



# THE PHILIPPINE CHANCERY IN THE NETHERLANDS

RENEWALS AND NEW BEGINNINGS  
IN A HERITAGE HOUSE

Laan Copes van Cattenburch 125  
2585 EZ, The Hague  
The Netherlands

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Consultant

# THE PHILIPPINE CHANCERY IN THE NETHERLANDS

Laan Copes van Cattenburch 125  
2585 EZ, The Hague

The cover page features the painting of the facade of the Chancery by Filipina-Dutch painter Jesamine Totañes-Wiersema.



In 2021, the first comprehensive renovation of the Philippine Chancery in The Hague, since its original construction in 1871, commenced after years of planning, evaluation, and consultations.

The 150-year-old heritage building is one of the Philippines' prized foreign properties in view of its elegance and prime location in the scenic and historic Archipelbuurt neighborhood in the city of international peace and justice—The Hague.

The Philippine Embassy's presence in The Hague is a testament to the Philippines' commitment to foster warm and mutually beneficial relations with the Netherlands and to deliver the best services to the Filipino-Dutch community. It also signifies the Philippines' firm commitment to actively engage the Hague-based international organizations that are devoted to the promotion of peace and justice through law.

The long-sought renovation of the Chancery, preserving its monumental heritage and restoring its splendor, was completed in mid-2022.

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By renovating and infusing this heritage building with a fresh lease on life, it is our hope that it would continue to be the center by which the friendship and partnership of the Philippines and the Netherlands would be nurtured and blossom.

For Filipinos in the Netherlands, may it also be a source of pride as their gemeentehuis or “municipio” in the host country where they will receive the best service that they deserve.

**J. EDUARDO MALAYA**  
Philippine Ambassador to the  
Netherlands



The renovated Chancery was inaugurated on 7 June 2022 and blessed by Bishop Johannes Hendriks of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Haarlem-Amsterdam, in the company of Director Dominique Kuhling, Chief of Protocol of the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ms. Irene Flotman, Chief Operating Officer of the contractor CBRE; and Ambassador Malaya.

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# The Foyer





Tastefully decorated, the reception hall features a combination of modern neoclassical furniture of different hues—a burgundy lounge sofa, golden tassel curtains, green and white carpet, and cream side chairs—that gives the room a stylish yet homey feel.

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# The Reception Hall



The best known area of the reception hall is the Embassy's photo wall where guests and visitors take photos with Embassy officials. The photo wall has the flags of the Philippines, the Netherlands, and the ASEAN with the coat of arms of the Philippines at the center.

A decor that gives the hall a classic feel is the Belgian tapestry of a flower arrangement inspired by the Dutch painter Jan van Huysum (1682-1749).



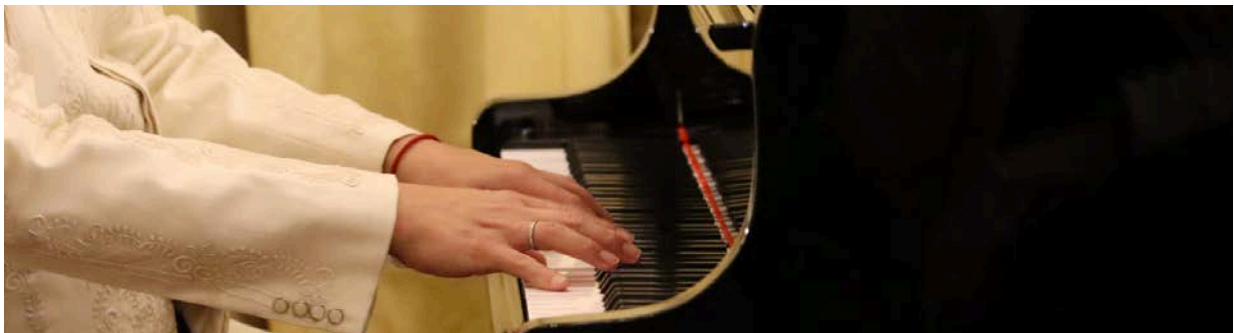
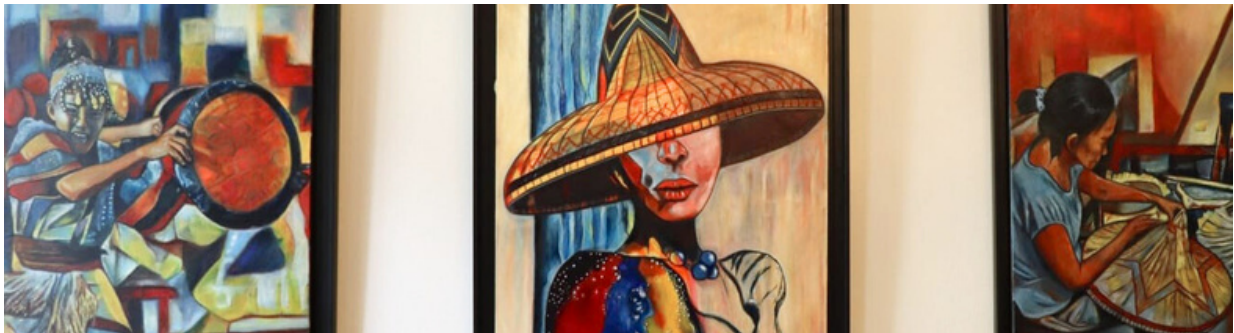
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# The Kalayaan Hall



