

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 25 February 2009

President Arroyo to meet with Asia:NZ leaders

The Chairman and Executive Director of the Asia New Zealand Foundation are to meet Philippines President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in Manila today.

The Hon Philip Burdon, Chairman, and Dr Richard Grant, Executive Director, are in Manila to help advance bilateral links between the Philippines and New Zealand.

Mr Burdon, a former New Zealand Trade Minister, and Dr Grant, one of New Zealand's most senior and accomplished diplomats, will be representing the Asia New Zealand Foundation, a non-partisan, non-profit organisation dedicated to building New Zealanders' knowledge and understanding of Asia.

Accompanying the visiting Asia New Zealand Foundation members will be New Zealand's Ambassador to the Philippines, Andrew Matheson. Also attending will be the Asia New Zealand Foundation's Honorary Adviser in the Philippines and former Foreign Secretary, Roberto R Romulo.

Both Mr Burdon and Dr Grant are visiting the Philippines to develop education, Track II, media, cultural and business contacts and to meet key Philippines political, business and academic leaders.

As the leading non-government organisation on Asia-New Zealand relations, the Asia New Zealand Foundation conducts work in five main areas — business, culture, education, media and research. It also runs a Young Leaders' Network and takes a leading role in Track II bilateral and multilateral dialogues in the Asia-Pacific.

The foundation's programmes enable scholarships, seminars, internships, educational support, special events and exchanges, Track II unofficial diplomacy, in-house and commissioned research — all designed to equip New Zealanders with first-hand experience of Asia and to forge valuable links to the region.

The Asia New Zealand Foundation is overseen by a top-level Board of Trustees drawn from business, community, academic and leadership backgrounds. Its Board of Honorary Advisers is made up of distinguished leaders from throughout the Asian region such as Mr Romulo.

The foundation was established in 1994 as a unique partnership between the public and private sectors to assist in the closer integration of New Zealand with the Asia region.

