

# Chamber of Commerce and Industry Australia Philippines Inc

## Annual General Meeting

3 October 2011

The Coffee Club, Park Road, Milton, Queensland, Australia

### President's Report

#### Introduction

Good evening. It is my great pleasure to welcome you all at our 10th Annual General Meeting since our organisation became a Chamber of Commerce.

It is my utmost privilege to preside at this AGM and be the Chamber's President at this 10<sup>th</sup> year celebration.

#### The year in review

The year 2011 has started to be a very challenging year for 70% of Queenslanders who have been affected by the summer floods and typhoon Yasi. Indeed, these had caused tragedy after tragedy from our mountain ranges, to our agricultural fields, to our mining regions, to the outback, up to the far north causing deaths and massive destruction to nature and to infrastructure.

After these unfortunate lashings of mother nature, the generosity and kindness of the Queensland community kept our spirits up, assisting the victims and with the clean up. Indeed, here in Queensland, we were built tough!

The rebuilding starts as soon as the water subsided, but for most, there is a long way to recovery. It will take years to repair the psyche of a community beyond the reconstruction and rebuilding efforts currently underway.

Despite the challenging start of the year, your Chamber kept up with its activities and commitments:

- First Mondays Networking Events
  - Through the monthly First Mondays Networking, the Chamber continues to conduct regular information sessions, networking and business leads events (Objectives 1 & 3). These were as follows:

October 2010	Educational series on the basics of trademark and intellectual property protection. <i>Presenter: Glen Paoletto, Principal, Trademark Central.</i>
November 2010	Travel tips to the Philippines. <i>Presenters: Teresa Keating, Principal, TourFlair; Robert Graham, Principal, All about Asia; and Glenn Johns, Partner, All about Asia.</i>
December 2010	Chamber Christmas Party on 3 Dec 2010 at the Qld Lions Club.
January 2011	New Year Public holiday.
February 2011	Information session on the Asia Pacific Cities Summit (6-8 July 2011) to be hosted by Brisbane. <i>Presenter: Barry Hancock, International Relations Manager, Office of the Lord Mayor</i>
March 2011	Launch of CCIAP-National Australia Bank (NAB) Partnership and Benefits Program and information session on Small Business Financing: A Guide to the Application Process. <i>Presenters: James Marsh (Host), NAB Branch Manager Toowong; Terence</i>

	<i>Woo, Banking Adviser, NAB Toowong; and, Paul Smoothy, Small and Emerging Business Banker, NAB Toowong.</i>
April 2011	Launch of 2011 Brisbane Mabuhay Festival. <i>Presenter: Riza Clout, Vice President</i>
May 2011	Hosted 19 Fellows from the Australian Leadership Awards from Mindanao visiting Brisbane accompanied by ACPET's CEO Kay Ganley.
June 2011	Educational series on importing topic covering "the essential on importing for business". <i>Presenter: Michael Watson, Supervisor (Targeted Compliance), Compliance and Trade Unit, Australian Customs &amp; Border Protection Service.</i>
July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing session on Australia and Philippine Trade and Investment, a briefing on the outcome of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Philippines-Australia Ministerial Meeting Business Dialogue held in Canberra on 16 June 2011. <i>Presenter: Connie da Cunha, CCIAP President</i></li> <li>• Educational series on the Philippine Business Culture, Etiquettes and Protocols. <i>Presenter: Connie da Cunha</i></li> </ul>
August 2011	Educational series on business model design and achieving successful business outcomes. Areas of focus: Management, Marketing and Growth. <i>Presenter: Business Guru Travis Windsor, Principal, ThinkBiz</i>
September 2011	Educational series on financial markets and trends during turbulent times and, securing personal financing. <i>Presenters: James Marsh (Host), NAB Branch Manager Toowong; and Terence Woo, Banking Adviser, NAB Toowong.</i>

- Participation at the 36<sup>th</sup> Philippine Business Conference and Expo, 13-15 Oct 2010 (Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4)
  - As a response to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry invitation, seven CCIAP members attended the 3 days conference held at Manila Hotel. The theme of the Conference was One. Global Filipino. Creating Synergy for Competitiveness. President Benigno Aquino III, had delivered his keynote address on "*Transparency and Accountability: The Governance Agenda in Enhancing the Philippines' Competitiveness as Investment Destination*". Lots of opportunities for CCIAP delegates to learn new government priorities/agenda and to network and meet new contacts.
- 2010 Mabuhay Festival (Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4)
  - The successful inauguration of the Mabuhay Festival on 14 November at the Southbank Parklands attracted thousands of people to learn about and experience the Philippine culture and cuisine. For members of the Filipino community, it is time to cure their "home sickness".
  - I would like to credit the success of the Festival to Riza Clout, our Vice President whose leadership during the planning, preparation and execution of the Festival is commendable. She steered us volunteers on track and kept us motivated when the going gets tough. Thank you Riza and Dan for your efforts and commitment.
- Philippine Business Opportunities Seminar (Objectives 2, 3 & 4)

