



Top Photo : Undersecretary Edsel Custodio is joined by CITEM's Malou Mediran, Executive Director Edgardo Manuel, Sp. Assistants Maria Lumen Isleta, Eric Tamayo, Jerome Castro and GDAP's Ranulf Goss in welcoming guests to the Networking Night.
Bottom Photos L-R: Usec. Custodio delivers his welcome address; Animation Council of the Philippines' Grace Dimaranan and I Boncan with Rene Misa and Nelson Udaundo; Cosplay Enthusiast Alodia Gosiengfiao with OUIER's Jerome Castro; US Commerce Attache Tyrena Holley, BPAP's Jamea Garcia, and CICT's Trish Abejo and Emmy Lou Delfin.

12 February 2010 - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Game Developers Association of the Philippines (GDAP) hosted a Networking Night last February 9 to cap the 10th Philippine e-Service Conference and Exhibition held in Manila.

The event was hosted by DFA's Office of the Undersecretary for International Economic Relations-Economic Diplomacy Unit and GDAP at the Traders Hotel.

DFA Undersecretary for International Economic Relations Edsel T. Custodio, on behalf of Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo, welcomed guests and visiting delegates to the occasion, which lent support to efforts of the Philippine game development sector to tap a worldwide video and interactive entertainment industry that had likely grown to over US\$60 billion as of 2009.

Representatives of game developers from Australia, the United States, Taiwan, Japan, and Singapore attended the occasion which also brought together public and private stakeholders in the country, as well as commercial officers from the Singapore and US missions in Manila.

Undersecretary Custodio remarked that the effort to host the Networking Night is done for "love of country" more than anything else.

While acknowledging that the Philippines would have a modest stake now in the worldwide game development industry, the country's nascent game industry would be "brimming with exponential growth potential."

According to the Undersecretary, the Philippines is "well-positioned to play a bigger role in the interactive media and digital content industry" and that it would not be unlikely for the country's industry "to see a ten-fold increase of up to US\$50 million" in terms of shared-services partnerships in the very near future.

Noting the vast talent pool of the country, Undersecretary Custodio highlighted the well-renowned skill, creativity, and productivity of Filipinos who would offer "more value than mere English-speaking ability" by lending a "depth and familiarity towards western culture and practices unmatched by other countries."

Moreover, the Undersecretary also noted the ability of Filipino gaming technopreneurs to also bring to the table a wide degree of "dexterity and flexibility towards other Asian and European influences," as may be tailored by clients for these markets.

In delivering his keynote remarks, GDAP President Ranulf Goss shared the story of a young man, who, having gone through discouraging encounters for a vision of the interactive entertainment industry, persevered and continues to work hard for the sake of nurturing the industry group he now leads. It was the touching story of Mr. Goss himself.

Mr. Goss related how, as a young student in a foreign land, his teachers and experts could not readily grasp at the time an emerging industry on the cusp of a new frontier in business and entrepreneurship. He demonstrated that the Philippine gaming sector would be not far from cutting edge of relevant shared services, and expressed the hope that the industry would realize its full potential with the help of future partners.

Among those who attended the Networking Night include Deputy Commissioner Monchito Ibrahim of the Commission on Information and Communication Technology (CICT); Ma. Lourdes Mediran, Officer-in-Charge of the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM); Atty. Anthony Abad, Trade Policy Adviser of the RP-EU TRTA 2; Atty. Jamea Garcia of the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP); Mr. Cesar Tolentino, Executive Director of BPAP; Ms. Rowena Bagadion of the Animation Council of the Philippines (ACPI); Ms. Tyrena Holley from the US Embassy Trade Office; and Mr. Alexander Lim from the Embassy of Singapore.

Guests enjoyed cocktail concoctions from VuQo, master distillers of premium coconut vodka.

Lucky guests received a bottle each of VuQo Vodka in the raffle drawn by Ms. Giselle Sanchez, Marketing Head of VuQo; Executive Director Edgardo Manuel of OUIER; Ms. Malou Mediran of CITEM; and Ms. Alodia Gosiengfiao, foremost Philippine Cosplay enthusiast. END