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By Dr. Alex Brillantes Jr

The Philippine Society for Public Administration (PSPA) hosted public administration colleagues from all over the country and from various parts of the globe during the 2013 International Conference on Public Administration with the theme "Public Sector Reform and Governance in Transition: Values, Institutions, Leadership, Citizen Engagement and Human Rights" last October 1-2.

The 2013 International Conference of PSPA became a platform to bridge public sector reform principles and approaches in government in transition.

The conference discussion focused on the following: (1) reforming institutions, structures, and processes for responsive public administration and governance, (2) leadership and political will,

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Word from the Center

Death to the Death Penalty

An "expert seminar" on moving away the death penalty in South East Asia that was held in Bangkok on October 22 - 23.

There it was documented that the death penalty "has decreased dramatically world wide since the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" was adopted by the United Nations in 1976.

"Under Article 6 of the Covenant, the death penalty ... may be imposed 'only for the most serious crimes' ... in countries that have not abolished the

death penalty."

In 1989, "the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant aiming to abolish the death penalty" was adopted.

As proof of the worldwide effort to deal a death blow to the death penalty, some "122 countries, including 18 states from the Asia-Pacific region ratified the Rome Statute. The statute forbade the courts of the ratifying countries from imposing the death penalty.

In actual terms, how-

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FROM DEATH TO LIFE

By Clarisse Aquino

Professor Aquilino Nene Pimentel Jr. has expounded on the need to move away from imposing the death penalty to criminal convicts, specially in Southeast Asia.

Speaking before delegates, advocates and government officials in Bangkok Thailand last October 22, 2013, Pimentel discussed the Philippine's historical experience on imposing the death penalty to convicts of heinous crimes.

Presently the Philippines no longer imposes the death penalty, Pimentel told the audience.

He said the death penalty should be repealed and

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From Death...

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no longer allowed to be imposed because innocent people have been sentenced to death.

He informed that in the United States, "some 23 convicts had been executed that turned out later to be innocent" citing the National Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

He said that if the justice system in the US cannot guarantee against wrongful executions, he argued in the Senate when he was senator that neither can that guarantee be given in the Philippines.

Pimentel also argued that the death penalty should not be imposed because even minors and the mentally ill have been sentenced to death.

He added that the death penalty is biased against the poor and the unlettered, thereby offending against the equal protection clause of the constitution.

In the Philippines, Pimentel relayed that the



Prof. Nene Pimentel Jr. (3rd from left) stresses a point during the discussion on efforts to move away from the death penalty, held in Bangkok last October 23, 2013.

penalty of life imprisonment was made an alternative to the death penalty.

He explained that despite the strong arguments for the abolition of the death penalty, there was a big sector in society that wanted the death penalty retained.

The imposition of life imprisonment was a product of a compromise to get the death penalty abolished, he said.

He also suggested that even as the death penalty has already been abolished in the Philippines, the next

move should be to find ways to shorten life imprisonment.

Life imprisonment as a penalty ranges from 20 years and 1 day to 40 years.

In the Philippines, Pimentel said, life imprisonment is viewed as better than the death penalty only in the sense that the life of the convict is preserved.

But he said the reformatory or rehabilitation angle of modern penology may not be achieved by keeping a convict behind bars for the rest of his or her natural life.

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ever, much still has to be done to send the death penalty to its final resting place.

While the European countries, in general, have deleted the death penalty from their statute books, in South East Asia, only the Philippines, Mongolia, Cambodia and Timor Leste have done away with the death penalty.

Still, the universal trend towards its abolition is positive.

It was reported in that conference that "now more than 150 countries have either abolished the death penalty or do not practice it... And those countries that continue to retain it are taking positive steps to reduce or restrict its application in law or in practice, reflecting its declining use."

All that is good news for life is so sacred that cutting it short in the name of man-made law is not at all rational.



Prof. Nene Pimentel 3rd from right, was among the invited speakers in the international discussions on the imposition for the death penalty held in Bangkok.



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Global...

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(3) engaging citizens for good governance; (4) reshaping values, mindsets, behavior and paradigms; and (5) promoting the human rights and governance nexus.

The international conference followed the International Conference that was held in Cebu October 2012 in partnership with the Cebu Chapter of PSPA headed by AI Derecho of Southwestern University and Roselle Ranario of Cebu Normal University.

This year, the University of Makati headed by President Tomas Lopez and its Center for Governance and Public Policy led by Dean Ederson de los Trino Tapia generously offered to be this year's main co-organizer/host.

The Pimentel center for Local Governance also partnered in this conference. Its Chair Prof. Aquilino Nene Pimentel Jr., spoke on his experience in various government positions in his career in government service spanning more than forty years.

From its founding in the late 1970s, indeed PSPA has gone a long way.