- Ross Bray, Senior Trade Commissioner, Austrade Manila and I had joined our efforts to facilitate this Seminar in Brisbane on 18 May 2011. The Seminar was to give participants with an update on the latest developments in the broad Philippine economic environment, business culture and insights into where the market is heading; identify new sectoral opportunities for business and investment; and, receive information on the upcoming Philippine Australia New Zealand Joint Business Forum to be held from 12-14 July in Manila. The Forum was cancelled but will be proceeding in February 2012. Please watch our website for details.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Philippines – Australia Ministerial Meeting Business Dialogue (Objectives 2, 3 & 4)
  - On behalf of the Chamber, I have participated on the PAMM Business Dialogue in Canberra on 16 June 2011. A briefing session to the Chamber members followed shortly giving insights on the trade and investment opportunities for Australian businesses. Please do not hesitate to contact me for a copy of the briefing presentation.
- Education Economic Zones (Objective 2, 3 & 4)
  - CCIAP and MAP are working collaboratively to promote the Education Economic Zones (EEZ). EEZ is a platform for government, industry and academe private-public partnership in State Universities and Colleges. The business model for EEZ is following the Stanford University’s Silicon Valley concept where government, universities and industry sectors converged to stimulate economic activities with very successful outcomes, such as the like of Google, Hewlett Packard and Sun Microsystems.
  - Facilitated by myself and Oscar Torralba from MAP and CHED, we presented the EEZ to Rod Smith, Australian Ambassador to the Philippines at the Australian Embassy and to Austrade Manila.
  - EEZ will bring significant opportunities and benefits to Australian companies currently in the Philippines and those who are considering expanding their market base in the Philippines and in Asia.

### **The First 10 years**

I can proudly report at this 10<sup>th</sup> AGM that because of the dedication, commitment and hard work of members and several sets of Executive Committee, your Chamber is as strong as ever, as capable as it has never been and has earned a reputation both in Australia and in the Philippines, as the Chamber that “gets things done”.

Over the past ten years, your Chamber was in the forefront of advancing and promoting local Filipino Australian businesses and professionals; promoting trade and international businesses between Australia and the Philippines through trade missions, business forums and direct business to business referrals. Our First Mondays Networking Events, now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, have been very popular. Our signature event, the Mabuhay Festival is fast becoming a premier multicultural event that will promote the contribution of the Filipino community here in Queensland and will position the Philippines as a destination for trade, investment and tourism.

I commend the efforts of the past and present members of the Executive Committee as you have served the Chamber well in its first 10 years.

I also would like to make a special mention of appreciation to Mr. Oscar Torralba for his help and encouragement in navigating the very complex corporate and government affairs in the Philippines. Oscar continues to be our important partner in building relationships with captains and leaders of industries and governments in the Philippines.

I would like to give my heartfelt gratitude to my husband Jorge for his support and patience for all the 10 years that I have been with the Chamber. He is my confidante, my sounding board, the shoulder to lean on during tough times and my best friend patiently listening and giving his counsel without judgement.

## **Conclusion**

The diversity of CCIAP members makes our Chamber richer.

Each CCIAP President had their own leadership style and each had left their unique mark, making our Chamber what it is today, an organisation that we can be proud of.

The diversity of our Executive Committee members who run the day to day operation of our Chamber, and the diversity of our membership base make our Chamber so much richer and an envy of some organisations.

Being a Member of CCIAP, is a badge of honour. Let us keep it that way.

In the first 10 years, with the sweat and commitment by our past leaders and volunteers, the building blocks were laid; the pathways cemented and the road map into the future was drawn.

With these and looking forward in the next ten years, I am very confident of the future of our Chamber. A future where we can continue to achieve our vision of a “Commerce with no barriers”; where we could be confident that we have directly contributed to the prosperity of our fellow Australians and fellow Filipinos; where we could aspire to whoever we wish to be; and to each of us, to be an inspiration to all.

Let our deeds today be the catalyst of true change, now and in the future.

I move that this Report be accepted.

**Connie da Cunha**  
**President (2010-2011)**