



Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert F. del Rosario (right) and US Department of Defense D...
at the DFA Main Building in Pasay City on 19 March 2013.

19 March 2013 – The United States (US) is determined to intensify its defense and security cooperation with the Philippines in support of the Philippines' own efforts to build up its national defense capacity.

This was the assurance given today by US Department of Defense Deputy Secretary Dr. Ashton Carter during his call on Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert F. del Rosario at the Department of Foreign Affairs. Deputy Secretary Carter was accompanied by a number of US Defense and Military officials. The Deputy Secretary is the second highest ranking official in the US Defense Department.

"We had a good discussion on intensifying our defense cooperation and the current challenges in the region. Dr. Carter reiterated the commitment of the US to work with us and support our efforts to strengthen our military and its ability to defend our country," Secretary del Rosario said after their meeting.

The Secretary added that Dr. Carter also assured him that the US stands solidly behind the efforts of the Philippines to resolve the maritime disputes in the West Philippine Sea in a peaceful manner and consistent with the rule of law.

"I welcomed Dr. Carter's strong support for our efforts at peacefully settling the maritime disputes in the West Philippine Sea. We are committed to seeing this through," the Secretary said, referring to the arbitration case that the Philippines filed against China under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Both officials agreed that to support the military training and capacity building efforts of the Philippines, it is important that there be an increase in number of exercises and other approved activities between the military and defense establishments of the two countries.

"This increased rotational presence will be crucial in allowing us to maximize our own investment in our defense," the Secretary pointed out.

“We will be able to increase and maximize the value and returns of the 75 billion pesos the President has allocated for our defense for the next five years the increased rotational presence, exercises, training and other activities with US forces,” Secretary de Rosario added.

During their meeting, Dr. Carter told the Secretary that he had always had an interest in the Philippines, starting when he first met and interacted with Senator Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino, Jr., when both of them were members of the academe in institutions of high learning in Massachusetts.

Dr. Carter has served the US government in different capacities, has been a member of the academe and think tanks, as well as private corporations. He holds a doctorate in theoretical physics from the University of Oxford and bachelor’s degrees in physics and medieval history from Yale University. END