The Kalayaan (Freedom) Hall features Louis XVI style of architecture, furniture, and decorations. It has a majestic chandelier which lights the entire hall, a marble fireplace with a large antique mirror, and white panels framed with sculpted decors on the ceilings typical of neoclassical decor.

At center stage of the spacious hall, which can seat 60 guests, is a grand piano that makes it ideal for musical performances.



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The Kalayaan Hall is a venue for meetings, conferences, trade exhibits, and receptions. An additional cultural landmark in The Hague, it also hosts the best of art exhibits and musical performances by Filipino artists.





The ICJ Judge Cesar Bengzon Hall was inaugurated on 19 July 2022 in honor of Cesar Bengzon, who served in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) from 1967 to 1976, in ceremonies led by H.E. Kirill Gevorgian, Vice President of the International Court of Justice.

Cesar Bengzon was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines prior to joining the ICJ.

The Bengzon Hall is the first Philippine public space dedicated to eminent Filipinos in the field of international law.

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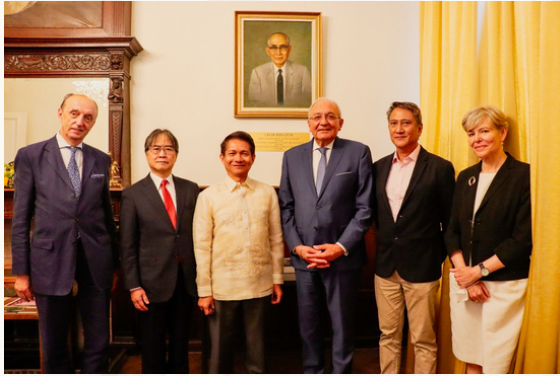
# ICJ Judge Cesar Bengzon Hall



The distinctive character of the ICJ Judge Cesar Bengzon Hall is its dark-colored oak panels and decorative accents, making the room aesthetically pleasing and welcoming.

It also features two windows with stained glass skylights and plastered frames with ornamented keystones.





Four judges of the International Court of Justice—Vice President Gevorgian, Judge Peter Tomka, Judge Yuji Iwasawa, and Judge Hilary Charlesworth—attended the inauguration of the Bengzon Hall. Also present were Judge Raul Pangalangan and the families of the honorees, along with representatives from the Permanent Court of Arbitration, other international organizations, and diplomats from various countries.

Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo addressed the guests virtually.

Cesar Bengzon was a former Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court before he joined the World Court.



An oil portrait of him by renowned Filipino portrait painter Romeo Enriquez, donated by his family, is prominently displayed in the hall, along with portraits of two other Filipino legal luminaries: Justice Florentino Feliciano, founding Member and then President of the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization, and Raul Pangalangan, Judge of the International Criminal Court.

*While a member of the Court from 1967 to 1976, Judge Bengzon made significant contributions to the work of the Court and to the development of international law. Judge Bengzon contributed to a number of important judgments and advisory opinions that have become crucial to international law and to the protection of human rights... I am therefore more than delighted to participate in the inauguration of a hall dedicated to his memory.*

- ICJ Vice President Kirill Gevorgian



*Justice Feliciano was a towering figure in international law. I was fortunate to work with him, and as his colleague, I was especially impressed with his meticulous nature and attention to details. His expertise went far beyond international trade law and international commercial arbitration. He was also a prolific academic whose scholarship touched on almost every area of international law ranging from the law of war, to the law of the sea, and human rights law.*

**- ICJ Judge Yuji Iwasawa**

*In addition to his extensive involvement with the ICC, Judge Pangalangan has made significant scholarly contributions to the fields of international criminal law and international humanitarian law. Although his work is primarily international in nature, Judge Pangalangan has also greatly enriched the legal culture of his native country.*

**- ICJ Judge Yuji Iwasawa**





Addressing the assembly via videotaped remarks from Manila, Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo praised Bengzon for having “blazed the trail for Philippine jurists and lawyers alike to enter the practice of international law and serve in international tribunals.”

