

PHL Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III Leads the Celebration of Migrant Workers' Day in Germany



Secretary Bello delivers his remarks during the Migrant Workers Day in Germany

The celebration of Migrant Workers' Day in Berlin, Germany was led by no less than Philippine Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III, together with PHL Overseas Workers Welfare Administrator Hans Cacdac and other DOLE Officials.

In his remarks, Secretary Bello highlighted the Duterte Administration's accomplishments that benefit migrant workers. He proudly spoke about the establishment of the OFW Bank and the OFW Hospital. *"Napakaganda po ng OFW Hospital, at ito ay hindi lamang bukas para sa inyong mga OFWs kung di para sa inyong mga dependents din. Free of charge."* he said.

Secretary Bello also shared the experience of officials of the Department of Labor, its attached agencies, as well as other partner departments, during the pandemic. He shared stories of sleepless nights and labor personnel themselves falling ill of COVID-19 during their repatriation of more than a million overseas Filipino workers -- a testament to the commitment of the Philippine government to protect Filipino workers all over the world.

Secretary Bello also spoke about the expansion of Philippines-Germany cooperation in healthcare and employment, citing the conclusion of two instruments that were earlier signed by officials of both countries. One of them is an MOU which further facilitates the entry to Germany of Filipino nurses and other healthcare professionals such as physiotherapists, radiographers and occupational therapists.

“Today, we reached another milestone... sa pamamagitan ng Memorandum of Understanding na ito, isa na namang daan ang nabuksan para makapunta ang ating healthcare workers dito sa Germany – it will complement the Triple Win Project.” The Triple Win Project is a landmark government-to-government agreement signed by both countries in 2013.

Secretary Bello also referred to the instrument which seeks to broaden the two countries’ partnership to include professions and skills other than nursing. He shared that the initial set of skills and professions being considered are electronics and electrical mechanics, plumbers, pipe fitters, cooks, waiters and hotel receptionists.

“Sa lahat po ng ito, nagpapasalamat ang gobyerno natin sa inyong mga OFWs sa inyong patuloy na pagtulong sa ating bayan sa pamamagitan ng inyong remittances na umabot sa halos 35 billion US Dollars o humigit kumulang sa sampung porsyento ng GDP ng ating bansa. Napakalaki ng tulong ninyo sa bayan, lalo na nang nagka-pandemya.” he said.



Left: Administrator Hans Leo Cacdac provided updates on the services offered by OWWA and its accomplishments in the previous years. He encouraged the audience to download the OWWA app for ease in renewal of membership. **Right:** Chargé d'affaires, a.i. Lilibeth Pono spoke about the contributions of migrant workers to Philippine development and stressed that the protection of the rights and the promotion of the welfare of migrant workers is a pillar of Philippine foreign policy.

The Migrant Workers Day Celebration was hosted by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Berlin, in collaboration with the Philippine Embassy in Berlin, on 03 June 2022. Attending the event were Filipino professionals and skilled workers, and German private stakeholders in the healthcare sector.