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Secretary Jesus Dureza Holds Town Hall Meeting in New York



Secretary Jesus Dureza and members of Fil-Am community and media during the town hall meeting in New York. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

26 April 2018, New York – Presidential Adviser on Peace Process Jesus Dureza held an engaging dialogue with members of the Filipino-American media and Fil-Am community in New York at a town hall meeting organized by the Philippine Consulate General on 25 April 2018 at the Philippine Center’s Kalayaan Hall.

Keeping the participants abreast of the peace process developments in the country, Secretary Dureza informed the group that the Philippine government is committed to sitting down with rebel groups in trying to find a convergence point or common ground, not in the context of surrender, but in bridging divides among differing ideologies. He cautioned, however, that signing a peace agreement is not the measure of success that peace has been achieved. He emphasized that it is only one of the milestones and it is where the arduous work of attaining the long-elusive peace begins.

Noting the lessons learned from previous failed peace talks, Secretary Dureza added that the Philippine government is now working on an inclusive approach for peace, where concerns of all stakeholders – whether they are peaceful citizens or those who have taken up arms - are to be taken into consideration during the negotiations. He said that the Philippine Government is likewise stepping up its catch up efforts to reach out to other rebel groups in depressed areas.

For more information, visit www.newyorkkpcg.org and www.facebook.com/PHConsulateNY



Secretary Dureza answers Fil-Am community's questions about probability of success of peace process during Q&A. (Photos by Lambert Parong and New York PCG)

Secretary Dureza encouraged potential investors to invest for peace in the Philippines, particularly in conflict areas such as Mindanao, citing that the investment will bring about development and relative peace to people in the area. He underscored that unlike the “chicken and egg” dilemma, peace and development must come together, saying “you cannot have peace if there is no development; and you cannot sustain development unless there is peace.”

At the end of the meeting, Secretary Dureza recognized the time and effort given by the participants in attending the forum which is a testament to their strong resolve to work for peace. The participants took a pledge to be Ambassadors of Peace in their community, helping the Philippine government in the daunting task of promoting awareness of the Philippine peace process. More information about Peace Ambassadors can be found on OPAPP's website at <https://peace.gov.ph/programs/ppa/>.

Consul Arman R. Talbo, the Philippine Consulate General's Political Officer, moderated the town hall meeting. END

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