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding or APPCU is a joint undertaking spearheaded by the Association for Philippines-China Understanding (APCU) and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of the Philippines. It is a novel award-giving body that pays special tribute to Filipinos who have made efforts through time in strengthening friendly ties and promoting mutual understanding between the Philippines and China using their respective advocacies and expertise in the various fields and disciplines of mass media and public service; trade and commerce; and arts, culture, and the sciences.

APPCU was launched on January 16, 2021 when State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and former Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo jointly attended the inauguration of the Manila Forum for China-Philippines Relations via video link. The basic rationale behind the launching of APPCU is to actively continue the efforts of promoting friendship between China and the Philippines and to enhance people-to-people exchanges, noting that amity between people holds the key to sound state-to-state relations.

Essentially, the award looks for people who made a mark and contributed much effort through time in the improvement and advancement of Philippines-China bilateral friendly relations and understanding. The award, in essence, promotes the spirit of friendship and understanding between the Philippines and China.

APPCU is an annual undertaking and each year, 10 laureates will be chosen.

Those who are eligible for the awards are Filipino citizens who have committed themselves to the improvement and advancement of Philippines-China bilateral relations using their fields of disciplines and areas of expertise.



APPCU has three (3) award categories. These are:

- The Hall of Fame category which acknowledges the prestige and stature of the individual, and the immense effort of work the individual has done over time as evidenced by the extent of reach, impact, and reception of the work(s) by communities and societies.
- The Outstanding Contributions category which recognizes individuals of lesser prominence but has nonetheless made notable contributions in promoting and strengthening Philippines-China bilateral relations, friendship, cooperation, and understanding.
- The Major Contributions category which recognizes the works of individuals whose works have a growing reach and impact on the lives of specific groups or communities of people at the grassroots level.

All APPCU nominees undergo three rounds of the selection process such as the (1) preliminary or the elimination round; (2) second round of judging; (3) and the third and final round.

The winners of APPCU will receive a trophy or a plaque of recognition, and a certificate. Prize money, on the other hand, will be given to each of the awardees for the Outstanding Contributions and Major Contributions categories. APPCU awardees will be formally recognized in an award ceremony.



APPCU is also in many ways a commemoration of the “Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day” and the day when the formal diplomatic ties and relations were established between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China on June 9, 1975.

# THE ASSOCIATION FOR PHILIPPINES-CHINA UNDERSTANDING (APCU)



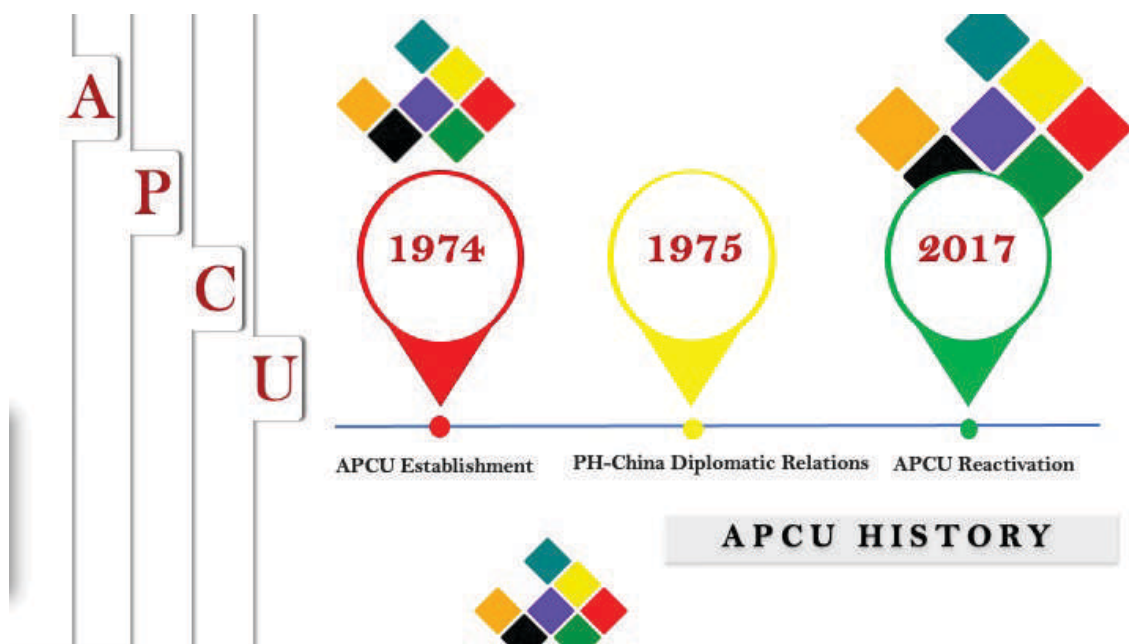
APCU is the pioneer and leading non-government organization (NGO) in the Philippines that promotes people-to-people diplomacy, bilateral understanding, and friendship between the Philippines and China through (a) cultural, academic, and visit exchanges; (b) sisterhood between Philippine Local Government Units (LGUs) and Chinese LGUs; and (c) economic and trade cooperation and partnership.