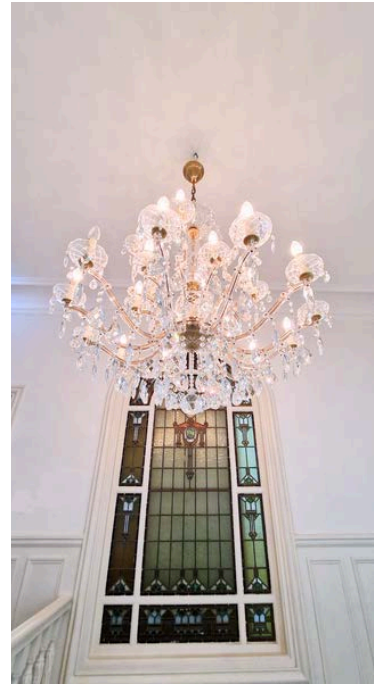
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*There is no doubt that Filipinos have proven themselves as lead actors on the stage of international law. Specifying the areas where the Philippines has made significant contributions to the progressive development of international law, Philippine Ambassador J. Eduardo Malaya mentions four, and here I approvingly quote: “(1) the drafting of the United Nations Charter and, in particular, on the chapter on international trusteeship for non-self governing territories; (2) the articulation of key principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes as embodied in the Manila Declaration of 1982; (3) the development of the archipelagic doctrine in UNCLOS, and recently on clarifying key UNCLOS provisions on maritime entitlement and jurisdiction; and (4) the distinguished service of eminent Filipino jurists in international tribunals.”*

*Today, we honor the achievements of three members of the legal profession, two of whom served in the Philippine Supreme Court, one even as Chief Justice. These outstanding Filipinos have shown exemplary performance in their chosen field of law, through their work as members of international tribunals. Their contributions to the international legal system have given pride and honor to the Filipino people.*

*A Dutch saying goes, “Als er één schaap over de dam is, volgen er meer” (If one sheep crosses the dam, more will follow).*

**- Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo**





Common features of the foyer, Reception Hall, Kalayaan Hall, Bengzon Hall, and the hallways are handmade chandeliers especially made for the Chancery. All chandeliers have adjustable lighting—a feature that sets the mood and creates the ambiance suitable for any occasion.

# Newly Acquired Artworks

Two contemporary artworks adorn the walls of the Kalayaan Hall: the paintings “Barricade” by Manila-based artist Ana Victoria Montinola, which was donated by Mr. Arnold E. Oliva, and “Fertile Terraces” by Jomike Tejido, donated by Professor David Jonathan Bayot. Complimenting them is a Belgian tapestry featuring the world-renowned tulips of Keukenhof.

“Barricade”  
by Ana Victoria  
Montinola (160 x 130 cm)

*With the use of color, texture, and shape, I experiment with spontaneity and chance to produce visually stimulating images drawn from memory. My work is influenced by cubism and abstract expressionism; I present scenes that use the palette of the old masters, which are then disrupted by unrehearsed textured strokes of bright paint.*

- Ana Victoria Montinola





“Fertile Terraces”  
by Jomike Tejido (122 x 152 cm)

The painting is an abstract representation of the Banaue Rice Terraces and Philippine agriculture. Instead of painting the terraces themselves, this piece shows the essence of this human-made landform that represents Filipino ingenuity and adaptability in an otherwise adverse environment.

The Ifugao peoples’ fertility symbol, the Dinumug, is also incorporated in the piece, as the artist’s gesture of paying tribute to the customs and beliefs of this group of Filipinos.

Source: Professor David Jonathan Bayot



“Celebration of Life”  
by Pabsie Martus (91 x 122 cm)  
(mounted at the ICJ Judge Cesar Bengzon Hall)

Pabsie Martus is best known for her vibrant renditions of realistic bees and floral subjects, inducing emotions and experience through her style of the neorealist genre with interplay of light and shadow in her work.

