

Amerasians in the Philippines Call for Equal Opportunities & Solidarity

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Manila, Philippines – Amerasians in Angeles and Olongapo, Pampanga and Castillejos, Zambales have joined hands to promote their rights and called for equal opportunities that will improve their welfare. Converging at a workshop conference with the theme Amerasians Bilang Kaagapay sa Kaunlaran ng Pamayanan (Amerasians as Partners in Community Development), they urged the government, civil society and fellow Amerasians to unite and take action.

“In 1992, the United States military left the Philippines. I thought they took everything with them. But they left behind at least 50,000 Amerasian children whose fathers were American sailors and their mothers were assumed to be prostitutes. These Amerasians are America’s forgotten children,” says Dale Asis, Founder and Executive Director of Bayanihan Foundation Worldwide, one of the organizers of the conference.

Amerasians have long been a marginalized sector in the Philippines, due to the lack of recognition and support from the government and the continuing discrimination that they get from their community.

According to Aida Santos-Maranan, Chairperson of WeDpro, which also organized the conference, “The dust left behind by the US military bases in Subic and Clark, even if it was more than decades ago, has filtered into all aspects of lives in Angeles and Olongapo. The most vulnerable of the youth are the Amerasians who, sired by US military servicemen with their Filipina “girlfriends,” continue to suffer extreme discrimination. A number of them, mired in poverty, hardly completed secondary schooling. What jobs are available for them that are decent and with just wage?”

Because of the various obstacles that they face, the Amerasians gathered to discuss issues that they face and how they can hurdle such challenges. On July 4, the USA’s Independence Day, they marched to declare their commitment in pushing for equal rights and opportunities.

“It’s long overdue—but it’s never too late for people to see us as equals. We should learn to look beyond the color of our skin or who our parents are. Let’s focus instead on how we can work together to achieve a better future,” says Mark Gilbore, an Amerasian from Angeles City.

Aside from Bayanihan Foundation and WeDpro, the workshop conference was also organized by Buklod.

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About Bayanihan Foundation Worldwide: With values anchored in bayanihan (community spirit) and pakikipagkapwa-tao (helping our fellows), Bayanihan Foundation Worldwide enables Filipinos to improve their lives in empowering and sustaining ways.

About WeDpro: Women’s Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organization (WeDpro) is a SEC-registered non-profit collective in the Philippines that works for the promotion and protection of human rights of women, youth and communities through gender responsive development programs, projects and activities. Visit www.wedprophil.org for more information.

About Buklod Center: Buklod was established in 1987 in Olongapo City and is now one of the most active survivors' organizations in the country managed by grassroots women.

Category Non-profit, Society
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