As an organization and advocacy group, APCU was instrumental and pivotal in facilitating the establishment and strengthening of the official diplomatic ties between the Philippines and China on June 9, 1975.

The association started as an informal group of Chinese friends in 1972 organized to coordinate aid and assistance from the People's Republic of China for the victims of a destructive flood that struck Central Luzon at that time. China had no diplomatic relations with the Philippines at the state level during that time, thus, cooperative efforts between the two countries were coursed through people-to-people relations and ties.

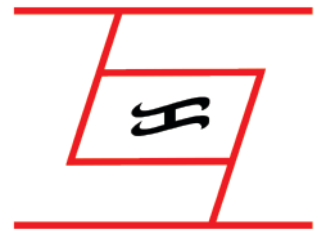
From this experience, the group expanded to include other progressive artists, businessmen, journalists, civic leaders, and academics. Eventually, in 1974, APCU was set up and registered as an NGO with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

As part of its programs/projects, it organized study and cultural visits to China. It also staged various projects like fora, symposia and came up with newsletters launched to promote bilateral understanding, cooperation, and friendship between the two countries. These projects and activities notably preceded the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and China.





# THE ASSOCIATION FOR PHILIPPINES-CHINA UNDERSTANDING (APCU)



In 2017, APCU was reactivated under the leadership of one of its founding members, former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who is the Chairman Emeritus of the organization. APCU is currently under the leadership of Chairman and Secretary Raul L. Lambino and its President Jeffrey Ng. APCU has regional chapters in Baguio, Cebu, Davao, Angeles City, and Pangasinan.

The Association is very active in the conduct of the APCU Forum, which is a platform for a constructive conversation on current bilateral issues among policy and thought leaders, experts, and stakeholders to foster friendship, understanding, and cooperation. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the association has also facilitated cultural, academic, and visit exchanges; economic, trade cooperation and partnership.

Last year (2021), APCU launched two important projects that further help promote mutual understanding, friendship, and cooperation between the two countries and peoples. These are the Manila Forum for China-Philippines Relations and the Award for Promoting Philippines-China Understanding (APPCU).



**"CHINA'S APPROACH TO MODERNIZATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS"**  
**Speaker: PROF. ZHANG WEIWEI**  
 Director of the China Institute at Fudan University  
 Top Scholar on China & International Politics

**Message**  
**PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**  
 Chairman Emeritus of APCU

**Opening Remarks**  
**AMB. HUANG XILIAN**  
 Ambassador of China to the Philippines

Meeting ID: 297 771 4088  
 Passcode: MNLFORUM

2<sup>nd</sup> MANILA FORUM FOR PHILIPPINES- CHINA RELATIONS  
 SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, Thursday | 3: 00 PM via ZOOM