Source: Art Elaan meets the Artist Pabsie Martus (Facebook Post)



“Netherlands Series (2023)”  
by Levi Yu (61 x 61 cm)  
(mounted at the Consuls’ Room)

Levi Yu is known for his minimalistic approach in art by stripping scenic subjects to their basic elements, inspired by the Dutch Art Movement De Stijl but executed in his unique way.

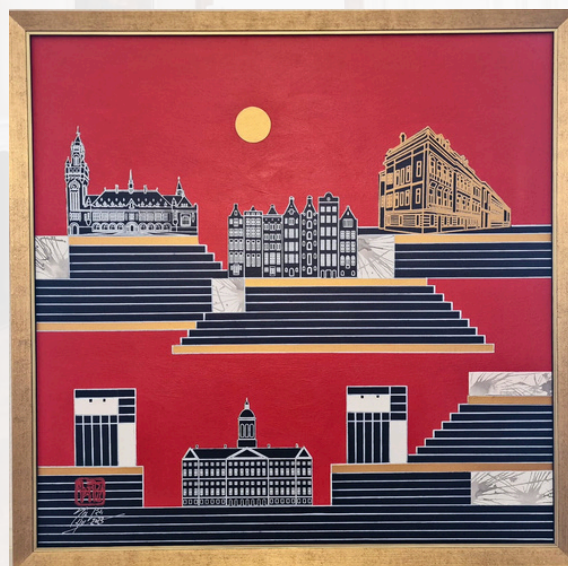
The painting features the iconic landmarks in the Netherlands, notably the Peace Palace, Amsterdam houses and the Royal Palace.

Source: <https://www.artcircle-gallery.com/levi-yu>

“Abbah Yahuwah Elohiym Is  
the Provider”  
by William Yu (89 x 89 cm)  
(mounted at the Consular Section)

William Yu is known for his use of original Philippine script or alibata in his inscriptions on the artwork, including the combination of vibrant colors, geometric shape figures, and disfigurative cubism.

Source: The Neo Baybayin Calligraphy of the Philippines (Video)



\*The four artworks are courtesy of Professor David Jonathan Bayot.



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# The Ambassador's Room



The Ambassador's Room features Philippine artworks and contemporary furniture which blend well with the classic setting.



# The Consular Section



Philippine-inspired themes are on display at the spacious Consular Section, notably tropical dividers and prints of artworks by Filipino artist Benedicto (BenCab) Cabrera.

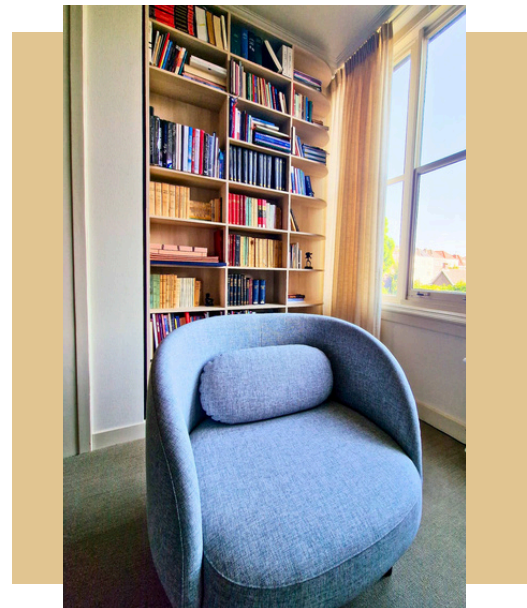


# Offices and Staff Work Stations



Attachés' Room

Sentro Rizal  
(Filipiniana Corner)



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## Consuls' Room



## Work Stations





The bust of Dr. Jose Rizal, Philippine National Hero, was installed on 4 July 2023 in the presence of the Knights of Rizal Supreme Commander Sir Gerardo V. Calderon KGCR, Sir Felino Paras KGCR (Europe Regional Commander), and Sir Anton Lutter KCR (Chapter Commander, KOR The Hague).

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# The Rizal Courtyard



The profile bust of Dr. Jose Rizal was sculpted by a Filipino artisan in Angeles, Pampanga, and donated to the Embassy by the Knights of Rizal - The Hague Chapter.

The then nondescript parking lot at the back of the Embassy compound underwent landscaping and, with the installed bust of Jose Rizal, is now called the Rizal Courtyard, the venue for outdoor activities, such as the commemoration of Philippine Independence Day.





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# A Heritage Building



The diplomatic representation of the Philippines in the Netherlands commenced in February 1959 with the appointment of Proceso E. Sebastian as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary.

