

PRESS RELEASE**DepEd chief, Spanish ambassador discuss Safe Schools Declaration, language program**

PASIG CITY, April 15, 2019 – Education Secretary Leonor Magtolis Briones met Spanish Ambassador Jorge Moragas Sanchez to discuss the Safe Schools Declaration and the Spanish Language Program during a courtesy call at the Department of Education (DepEd)–Central Office last April 4.

The Education chief emphasized that the Department strongly supports the Safe Schools Declaration through DepEd issuances and campaign materials: “As for the

Safe Schools Declaration, we fully support it. We have issued a number of publications and circulars in our Department. We have campaigned for it, especially in Mindanao. We require all our schools to carry the posters with messages, ‘This is a zone of peace, this is a safe school.’”

As to the status of the Safe Schools Declaration that will be endorsed by the government, Briones said: “The Declaration is already at the Office of the Executive Secretary for further comments and clearance.”

Sanchez, on the other hand, told Briones that the Spanish Minister of Education and Professional Training, Hon. Ma. Isabel Celaà Diéguez, requested him to transmit a formal invitation for her to be one of the main speakers at the Third International Conference on Safe Schools to be held in Palma de Mallorca on May 28 to 29. He noted that the Philippines was one of those selected among the countries in the United Nations to present its experience in the conference since the country has been supporting and implementing the Safe Schools Declaration, especially in Mindanao.

In addition, Sanchez expressed his desire for the renewal of their country’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DepEd on the teaching of Spanish language in schools which expired in 2016. He pointed out that the Spanish government shall continue to support the teaching of Spanish language in the Philippines.

In closing, Briones assured the Spanish Ambassador that DepEd will update him on the status of the endorsement for the Declaration, and that the MOU on the Spanish Language Program shall be renewed.

Also present in the meeting were Undersecretary and Chief of Staff Nepomuceno Malaluan, International Cooperation Office (ICO) Director Margarita Consolacion Ballesteros, Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD) Director Jocelyn Andaya, and Spanish Embassy First Secretary for Administrative and Cultural Affairs Pilar Cuadra.

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