**"HAND IN HAND FOR A STRONGER AND REINFORCED CHINA - PHILIPPINES FRIENDSHIP"**  
**Keynote Address: H.E. WANG YI**  
 State Councilor and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China

**Welcome Remarks**  
**FORMER PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**  
 Chairman Emeritus, APCU

**Speaker**  
**FU YING**  
 Vice Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of China's 13th National People's Congress  
 Former Vice Foreign Minister and Former Ambassador to the Philippines

Meeting ID: 297 771 4088  
 Passcode: MNLFORUM

5<sup>th</sup> MANILA FORUM FOR PHILIPPINES- CHINA RELATIONS  
 January 17, 2022, MONDAY | 3PM via ZOOM



## ASSOCIATION FOR PHILIPPINES-CHINA UNDERSTANDING (APCU)

### Enhancing Understanding & Cooperation between China and ASEAN Countries Under RCEP: Gains, Potentials, & Challenges

#### Speakers



**Atty. Allan Gepty**  
 Assistant Secretary, Industry Development and Trade Policy Group (IDTPG)  
 Department of Trade and Industry



**Dr. Theresa Chong Cariño**  
 Senior Research Consultant  
 The Amity Foundation

#### Reactor



**Dr. Henry Lim Bon Liong**  
 FFCCCII President  
 Business & Civic Leader  
 CEO of Sterling Paper Group &  
 Founder of SL Agritech

#### APCU Forum

April 21, 2022 (Thursday)

3:00 PM

Zoom Meeting ID: 297 771 4088

Passcode: APCU1974



**Prof. Anna Malindog-Uy**  
 Moderator

Official Media Partner

**The Manila Times®**

# APCU OFFICERS, APPCU COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND CONTACT INFORMATION

## APCU Officers:

**FORMER PRESIDENT GLORIA M. ARROYO**

Chairman Emeritus

**SEC. RAUL L. LAMBINO**

Chairman

**MR. SIXTO T. BENEDICTO**

First Vice– Chairman

**GEN. VICTOR N. CORPUS**

Second Vice-Chairman

**MR. JEFFREY T. NG**

President

**MR. RAYMUNDO T. ROQUERO**

Executive Vice-President

**MR. FELIX GUANZON**

Vice-President, Internal Affairs

**ATTY. PERCIVAL B. PERALTA**

Secretary-General

**MR. PETER T. LAVIÑA**

Deputy Secretary-General

**GEN. FERNANDO C. PACE**

Treasurer

**MRS. MAFEE HUNG CAI**

Youth Committee Head

**MR. FELIX GUANZON**

Membership Committee Head

**CONGW. CATALINA L. PIZARRO**

Ways and Means Committee Head

**MR. JOAQUIN SY**

Information Committee Head

**PROF. GABRIEL MA. J. LOPEZ, PH.D**

Entrepreneurship

## SECRETARIAT

**MR. JOSE T. ARCE, JR.**

Executive Director

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 [@associationforphilippineschinaunderstanding](https://www.facebook.com/associationforphilippineschinaunderstanding)

### Chinese Embassy-Manila:

Tel. 0063-2-8443148 local 101 for operator

Fax. 0063-2-8439974 (Political Section)

0063-2-8452465 (Administrative Office)

Add: 4896 Pasay Road, Dasmarinas Village,  
Makati City, Metro Manila,  
Republic of the Philippines.

## APPCU Committee Members

Chair: Mr. Sixto Benedicto

Vice-Chair: Anna Malindog-Uy

Spokesperson: Mr. Peter Laviña

Counselor Xie Yonghui

Jeffrey T. Ng

Atty. Perceival B. Peralta

Gen. Fernando Pace

Wu Chenqi

Jose T. Arce Jr.

Raven Jobelle Florante

## Researchers:

Jermaine Jardin Collantes

Jenny Beb Magarao



AWARD FOR PROMOTING  
PHILIPPINES-CHINA UNDERSTANDING  
中菲相知奖