

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LEGENDARY AMERICAN HAT MAKING STUDIO TO REVIVE DYING HAT INDUSTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES

In an effort to rebuild strained trade relations between the Philippines and North America, a special press conference consisting of some of the highest ranking officials of the Philippine government and business community is slated at the National Press Club in Intramuros, Manila, On Friday September 16th, 2005 at 11 AM to announce the very first joint venture, utilizing the expertise of an American Company to revitalize a Philippine national institution, once thought to be extinct. After years of negotiations, Mark Mejia, owner and CEO of Baron California Hats, a Hollywood Industry legend for over 75 years, has finalized an agreement with the Philippine government to bring back to life the ancient secret art of Lukban hand-woven hats. This process which is ten times as intricate, light and durable as the famous Panama weaves of South America was thought lost almost 100 years ago. However the newly created Bansud Special Economic Zone, a project of the Municipality of Bansud, Province of Oriental Mindoro, in cooperation with the Office of the Governor, the National Government, and the powerful Mindora Public Relations Bureau (MPRB), hope to spearhead a new resurgence in there once thriving hat-weaving industry.

In a special agreement, the Municipality of Bansud will provide, for the first time facilities within the Bansud Ecozone, so that Mark Mejia, and his company can help to train Midorefios in resurrecting this almost mystical weaving process for marketing worldwide. Not only are there hopes that this revitalization will help to stimulate the Philippine economy, but also that it will be the beginning of a more open relationship between the Philippines and American Business.

Present at this historic press conference will be:

- Undersecretary Zoraida Alonzo of the Dept. of Trade and Industry
- Governor Arnan C. Panaligan of Oriental Mindoro
- Congressman Rodolfo G. Valencia of the First District of Oriental Mindoro
- Assistant Secretary Joe Capadocia of the Office of the Press Secretary
- Mayor Butch Soller of the Municipality of Bansud, Oriental Mindoro
- Founding Chair of the Bansud Ecozone, Dr. Prudente Soller
- Manager of the Lukban Hats of Lukban, Quezon
- Mr. Mark Mejia, Owner and Master Hatmaker of Baron California Hats

Pictures and videos will be viewed together with samples of the rare raw materials and secret hand-weaves, created within Mindoro and Sariaya, Quenzon.

Your presence at this conference is most welcome.

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