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## **Editorial**

# **UNDERSTANDING, GOODWILL THROUGH PHILIPPINE DANCES**

**T**HE world-renowned Bayanihan Philippine National Folk Dance Company won the Gold Award in the 14th World Folklore Festival in Buyukcekmece, Istanbul, Turkey, on July 7, 2013, besting dance groups from Brazil, Egypt, Greece, Ukraine, Estonia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Slovenia, Mexico, Hungary, Serbia, North Cyprus, Turkey, and Slovakia. The Bayanihan also garnered the Gold Award in the same festival in 2007. The Bayanihan winning repertoire that showcased the rich cultural heritage of the Philippines consisted of Call of the Lumad (Bagobo Tribal Dance Suite), and Spanish-inspired dances, with the Filipino folk dance Tinikling as finale. The Singkil, Pandanggo sa Ilaw, and Maglalatik were highly applauded numbers.

The Bayanihan has promoted international understanding through dance and music, brought honor to the country and regaled millions in six continents all over the world, with performances described by the New York Times as “vibrant and ethereal.” It has performed Philippine folk dances as well as national dance interpretations from several continents and regions — Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, United States of America, and the Middle East — in 66 countries and 700 cities worldwide. The dancers’ graceful movements, stunning costumes, and indigenous accompaniment have enthralled audiences. Research on ethnic rites, tribal folklore, and regional folk tradition go into each dance number.

The Bayanihan was the first Filipino group to perform in Broadway and at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, both in New York; the first to be invited to perform in Russia, China, and South America; the only Filipino dance company to receive the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding; and the first Filipino dance company to perform at the World Showcase Millennium Village in Disneyworld, Florida.

The Bayanihan company, whose name means working together for the common good, was founded 56 years ago in 1957 and debuted internationally in 1958 during the Brussels World Fair in Belgium. It has gained international prominence and is today one of the country’s greatest ambassadors of goodwill. Recognizing its pioneering efforts and success in showcasing to the global community the rich Filipino history and culture, the government enacted Republic Act 8626 on April 15, 1998, declaring the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company as the Philippine National Folk Dance Company.

We congratulate the Bayanihan Philippine National Folk Dance Company, headed by its Founder and Chairman Emeritus, Dr. Helena T. Benitez and Executive Director Suzie M. Benitez, for earning accolades for the Republic of the Philippines, through the indigenous dance and music of the Bayanihan Philippine National Folk Dance Company, regarded as a national treasure. **CONGRATULATIONS AND MABUHAY!**

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BAYANIHAN PHILIPPINE NATIONAL FOLK DANCE COMPANY  
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS  
**DR. HELENA T. BENITEZ**



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
**SUZIE M. BENITEZ**

MANILA BULLETIN  
JULY 21, 2013

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