From a group of public academics and icons spearheaded by Raul P. de Guzman, Jose V. Abueva, Romeo Ocampo, Mila Reforma and Leonor Briones of the then College of Public Administration (CPA) of the University of the Philippines, now the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) and



Prof. Nene Pimentel Jr. and Dr. Alex Brillantes Jr., with the staff of Philippine Society for Public Administration. (September 30)

with a few practitioners including Gaudioso Sosmena and Sofronio Ursal, the PSPA has evolved into a more or less 500 individual members with local and international linkages.

PSPA was established at NCPAG and has been embedded in there for more than three decades now.

The College through its current Dean, Dr. Ma. Fe Mendoza, continuously support the impetus to push the envelope in the discourse of governance and public administration in the Philippines.

The Center of Local Regional & Governance (CLRG) of NCPAG headed by Dr. Remigio Ocenar also partnered in the Conference.

The PSPA has likewise forged linkages with many international partners including the Asian Group of Public Administration (AGPA), the Public Administration Associ-

ation of Thailand (PAAT), the Korea Association for Policy Studies (KAPS), the Asian Association of Public Administration (AAPA), among others.

Members of the board of advisers are colleagues from New Zealand, Timor Leste, Thailand and Japan.

Organizers will explore and develop linkages and networks with public administration colleagues in Indonesia, Taiwan and Malaysia.

This coming January 2014, PSPA will play key role in convening the Asian Association for Public Administration to be held on January 24-27 in Cebu.

The PSPA has maintained close partnership with international donors most especially with the United Nations Development Programme through Dr. Emmanuel Buendia and the Commission of Human Rights of the Philippines.

The PSPA has also nurtured partnerships for capacity building with our local partners such as the cooperative work with the Philippine Councilors League-Legislative Academy through Dr. Helario Caminero who happens to be one of our Board of Directors in the PSPA, the Pimentel Institute for Local Governance (PILG), the Local Government Development Foundation (LOGODEF), the German GIZ to conduct a sustained capacity building

programs for our local government units.

Meanwhile the convention take place on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Local Government Academy, headed by Dir. Marivel Sacendoncillo.

The conference was also a fitting occasion to celebrate the Local Government Month in celebration of the 22nd Anniversary of the enactment of Local Government Code of 1991.

The conference also gained strong support from Mindanao State University headed by President Macapado Muslim, the Good Citizenship Movement and Bagong Lumad Artists Foundation, Inc. and other local and international partners.

The conference pursued the PSPA's commitment to provide a forum for the discussion of issues, problems and trends in public administration; to promote improvements in the study and practice of public administration; and to stimulate and maintain public interest in the continuing improvements of public administration in the Philippines and in other parts of the world.

Participants considered the exchanges of knowledge and experiences in this 2013 Conference as having greatly contributed in shaping the future of public administration through public sector reform not only in the Philippines but to the rest of the world.



Prof. Nene Pimentel shares his long experience as a public servant, spanning more than forty years in the various elective position in government, on the occasion of the International Convention for Public Administrators, held at the University of Makati.

RECENT PICTORIAL EVENTS



PILG was among the sponsors of the recently held International Convention for Public Administrators. (October 1)



Coylee Gamboa, PILG Fellow, gives a birthday blow-out at the Center. (October 16).



PILG Officers and Fellows receive donations to support the Institutes activities, the latest of which was the Batang Transformers Leadership Seminar for the youth (October 16).



Dr. Alex Brillantes Jr. celebrates his birthday at the Center (October 30).



UNIVERSITY OF MAKATI ACTIVITIES



KABALIKAT UMAK-CESELE CONDUCTS MEDICAL MISSION 2013 FOR FAMILIES AFFECTED BY TYPHOON MARING AND HABAGAT

The UMak Center for Extension Service, Entrepreneurial and Livelihood Education (CESELE) conducted a medical mission last September 28, 2013 in partnership with the College of Allied Health Studies, College of Computer Science, Oreña's Medical Team, Ospital ng Makati, UP College of Medicine, Electronic Health Records International-Philippines, Inc., Philippine Charity

Sweepstakes Office, Alfonso Yuchengco Foundation and the Municipality of Naic. This noble undertaking was held at Barangay Tramo, Estacion, Naic, Cavite, and covered six barangays of Naic, Cavite including some residents of Tanza, Cavite who were affected by the recent habagat and Typhoon Maring on slaughter. 341 residents benefited from the outreach program. The medi-

cal mission consisted of the following: dental extraction (with free toothbrush and toothpaste), medical check-up, optical check-up (with free reading glasses) and free medicines. CESELE also distributed T-shirts donated by UMak's Design Center for Nation Building-National Service Training Program (DC-NB-NSTP). (Write-up by Dir. Lhiza M. Ferrer; Photos by UMak TV)

