



Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert F. del Rosario (2nd from left) with United States Representative Jeff Miller (1st from left), Chair of the US House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, together with (from left) US Representatives Michael Michaud, Timothy Walz, Josiah Bonner and Gus Bilirakis at the DFA Main Building in Pasay City.

21 February 2013 – United States (US) Representative Jeff Miller met today with Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert F. del Rosario together with US Representatives Gus Bilirakis, Timothy Walz, Michael Michaud and Josiah Bonner at the Carlos P. Garcia Conference Room of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in Pasay City.

Representative Miller is the Chairman of the US House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and supports Philippine advocacies in the US Congress, particularly the SAVE Our Industries Act Bill and the Philippine position in the West Philippine Sea.

The call was an opportunity for the two sides to discuss the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation (FVEC) Act and other issues concerning the welfare of Filipino veterans of World War II.

Secretary del Rosario called for the review of the case of 24,385 Filipino veterans whose FVEC claims were disapproved. He requested the support of Representative Miller and his delegation in easing the requirements for Filipino veterans to qualify for the FVEC, particularly the requirement of the National Personnel Records Center that the names of FVEC applicants should appear in both the Roster of Troops and Discharge List of the United States Army at the end of World War II.

The FVEC Act was passed in 2009 as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and provides for a lump sum compensation to Filipino veterans of World War II in the amount of US\$ 9,000 for non-US citizens and US\$ 15,000 for US citizens.



Secretary del Rosario (3rd from left) and Representative Miller (3rd from right) together with US Congressional Delegation during the courtesy call at the Carlos P. Garcia Conference Room, Pasay City.

Secretary del Rosario, in his statement, welcomed *"the correct posture taken by the US*

Government with regard to the West Philippine Sea”

particularly its support for a resolution in accordance with international law, the finalization of the Code of Conduct and the pursuit of a peaceful and multilateral approach to the dispute.

Representative Miller commended the Philippines' patience in pursuing a peaceful and durable solution to the dispute and its measured approach in bringing the matter to arbitration.



Representative
(standing, leftm

The Philippines also expressed appreciation for the firm commitment of the US to the Mutual Defense Treaty and its continuing assistance in the Philippines' build-up of a minimum credible defense posture.

Secretary del Rosario thanked Representatives Miller and Bilirakis for their membership and participation in the Philippine-US Friendship Caucus in the US Congress. "We appreciate your advocacy for Philippine interests in the US Congress and we look forward to working together with you in enlisting new members of the House to join the Caucus," Secretary del Rosario said.

The delegation was treated to a musical rendition by the DFA's homegrown Angklung Ensemble prior to the meeting.

Representative Miller and his delegation are in Manila on a four-day visit to assess the activities of the medical facilities managed by the US Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense and to tour historical sites that commemorate the two countries' shared sacrifices during the war. END