The Philippine representation was elevated to an Embassy in 1960 with the appointment of Nicanor Roxas as Ambassador. During this time, the Philippine Chancery was located in Prinsessegracht, then later moved to Duinweg in Scheveningen. On 14 October 1968, during the term of Ambassador Delfin R. Garcia, the Philippine Government purchased the land and building at Laan Copes van Cattenburch 125 in the amount of D.Fl. 420,000 or Php 465,227.

108-G

September 18, 1968

Sir:

This letter hereby certifies that the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines has authorized the undersigned, Ambassador of the Philippines to the Netherlands, to sign contracts for and in his behalf in connection with the purchase by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines of the building and lot located at No. 125 Laan Copes van Cattenburch, The Hague, for use as the Chancery of the Embassy of the Philippines.

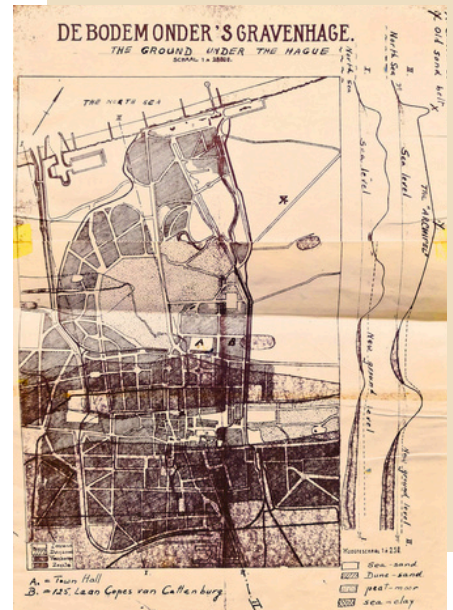
Very truly yours,

*h*  
DELFIN R. GARCIA  
Ambassador of the  
Republic of the Philippines

Mr. Dr. J. E. D. M. Thielen

Notaris

Frederik Hendrikplein 31, Den Haag



Archipelbuurt District in 1968

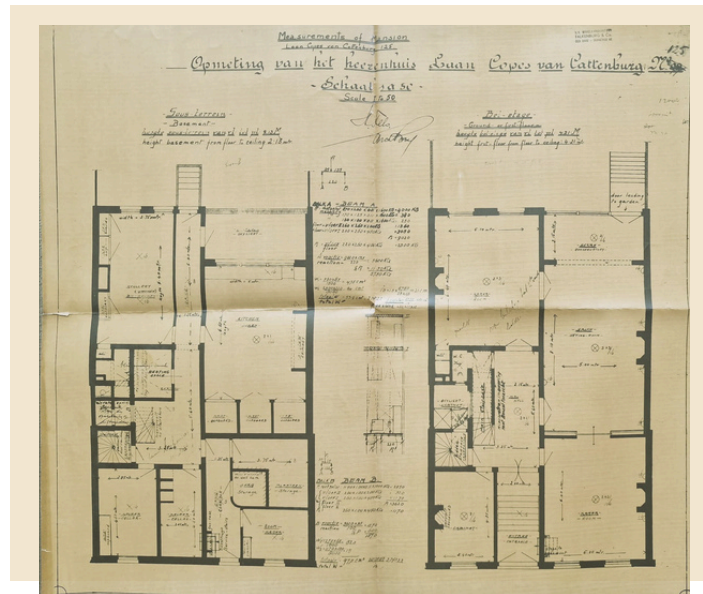
The Chancery building was declared a historical landmark by the City Government of The Hague in May 1990 and was listed as a “rijksmonument” on 22 July 1994.

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Laan Copes van Cattenburch is situated in the nationally protected “Archipelbuurt” neighborhood, which means “archipelago.” The area's street names are derived from the groups of islands in the then Dutch East Indies. It was the district of the Dutch people who returned from the East.

125 Laan Copes is just a few minutes walk from the Peace Palace or Vredespaleis, the home of the International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and the Hague Academy of International Law.





Chancery's floor plan, 1868

## Architect Jan Hendrik van Sluijters

The Philippine Chancery is the middle part of a symmetrical group of three mansions listed as Laan Copes van Cattenburch 123, 125, and 127. It was designed by Architect Jan Hendrik van Sluijters in an eclectic architectural style in 1871-1872 and consists of three stories, a basement, and a sizable courtyard.

