



UNION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES INC.

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PRESS RELEASE

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ULAP Takes Stride Towards Global Innovation: Successfully Concludes Study Mission in China

Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines president and Quirino governor Dax Cua underscored the role of local governments in integrating the Philippines into the global economic and political landscape.

“As local governments assume their roles in the fulfillment of Philippine commitments to economic and trade agreements in various international and regional groupings, we have witnessed the emergence of more dynamic, aggressive and entrepreneurial local governments, which are indispensable to any trade facilitation strategy,” Cua told participants of a roundtable dialogue on economic and trade cooperation among Asia Pacific Local Governments during the 9th United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG ASPAC) Congress held in Yiwu, China from November 13 to 15.

The UCLG ASPAC gathered a 500-strong assembly of local leaders and stakeholders from the Asia-Pacific region and across the globe. The theme for this year’s assembly is “Advancing Balanced Economic Development for Asia and the Pacific.”

As the largest regional section of the UCLG, participants included representatives from cities, local government associations, relevant ministries, international organizations, training institutions, academicians, youth representatives, and private companies.

Cua added that in the future, economic and trade partnerships may even go beyond national boundaries and focus on decentralized cooperations involving local government units.

“However, even in the absence of such a transformation, we can anticipate a future where local governments evolve to become less politically-driven and more attuned to economic and entrepreneurial pursuits, particularly in the realm of economic and trade partnerships,” he added.



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Recognizing the ongoing global trend of a shift from goods to services, Cua then urged local governments to explore opportunities in the service sector, such as technology, finance, healthcare, and education to align with this transition.

During the Congress, Cua was also elected president of the UCLG ASPAC, making him the first Filipino to lead the assembly which aims to strengthen collaboration among cities and local governments in the Asia-Pacific region.

ULAP Secretary General Councilor Handy Lao meanwhile delivered a presentation on youth entrepreneurship, spotlighting the Sirib program of the Province of Ilocos Norte as a beacon of innovative youth-led economic activities shaping the future economy of the Asia-Pacific region. Cua also joined the Opening of the 7th China Yiwu Imported Commodities Fair and the 4th Zhejiang International Friendship Cities Exchange Exhibition, the Inauguration of the UCLG ASPAC Public Space at the Botanical Garden of Yiwu with Board Member Atty. Ananias Canlas and Councilor Atty. Raul Corro. He also reported on the outcomes of the Meeting of Governors and Mayors of ASEAN Capitals (MGMAC) and the ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF) 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia on 1 and 2 August 2023 during the Southeast Asia Standing Committee Meeting.

In addition, the ULAP delegation also engaged in a study mission on digital transformation from November 15 to 18 with the invaluable support of PLDT, spearheaded by its AVP and Public Sector Head William N Batac. Mr. Batac played a pivotal role as a proficient facilitator, seamlessly bridging the collaboration between ULAP and PLDT and ensuring a synergistic exchange of insights and expertise during the study mission. The collaborative effort between ULAP and PLDT, facilitated by Mr. Batac, not only strengthens ties between the two entities but also underscores the commitment to continuous learning and collaboration in the landscape of digital innovation.

Besides Cua and Lao, the Philippine delegation also included ULAP 2nd Vice President-Visayas Atty. Reynaldo M. Quimpo (LVGP National Chairman, Vice Governor, Province of Aklan), 3rd Vice President-Mindanao Bernard C. Dela Cruz (VMLP National Chairman, Vice Mayor, Malabon City), Liaison Officer Dean Anthony G. Domalanta (VMLP National President, Vice Mayor, San Mariano, Isabela), Legal Counsel Atty. Ananias L. Canlas, Jr. (PBMLP National Chairman, Board Member, 3rd District Of Pampanga), Chairman for Advocacy and Policy Atty. Raul R. Corro (PCL National Chairman, Councilor, 1st District of Muntinlupa), Governor Jake



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Villa of Siquijor, and Board Member Antonio Jose Rebong of Occidental Mindoro. Members of the ULAP Secretariat, namely Executive Director Aileen Leycano, Project Development Head Lawrence John Paulo Trinidad, Finance and Administrative Director Maricor Cauton, and Head of Policy Ralfhee Blake Barrios also joined the study mission.

ULAP's strategic venture into international forums and study missions, its second this year, underscores its commitment to equip local executives for the challenges of the future, fostering a global perspective for the benefit of the Philippines and its local communities.

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ULAP is the umbrella organization of all leagues of local government units and local government officials in country, serving as the focal representative and mouthpiece of the subnational government in all policy and program platforms to amplify our unified advocacy towards the strengthening of LGUs into able partners in nation-building.

Learn more at www.ulap.net.ph.