

**PHL EMBASSY IN MANAMA ASSISTS IN THE REPATRIATION OF UNDOCUMENTED FILIPINO CHILDREN, LAUNCHES OPLAN KABATAAN**



PHL Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, H.E. Alfonso A. Ver, OWWA Welfare Officer Redina Manlapaz, and other Embassy Officials pose with babies AJ and Jasper, and their mothers, prior to their departure for their flight to Manila.

The Philippine Embassy in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, recently assisted in the repatriation to the Philippines of two Filipinas and their infants born in Bahrain. Both babies were born without the proper documents as their mothers are not married to their fathers. One of the mothers, who was already out of status and has been overstaying in Bahrain for a few years, gave birth at the home where she was staying without assistance from an appropriate medical practitioner, while the other was employed as a household service worker when she was impregnated by a co-worker. The latter gave birth in a hospital through the help of her employer.

The Embassy assisted in facilitating the DNA testing of the child without medical records, and facilitated the registration, issuance of travel documents, and exit clearances of the ladies and their babies. The Embassy likewise assisted in providing their airfare for their repatriation to the Philippines. Both cases were also sheltered at the Embassy's Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Resource Center being managed by OWWA while waiting for their exit clearances.

Since 2017, the Embassy has repatriated more than 61 cases of undocumented children who were born in Bahrain and had no birth certificates, no passports or visas, and who have not been given adequate access to medical facilities because of their illegal status. These children have also been deprived of the opportunity to get an education as only local and legal residents/expatriates are allowed to enroll in schools operating under the Ministry of Education.

In order to assist more Filipino children under similar circumstances and in view of the rights guaranteed to a child under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly the right to be registered at birth, to have a name, to leave a country to be reunited with family and to have access to quality healthcare and education, the Embassy is launching its **OPLAN KABATAAN Program** to assist in the repatriation to the Philippines of these undocumented Filipino children in order to afford them access to quality education and healthcare.

For this purpose and as part of its celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a special meeting with members of the Filipino Community will be held on **20 November 2019, 5PM** at the Philippine Embassy Lobby. For inquiries regarding the program and the community meeting, please call Ms. Tere Belardo at telephone number 17721234, or send a Whatsapp message to 39953235, or an email to [manamapeatn@gmail.com](mailto:manamapeatn@gmail.com).



Ambassador Ver with Labor Attache Vicente Cabe and OWWA Welfare Officer Redinal Manlapaz and the repatriates.