

Bridging Nations: Strengthening U.S.-Philippines Economic Ties

Friday, June 27, 2025

SPEAKERS



JOSE MANUEL G. ROMUALDEZ
Philippine Ambassador to the United States of America

Jose Manuel “Babe” del Gallego Romualdez was appointed Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the United States of America in July 2017 by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, and was reappointed in July 2022 by President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos, Jr. On 29 November 2017, he presented his credentials to US President Donald J. Trump and formally assumed office as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. Additionally, as the head of the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C., Ambassador Romualdez is concurrently the Philippines’ emissary to the Commonwealth of Jamaica, Republic of Haiti; Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; Antigua and Barbuda; Bahamas; Barbados; Dominica; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; and Saint Lucia.

Prior to his appointment, Ambassador Romualdez was designated as a special envoy of the Philippine President to the United States. He also served as a member of several Philippine business delegations visiting the United States, China, Japan and New Zealand from 1989 to 2012.

Ambassador Romualdez has extensive experience as a media practitioner and business executive. He used to be the Chief Executive Officer of Stargate Media Corporation and Publisher of People Asia Magazine (The Philippine Star affiliate). He was president of the Manila Overseas Press Club and vice-president of Rotary Club of Manila.

Ambassador Romualdez writes columns for The Philippine Star. All his columns have a wide following of readers both in the Philippines and abroad.

On 29 November 2021, President Rodrigo Duterte conferred the Order of Sikatuna, with the rank of Datu (Grand Cross), Gold Distinction on Ambassador Romualdez. The Order of Sikatuna is one of the three highest honors of the Republic and is conferred upon individuals who have rendered exceptional and meritorious service to the Republic of the Philippines. He received the Order of Sikatuna in recognition of his meritorious contributions to the strengthening of the longstanding comprehensive ties between the Philippines and the US, for his steadfast efforts to further deepen Philippines-US alliance, for promoting trade and investment, and for his laudable initiative in the procurement of 20 million doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccines.

Born and raised in Manila, Ambassador Romualdez received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from De La Salle College in 1970. He plays golf as a pastime and is affiliated with Manila Golf and Country Club and the Manila Polo Club.



AMBASSADOR PAUL W. JONES
International Affairs Advisor

During a distinguished government career spanning three decades, Ambassador Jones served as a senior US ambassador in both Europe and Asia – US ambassador to Poland (2015-2018); US ambassador to Malaysia (2010-2013); chief of mission in Pakistan (2018-2020); and deputy chief of mission and *chargé d'affaires* in the Philippines (2005-2009). Other in-country postings included Russia, Colombia, Austria, North Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement the Dayton Agreement ending the war. He planned and participated in overseas visits by Presidents Trump and Obama; Secretaries of State Tillerson, Kerry and Clinton; Secretary of Defense Gates; and scores of US senators and representatives.

In Washington DC, he is currently International Affairs Advisor at Squire Patton Boogs. He is a member of the US-Philippines Society Board of Directors. Previously, he was principal deputy assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasia, as well as deputy special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He participated frequently in interagency policy decision meetings in the White House situation room, as well as in foreign heads of state meetings in Washington DC with Presidents Trump and Obama and Vice President Biden, and many foreign minister meetings with several secretaries of state.

Ambassador Jones most recently served as vice president for International Government Relations at RTX (Raytheon Technologies, 2020-2023), where he led a globally deployed team to achieve priority business objectives with top levels of government in 25 countries.



RONALD J. BAUMGARTEN, JR.

Former Deputy Assistant USTR for Southeast Asia and the Pacific

Ronald Baumgarten, a trade lawyer at BakerHostetler International Trade and National Security team has extensive experience in international trade law and negotiations. Ron represents clients on international trade matters, including AD/CVD proceedings before the U.S. Department of Commerce and ITC; appeals to USMCA panels and the U.S. Court of International Trade; agricultural trade market access; and trade law and policy advice. Before leaving government to rejoin BakerHostetler, he served from 2018 to 2021 as the Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) for Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Prior to working on regional matters, he was the Director, and later Senior Director, in the USTR Office of Agricultural Affairs from 2010 to 2018. Ron also gained valuable experience as Associate General Counsel with the USTR Office of the General Counsel, where he litigated WTO disputes and advised on trade remedies.

MODERATOR



HANK HENDRICKSON

**Executive Director
US-Philippines Society**

Hank Hendrickson helped launch the US-Philippines Society in Washington D.C. in May 2012 and continues to serve as the Society's Executive Director. He is a former U.S. Foreign Service Officer, with postings in East Asia (Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and Korea), Europe, and the Middle East.

During his postings to Asia, Hendrickson spent two tours in the Philippines, as a political officer (1979-83) and Counselor for Political Affairs (1995-97). Prior to joining the Foreign Service, he was a commissioned officer in the Navy.

Hank graduated from Bucknell (BA) and holds a master's degree from Georgetown University (MSFS).