Born in Breukelen in 1832, van Sluijters completed his degree in architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in The Hague and worked as a student architect in Brussels. He was married to Hillegonda Prins and one of his children is the famous Dutch artist Georges de Feure.

Other notable works of van Sluijters include the 12 houses in Arnhem called the “Brussels Houses,” the renovation of the “Biblehotel” in Damrak, and the residence in Paris of the then Dutch Envoy to Paris Baron van Zuylen van Nijvelt.

The original owner of the building was Johannes Hendricus Loopuyt (1829-1879), son of Pieter Loopuyt, a banker, corn wine distiller, and member of the Senate. The latter was also the first private owner of Het Koegras, a 3,875-hectare polder or reclaimed land from bodies of water, in the municipality of Den Helder.

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## Among the other occupants through the decades were the following:

- Baronet Cornelis Jacob Abraham Ridder Speelman and spouse Anna Judith Hora Siccana
- Colonel Jan Joost baron Taets van Amerongen and spouse Maria Cunegonda Louisa baronness Taets van Amerongen
- Chief of Police in Indonesia Hendrik Theodore baron Taets van Amerongen (son of Col. Jan Joost and Maria Cunegonda Louisa)
- August Carel Albert Eschauzier and spouse Louise Mathilde Sophie Maria Pabst

The Philippine Government, under the term of Ambassador Delfin R. Garcia, purchased the property from city councilor and lawyer Pieter Charles Louis Eschauzier, the only son of August Carel Albert and Louise Mathilde Sophie Maria.



Pieter Loopuyt

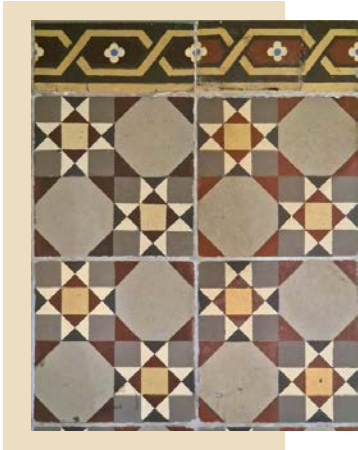


Jan Joost baron Taets  
van Amerongen



Pieter Charles Louis Eschauzier

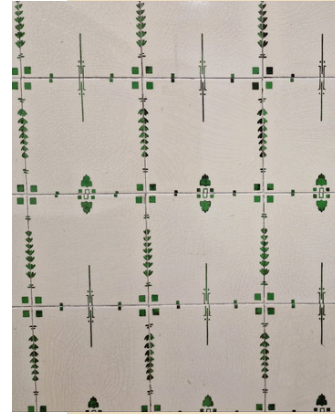
Classified as a nationally protected monument, the renovation of the Chancery was undertaken following the guidelines of The Hague's heritage building office Monumentenzorg Den Haag to preserve the building's heritage elements.



