

PHILIPPINE EMBASSY WARNS FILIPINOS AGAINST ILLEGAL RECRUITMENT BY A FOUNDATION

Bangkok. The Philippine Embassy in Bangkok has issued a warning to Filipinos about the alleged illegal recruitment activities of a Foundation, which has been identified as Amarsa Global Foundation Philippines, Inc.

The Foundation allegedly charges Php200,000.00 (roughly US\$5,800.00) per person as payment for facilitating the recruits' entry into Europe as tourists, and in finding jobs for the latter once they are in Europe. The Foundation allegedly packages the recruits as cultural performers with scheduled appearances in selected European countries.

The Embassy reportedly uncovered the illegal recruitment operation when a Filipina claiming to have been recruited by the Foundation, contacted and pleaded for the Embassy to rescue her and 2 others from a Bangkok hotel where officers of the Foundation reportedly brought them.

According to the lady, she was one of 10 recruits who arrived in Bangkok on 28 April together with the President, and a lady who appeared to be the secretary, of the Foundation. The lady added that the rest of the recruits, apparently still believing that the Foundation is not committing any illegal act, refused to go with them.

The recruits reportedly flew first to Hong Kong on April 18 and left for Bangkok ten days later after being told by the President of the Foundation that they would just apply for their Schengen visas in Thailand.

From the moment they arrived in Bangkok on April 28, however, the lady said that the officers of the Foundation still could not provide them with a definite schedule as to when they would be applying for their Schengen visas. The officers of the Foundation also reportedly began telling them that they would now have to fly to Brazil where they would pick up their Schengen visas. They were also reportedly asked to switch hotels several times again without being told why.

Reportedly fearing for her safety and that of her companions, the lady finally decided to call the Embassy in the afternoon of May 2. In the evening of that same day, a consular team rescued the lady and two others from the Bangkok hotel where they were staying and brought them to the safety of the Embassy grounds. **END**