

# traffick BOARD

Information Bulletin for the  
Anti-Trafficking Task Force  
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## Beneficiaries of the Port Halfway House Program

Number of <b>assisted</b> women and children	1,350
Number of <b>clients</b> provided with <b>center-based services</b>	1,329
Number of <b>clients</b> provided with <b>preventive counseling and information assistance</b>	2,302
Number of <b>trained partners</b>	2,118

## US Ambassador hails Bahay Silungan as “celebration of love, compassion, courage”



US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone paid tribute to the Bahay Silungan sa Daungan (Port Halfway House) during his visit in North Harbor last December 8, 2003.

“Bahay Silungan sa Daungan is a real celebration of love, compassion, courage,” Ricciardone said during a meeting with Anti-Trafficking partners onboard the WG&A Superferry 12.

Ricciardone hailed the partnership between the Visayan Forum, the Philippine Ports Authority, shipping lines WG&A, Sulpicio, MERS, and Negros Navigation, and law enforcement agencies led by the PPA Police, the PNP Maritime Police, and the Coast Guard as model for true cooperative synergy.

Mr. Ricciardone pledged to continue supporting the initiatives of the port community against trafficking stressing the belief of the American government that human trafficking is morally unacceptable.

During the visit, Mr. Ricciardone visited the Port Halfway House and met with victims of trafficking who were rescued by the anti-trafficking task force from child trafficking syndicates.

The Port Halfway House or Bahay Silungan sa Daungan is a catchment network for victims of trafficking owned and operated by the port community.

## Sulpicio Lines, Philippine Coast Guard holds anti-trafficking training

The campaign of the Anti-Trafficking Task Force received a major boost as partners held specialized training and seminars on effective means to combat trafficking.

Officers from the Philippine Coast Guard participated in the Seminar on the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act on October 8, 2003 at the Coast Guard Conference Room in North Harbor, Manila. Eighteen (18) officers participated in the discussion on the salient provisions of RA 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act led by officials from the Visayan Forum Foundation. The training also provided Coast Guard Officers with tips on detecting possible victims of trafficking and cleared communication lines and areas of coordination between partners.

Sulpicio Lines also conducted a series of Orientation on Anti-Trafficking among its key officials and personnel from November 18-26, 2003.

Ship captains, managers, and other officers from the Princess of the Caribbean, Dipolog Princess, and other ships were provided with an orientation on the deleterious effects of trafficking and positive actions among ship officials for detecting and providing assistance to victims or potential trafficking victims. The Sulpicio Lines orientation is in preparation for the massive information dissemination campaign against trafficking that the shipping lines will conduct for the coming year.

Training and advocacy are services being provided by the Port Halfway House to arm partners with the necessary information and skills to effectively combat trafficking. More than 2,100 individuals from anti-trafficking task force partners have been provided with training and other capacity-building exercises.

# Multi-sectoral network against trafficking launched

A National network spearheaded by members of the anti-trafficking task force and government agencies was launched last October 23, 2003 at the Club Filipino.

The Multi-Sectoral Network Against Trafficking in Persons (MSNAIP) is a network of government agencies, business groups, NGOs, and other concerned institutions committed to creatively converge in the areas of prevention of trafficking, prosecution of offenders, protection, rescue and recovery and reintegration of trafficked persons, and to support government efforts in the fight against the problem.

The event was highlighted by the signing of the **Memorandum of Agreement**, which aims to strengthen the creative synergies of civil society groups to support government efforts in the fight against trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

The MOA signing formalized the commitment of more than 30 partners nationwide who have undergone a series of consultations and strategic planning workshops towards seriously implementing **Republic Act 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act**.



The law criminalizes the sale and trafficking of persons into sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery, involuntary servitude or debt bondage. It prescribes stiff penalty of life imprisonment and a fine of up to P5 million.

DOLE Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas was the keynote speaker. Representatives from ILO, UNICEF, Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking in Persons, BBC, Asia ACTS, Philippine Ports Authority, and shipping companies also gave solidarity messages and responses to commitments by partners.

# Shipping companies plan intensive campaign against trafficking



Executives and representatives of major shipping companies geared up for a concerted campaign against trafficking during the National Training on Trafficking for Shipping Companies held last November 18-19 at the Grand Boulevard Hotel, Manila.

Fifteen (15) officers from WG&A, Sulpicio Lines, Negros Navigation, MBRS, and other regional shipping lines participated in the training designed to provide key officers and personnel of shipping companies with the necessary knowledge and skills to wage an all-out campaign against trafficking.

The participating shipping companies agreed on the need to come up with effective, concerted, and coordinated actions against trafficking. They plan to strengthen their anti-trafficking initiatives through the release of memorandums to all of their personnel informing them of the need to report to their Central Offices, to the Visayan Forum, or to law enforcement agencies possible

cases of trafficking detected inside their ships or even during boarding and disembarkation.

The shipping companies will also intensify their information dissemination by developing info-mercials and documentaries on trafficking to be shown during voyage.

Ms. Cecilia Flores-Oebanda of Visayan Forum Foundation, Ms. Meloney Lindberg of the Asia Foundation, and Ms. Kimberly Harrington of the US Embassy were the featured speakers during the opening ceremonies. Resource persons for the training included representatives from the Department of Justice, Philippine Senate, MARINA, Philippine Coast Guard, Employers' Confederation of the Philippines and the Visayan Forum Foundation.

Shipping companies, according to Ms. Oebanda, have been instrumental in detecting and reporting cases of trafficking inside their ships. They have also been helpful during repatriation of victims.

The training, conducted with support from the Asia Foundation and the US Embassy, is expected to strengthen the cooperation and partnership among shipping companies and other members of the Anti-Trafficking Task Force.

*The Manila North Harbor Anti-Trafficking Task Force is composed of the Visayan Forum Foundation, Philippine Ports Authority, WG&A, Sulpicio Lines, MBRS, Negros Navigation, PPA Police, PNP Maritime Police, Coast Guard, Porters and Stevedores Associations and workers groups, and other partners from the government and the port community*