



# PRESS RELEASE

**Office of the Assistant Secretary for Strategic Assessment**

*Date* 16 Nov 2011

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**Tel. Nos: 911-7171 / 421-2201 CATEX 9116001-12 loc 8148/8149 Fax No.: 4212201**

## **Philippines – United States Reaffirm Alliance**

The Philippines and the United States reaffirmed their collective commitment to meet their obligations under the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT). Embodied in the “The Manila Declaration” signed by PH Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert Del Rosario and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the presence of Secretary of National Defense Voltaire T. Gazmin and US Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr. on 16 November 2011, the renewed commitment marks the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MDT.

The Manila Declaration recalls the long-standing partnership between the Philippines and the United States as well as reiterates the strong commitment of the two countries in various areas of cooperation, ranging from defense and security to trade and economics. On defense and security, the two countries pledged to maintain “a robust, enduring and responsive security partnership...to enhance the defense, interdiction, and apprehension capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Philippines”, advance mutual security through a high-level strategic dialogue, and further collaboration on regional forums such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus and the East Asia Summit (EAS) to address security concerns such as climate change, nuclear proliferation and extremism.

On board the USS Fitzgerald where the signing took place, Secretary Gazmin acknowledged that the MDT enables both countries to protect and assist each other in times of war as well as work together to mutually enhance each other’s capabilities in times of peace. Meanwhile, Secretary Del Rosario noted the importance of a “flexible, reliable and interoperable” alliance especially in maintaining peace and stability in the West Philippine Sea. Secretary Clinton expressed appreciation for the enduring PH-US ties and conveyed the importance of gaining the people’s political support, promoting an adaptive and flexible alliance, and strengthening collective defense capability and communications infrastructure. These will ensure the alliance’s relevance and effectiveness to address security challenges.