

DSWD heads ASEAN new pillar launch in PH

MarQuee Mall, Angeles City– As the national government agency mandated to promote the social welfare of the Filipino people, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) led yesterday's national launch of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC).

"Ito angmagbibigay ng kulay, musika, himig, at ng malasakitsabuong ASEAN, (This will bring color, voice, hymn, and empathy to the entire ASEAN)" said Secretary Judy M. Taguiwalo as she pertained to the ASCC as the third and the newest pillar of the inter-governmental organization in Southeast Asia. The two other pillars of ASEAN include political security and economic integration.

Primarily, ASCC aims to bring about a people-oriented and socially responsible ASEAN. It focuses on cultivating and preserving the human, cultural, and natural resources of member nations to achieve sustained development.

"The ASCC represents the social services and cultural arms of the government, and the vulnerable sectors of the society," added Taguiwalo in her keynote speech. Taguiwalo also stressed that the launching of the third pillar was held in public to increase awareness on the purpose and meaning of ASEAN. She even introduced the idea of including ASEAN in the education curriculum and raising ASEAN's flag beside the Philippine flag.

Taguiwalo also announced that the 2017 ASEAN summit will take place on November in Clarkfield, Pampanga.

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Executive Director Zaldy Patron and ASEAN National Organizing Council (NOC) Ambassador Marciano Paynor attended the event along with other notable

government leaders. Different societal sectors such as persons with disability (PWD), elderly, indigenous people, farmers, fisher folks, youth, women, and solo parents were also recognized and applauded in the event.

The ASEAN was ratified and founded on August 8, 1967 with the Philippines as one of the founding nations along with Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. After 50 years, the organization is now hailed as one of the most successful inter-governmental organizations worldwide. ### (Ma. Dennielle M. Lomboy)