

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY
DFA SPOKESPERSON RAUL HERNANDEZ
REGARDING THE HONG KONG VISA SANCTIONS
AGAINST THE PHILIPPINES

30 January 2014

The Philippine Government regrets the Hong Kong SAR Government's implementation of sanctions against the Philippines, particularly, the requirement of visas for Philippine official and diplomatic passport holders which is usually given to government officials on official travel to Hong Kong. The sanction is unfortunate because a substantive closure on the Quirino Grandstand Incident had already been arrived at three years ago with the previous Hong Kong SAR Government and the victims as well as their families.

A renewed appeal for compassion was directly made to our government last October 2013. We responded to this appeal without equivocation and in a most generous manner. Additional tokens of solidarity have therefore been pledged by the Filipino people at the behest of the Philippine government. These amounts that are being offered are substantially more than those that have been previously accepted by the victims and their families. We have been made to understand that the victims and their families have agreed to this offer.

In response to this generous offering, a total renegotiation has been opened by the Hong Kong SAR Government to seek a demand for an apology which the Philippines, as a sovereign nation, is not prepared to consider. Our Nation has already expressed its deepest regret and condolences over the incident and we are preparing to reiterate this.

To bring the issue to its final conclusion, the Philippines remains committed to manifest compassion for the victims and their families and is ready to turn over the additional tokens of solidarity from the Filipino people. We hope that we will be able to do this as soon as possible.

We would like to assure the Filipino people that the Philippine Government has done its utmost best to address the Quirino Grandstand Issue. END