

# 6TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF SOLEMNIZING OFFICERS

Theme: Civil Registration: Key to Global Opportunities

SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City  
August 4-6, 2009



Day 3 Highlights

## 6NCSO Closing Ceremonies

### Civil Registrar General Ericta emphasizes importance of the family and sanctity of marriage



Civil Registrar General Carmelita Ericta emphasized the importance of the family as the foundation of the nation during the closing ceremonies of the Sixth National Convention of Solemnizing Officers (6NCSO) at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City on August 6.

In her "Synthesis and Directions" she enumerated the next steps in improving the country's marriage registration system. Among these are the review of administrative guidelines, implementation of the revised forms of marriage certificate, lobbying with identified legal and policy champion in the legislative and executive agencies, strengthening of network of solemnizing officers, and issuance of CRASM with SO identification cards.

She also thanked the participants for sharing the vision with NSO of an improved marriage registration system.

The NSO Chorale sang the doxology while the Philippine Tourism Authority provided the intermission number. After the awarding of the outstanding local civil registry offices, the event was formally ended by the singing of "Hand in Hand."

### 6NCSO Summary Statistics

As of August 5, a total of 1,647 solemnizing officers and local civil registrars registered for the Sixth National Convention of Solemnizing Officers (6NCSO) on August 4 to 6 at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City.

Of this figure, 606 are solemnizing officers (36.8%), 566 are civil registrars (34.4%), 241 are mayors (14.6%), 26 are judges (1.6%) and 298 are other participants (12.6%), which included municipal and barangay officials.

The Convention had the most participants from the host region, NCR with 306 or 18.6 percent of the total attendance followed by CALABARZON with 215 or 13.1 percent and Eastern Visayas with 137 or 8.3 percent.

Male participants comprised 61.1 percent of the participants outnumbering their female counterparts registered at only 38.9 percent.

### **Outstanding local civil registry offices awarded**

In recognition of their efforts to improve the performance and delivery of civil registration programs, activities and services, a special night was set aside for the outstanding local civil registry offices of the country.

Ten offices were awarded for each category, that is for the extra small, small, medium, large and extra large categories. The list of awardees per category are as follows:

#### **Extra Large Category**

1. City of Las Pinas
2. City of Malaybalay
3. Batangas City
4. Iligan City
5. Butuan City
6. City of Tagum
7. Dagupan City
8. Pasay City
9. Naga City
10. Angeles City

#### **Large Category**

1. Labo, Camarines Norte
2. Brooke's Point, Palawan
3. San Jose City, Nueva Ecija
4. Gingoog City
5. Candelaria, Quezon
6. City of Escalante
7. City of Valencia
8. San Jose, Antique
9. Cabanglasan, Bukidnon
10. Agoo, La Union

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## RTC Presiding Judge relates experiences in solemnization of marriages in the NCR

Makati City Regional Trial Court Presiding Judge Marissa Macaraig-Guillen related her experiences in solemnization of marriages in the NCR.



She mentioned that some people are reported to be able to arrange quick marriages in the City Hall of Manila, where parties sign the Certificate of Marriage in blank. When they finally get their Certificate of Marriage, it is made to appear that they did not marry in Manila and that they supposedly married in San Juan or Pasay. Entries contained therein are false and erroneous, therefore, marriage is void and marriage certificate is fabricated.

She also informed the group that there is an ongoing investigation of an NCR judge who performed 2,000 marriages without registering any of them or paying the P300.00 solemnization fee. As a consequence, the high Court has to determine what appropriate administrative and punitive sanctions may be imposed against the judge.

Based on the statistics provided by the NSO, the NCR serves as the venue of about 100,000 marriages for the years 2002 and 2003. While it doesn't have figures on the number of civil annulments filed, the Office of the Solicitor General's statistics of more than 7,000 cases is, as claimed by Judge Guillen, an underestimate.

She then enumerated the requisites before marriage is solemnized. The Presiding Judge also cited the requirements for foreigners who want to marry in the Philippines.

On the other hand, the law provides that marriages solemnized by a minister with no authority to do so may still remain valid provided one or both parties believed in good faith that the solemnizing officer had the requisite authority, this does not prevent a party who finds out later on about the absence of the essential requisite to petition for their marriage

to be declared null and void. She also mentioned that if the parties do not get the parental consent or advice, the marriage is still valid but the civil registrar and the parties may be held administratively liable if such requisite is not present.

Judge Guillen encouraged all solemnizing officers to exercise both prudence and diligence in the performance of their duties.

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### Answers to Main Issues:

- Pairing judge is a judge from another city/municipality who is authorized to perform functions of the judge who died, retired, or is on leave. The pairing judge should have a written authority from the Supreme Court to solemnize marriage outside his area of jurisdiction.
- Registration of marriage certificate is a ministerial function of the civil registrar. Should there be irregularities in the certificate or there is a complaint pertaining to its registration, the civil registrar should still register with proper annotation.
- It is the duty of the SO to have the marriage certificate registered in the LCRO. The SOs should not give the marriage certificate to the concerned parties for them to register the certificate themselves. Failure to register the marriage certificate can result to the cancellation of the SO's authority to solemnize marriage.
- Contracting parties whose marriage certificate was not registered cannot marry with other persons because there exists a valid marriage between them.
- The law requires that a foreigner should submit a legal capacity to marry a Filipino. In lieu of this, the US Embassy issues an Affidavit of No Legal Impediment because they cannot ascertain the qualification of the American. In case of doubt, it was advised that the SO should not marry the couple. We cannot compel the US Embassy to issue a Certificate of Legal Capacity.
- The attachment to RD Celeste's paper is a sample case provided during the training as an exercise of the participants for them to determine the defects/errors.

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## Outstanding local civil registry offices...concluded

### Medium Category

1. Santa Cruz, Marinduque
2. San Fabian, Pangasinan
3. Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro
4. Carmona, Cavite
5. Santo Tomas, Davao (Norte)
6. Tayabas, Quezon
7. Tangub City
8. Tandag, Surigao del Sur
9. Sibalom, Antique
10. Roxas, Oriental Mindoro

### Small Category

1. Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte
2. Torrijos, Marinduque
3. Basud, Camarines Norte
4. Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija
5. Baler, Aurora
6. Hamtic, Antique
7. Governor Generoso, Davao Oriental
8. Alubijid, Misamis Orienta;
9. Dasol, Pangasinan
10. Maria Aurora, Aurora

### Extra Small Category

1. Bacarra, Ilocos Norte
2. Medina, Misamis Orienta;
3. San Luis, Aurora
4. Dilasag, Aurora
5. Macalelon, Quezon
6. Casiguran, Aurora
7. Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte
8. San Gabriel, La Union
9. Padre Burgos, Quezon
10. General Luna, Quezon