1870s tiles in the basement hallway



Wooden panels at Bengzon Hall



1870s tiles in the lavatories



Stained glass atop the main staircase



High panel door with stained glass skylight at the Chancery main entrance

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# Heritage Elements



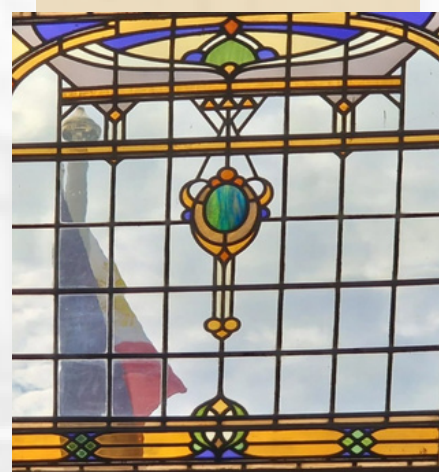
Marble fireplace at the Kalayaan Hall



Mantel artwork at the Reception Hall



Neoclassical ceiling decorations at the Reception, Kalayaan, and Bengzon Halls



Stained glass skylight window



1968



2006



2022

# EQUIPPING FOR THE FUTURE

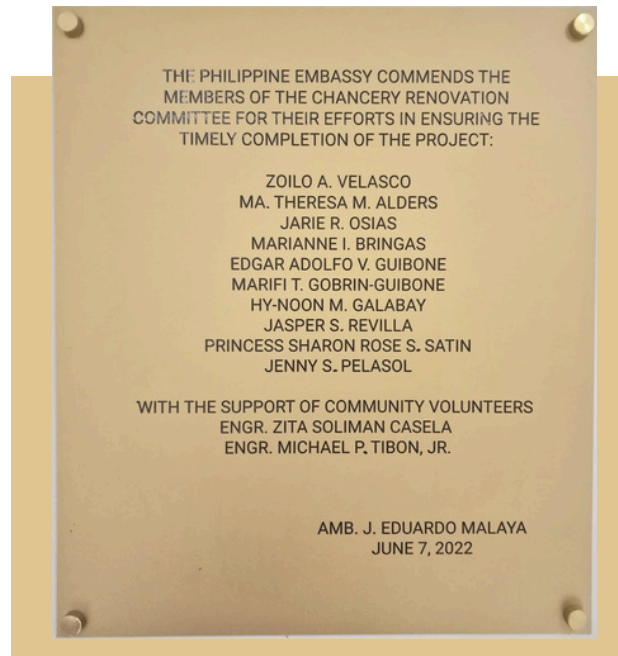
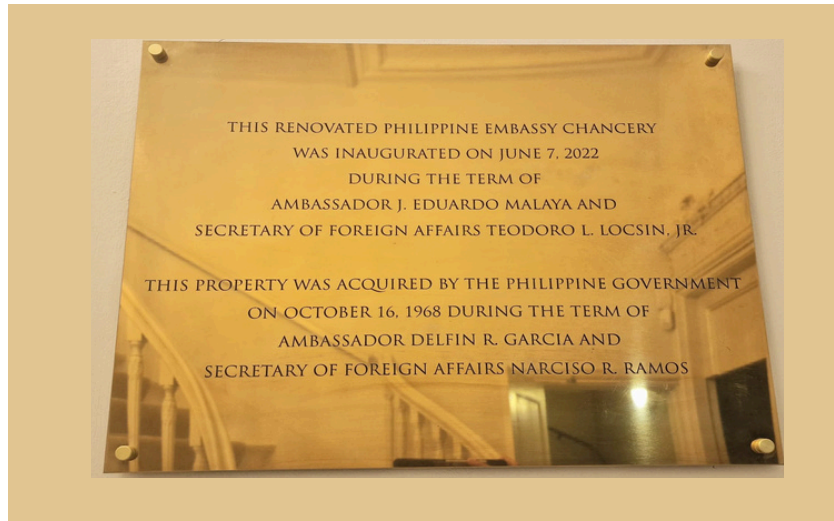


A storage shed, with solar panels on its roof, was constructed at the far end of the courtyard. Solar panels were also installed on the roof of the Chancery so as to help address the Chancery's energy requirements in a sustainable way.



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# AND MARKING HISTORY





Philippine hosting of the  
Commemoration of the  
55th Founding Anniversary  
of ASEAN, August 2022

Meeting of the Asia  
Group of the  
Organization for the  
Prohibition of  
Chemical Weapons,  
October 2022



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# Diplomatic Events



Luncheon meeting with the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Department of Asia and Oceania officials led by Director Karin Mossenlechner, May 2023

Cutting of the ceremonial cake during the Philippine Independence Day with (L-R) Mr. Max Valstar (MFA Asia and Oceania); Secretary General Marcin Czepelak (PCA); Ambassador J. Eduardo Malaya; Mme. Rena Cristina Malaya, MD; Director Dominique Kuhling (MFA Protocol); and Secretary General Christophe Bernasconi (HCCH), June 2023





Piano and cello concerto featuring Dr. Victor Asuncion, Steinway artist, on piano, and Mikko Pablo, cello, in celebration of Philippine Independence, June 2022

“Kalayaan in Full Color” Art Exhibit featuring Filipino-Dutch visual artists Mr. Victor Cantal, Ms. Maricel “Chelony” Mercado-Lelieveld, Ms. Jesamine Totanes-Wiersema, and Ms. Marites van Vianen, September 2022



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# Cultural Events

Philippine Independence Day  
cooking demonstration  
featuring Chefs Rolando and  
Jacqueline Laudico,  
June 2023



A Christmas Concert  
featuring Male Ensemble  
Philippines, December 2023



**Study mission of Metro Manila mayors and Metro Manila Development Authority officials, April 2023**

**Forum “Empowerment through Enterprise: Advancing Filipina Entrepreneurship in the Netherlands,” March 2024**



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# Community Events

Independence Day Reception  
for the Members of the  
Filipino-Dutch Community,  
June 2022



