

07 April 2011 - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) reiterates its appeal to all Filipinos to avoid accepting offers from individuals or groups to carry illegal drugs in their luggages or in their person when going abroad in exchange for money, as harsh penalties await them in their destinations.

This is in light of a Filipina apprehended by the Indonesian Customs and Excise Officers at the Adi Sumarmo Airport in Solo, Central Java for possession of 1.193 kilograms of class I type of heroin.

The Filipina was arrested on April 3 upon her arrival there via Air Asia from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Based on the initial interrogation conducted by local police authorities, the Filipina was sent to Indonesia by a Filipino who is a member of an international drug syndicate in exchange for US\$8,000.

The Philippine Embassy in Jakarta is providing assistance to the Filipina to ensure that her rights are respected.

The Philippine Government has a strong anti-illegal drug policy, and is closely cooperating with law enforcement agencies in other countries on efforts against anti-drugs trafficking. It is undertaking comprehensive and proactive measures to address the drug mules issue and to prevent the further victimization of Filipinos by international drug syndicates.

The DFA has been working closely with other concerned on drug trafficking cases.

There are 73 Filipinos in China who were meted death penalties with two-year reprieves, which in Philippine legal parlance is equivalent to life imprisonment. In China, drug trafficking of 50 grams or more of illegal drugs is punishable by 15 years in prison, life imprisonment or death.

In most Muslim countries, drug trafficking is punishable by death. END