

# PRESS RELEASE

## Department of Foreign Affairs

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### AMBASSADOR REYES REPRESENTS PHILIPPINES AT DEDICATION CEREMONIES FOR FILIPINO VICTIMS OF UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS PLANE CRASHES IN ANGOLA

23 April 2007 — Philippine Ambassador to South Africa Virgilio A. Reyes, Jr. reported to the Department of Foreign Affairs that he represented the Philippines at a memorial service held for 23 victims of a UN Peacekeeping Operations plane crash at the Pretoria East Cemetery on 19 April 2007. The plane crash had included Filipinos Ramon Dumlao, Benjamin Montefalcon and Bernabe Vicarme.



The dedication ceremonies were held with UN Assistant Secretary General Hedi Annabi; Lt. Gen. Gaye, Force Commander of MONUC; Dr. Christian Halle, project manager of the Angola Recovery Project and representatives of the victims' families, including the daughter of Captain Ramon Dumlao.

Philippine Ambassador to South Africa Virgilio A. Reyes, Jr. (center) represents the Philippines at a memorial service at the Pretoria East Cemetery held for 23 victims (including three Filipinos) of UN Peacekeeping Operations plane crashes in Angola in 1998 and 1999. With Ambassador Reyes are UN Assistant Secretary General Hedi Annabi (to the Ambassador's right), and Ms. Weng Dumlao (standing, rear), one of the daughters of the Filipino victim Ramon Dumlao.

Flights UN 806 and UN 806A had crashed, respectively, on 26 December 1998 and 2 January 1999 in Wambo, Angola while carrying 23 staffmembers on a UN Peacekeeping Mission. It was only recently possible to identify the remains of 13 victims from their DNA profiles with the assistance of the South African Government.

In a simple non-denominational ceremony, a prayer and the names of the victims were read out, with a citation appropriately from the Katipunan's manifesto, describing the equality of the victims in their common sacrifice for humanity.

The unidentified remains were thus buried in a common grave with a memorial stating the names and nationalities of all 23 victims and marked "They gave their life for peace." END