Philippine Independence  
Day Celebration,  
22 June 2024



Visit of Justice Secretary  
Jesus Crispin Remulla,  
24 May 2023

Visit of Secretary of Trade  
and Industry Alfredo E.  
Pascual as part of DTI's 5-  
country Europe investment  
roadshow, June 2023



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# High-Level Visits



Visit of Senator Francis N. Tolentino and the elective officials of various provinces, cities, and municipalities, February 2024

Visit of Senior Associate Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen and Associate Justices Benjamin Caguioa, Rodil Zalameda, and Midas Marquez and PHILJA Chancellor Rosmari Carandang, July 2023





Ambassador J. Eduardo Malaya, as acting President of the Administrative Council of the Permanent Court of Arbitration for term 2023-2024, delivered the welcome and closing remarks at the 3rd Congress of the Members of the Court, The Peace Palace, 14 June 2024



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# 2024 Major Events

Members of the Court of the Permanent Court of Arbitration from the Philippines, together with the Philippine Legal Adviser:

(L-R) Dean Antonio La Viña, Dean Sedfrey Candelaria, Ambassador Malaya, Solicitor General Menardo Guevarra, and Judge Raul Pangalangan



The Philippine delegation to the 3rd Congress of the Members of the Court, with Secretary General Marcin Czepelak of the Permanent Court of Arbitration

Upon the Embassy's invitation, the 30-member University of the Philippines Concert Chorus (UPCC), under Conductor Prof. Janet Sabas-Aracama, came to The Hague for the commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the 126th anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.



The UPCC at the Peace Palace, 5 June 2024

The UPCC performing before fellow students at Leiden University - The Hague Campus, 5 June 2024





The UPCC on a special performance at the Diligentia Theater for the 125th Anniversary of the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the 126th Anniversary of Philippine Independence, 6 June 2024



Ambassador Malaya accompanying on piano the UPCC in singing “Payapang Daigdig” (Peaceful World) at the Diligentia concert, 6 June 2024



**Ambassador and Mrs. Malaya with the Embassy officers,  
staff members, and service attachés, June 2023**



## AMBASSADORS OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE NETHERLANDS

Nicanor Roxas	1959-1962	Romeo A. Arguelles	1992-1994
Librado D. Cayco	1962	Rodolfo Sanchez	1995-1999
Eduardo T. Quintero	1964-1965	Eloy R. Bello III	1999-2002
Delfin R. Garcia	1965-1971	Romeo A. Arguelles	2002-2009
Rogelio dela Rosa	1971-1978	Cardozo M. Luna	2009-2010
Jose V. Cruz	1978-1980	Lourdes G. Morales	2011-2013
Jose I. Plana	1984-1987	Jaime Victor Ledda	2013-2020
Rosario V. Cariño	1987-1991	J. Eduardo Malaya	2021-Present

*Ambassador Malaya and his lovely team warmly welcomed me to our gorgeously refurbished embassy at The Hague. Beautiful paintings. Tastefully gorgeous chandelier. A grand piano. Two busts of Rizal, one in the garden and another in the arrival hall. All thanks to private donations by patriots as well as the impeccable leadership of our ambassador to the Netherlands, who made sure that the Philippines receives its due recognition as one of the pillars of modern international law.*

**- Richard Heydarian**  
“PH: A Champion of International Law”  
Philippine Daily Inquirer, 16 July 2024

*The Philippine Embassy in the Netherlands just finished renovations for the Kalayaan Hall, Bengzon Hall, and Rizal Courtyard. Both halls were originally the embassy office where they conduct official business with the Filipinos in the Netherlands. They transferred the office to the basement where the interiors were beautifully decorated, and created the Kalayaan and Cesar Bengzon Hall for events instead of renting expensive hotel ballrooms.*

**- Giselle Sanchez**  
“Gossip Girl: Giselle Sanchez Wows Pinoys in Netherlands”  
Manila Bulletin, 13 June 2024

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Embassy wishes to thank the following for their valuable contributions in the publication of the book:

BenBatz Fotografíe, Kieren Roevi Batiles, Nomer B. Ado II, and Rodelio Asis for the photos

Mr. Riddick Recoter and Mr. John Christopher Avelino for improvements in the layout

Ms. Louise Jezareth Antipala for copy-editing assistance

Ms. Ma. Socorro Elevera-Vink for the archival documents on the history of the Embassy, including the building's previous owners

The Embassy's Properties Committee for spearheading the renovation project, and

Ms. Jesamine Totañes-Wiersema for her painting featured on the front cover of this book.



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