

Remarks of Ambassador Leslie J. Baja
Vernissage of “Stories from my grandmother - an exhibit of Philippine weaves”
24 February 2025

Dear friends and colleagues, welcome to this vernissage. This exhibition is entitled “Stories from my grandmother” as some of the weaves we are exhibiting are decades old and belong to the personal collection of our visiting artists, Mr Al Valenciano and Ms Len Cabili. They work with Filipino artisans in order to preserve the rich cultural heritage and weaving traditions of Philippine indigenous communities.

Textiles and weaving date back to the pre-colonial era and are very important in the lives of the indigenous Filipinos. Natural fibers like abaca, piña or pineapple fiber, cotton and silk were used to create fabrics. They serve as identifiers of social rank, as special offerings to the spirits, to heal the sick and to bless harvest festivals. More than a perpetuation of culture, they serve as an artistic expression of beliefs and different rituals in the country. Weaving, aside from being a significant source of income, is an important part of these communities’ cultural and spiritual practices and is often done by women.

And as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Philippine-Moroccan relations this year, this exhibit also features collaborations between Filipino and Moroccan artists and artisans. Through this exhibit, we start a yearlong celebration of this momentous occasion and hope to weave a stronger fabric of relations between our two countries.

This exhibit will run until the 8th of March or International Women’s Day to honor the women weavers who made this exhibit possible.

I wish you all a pleasant evening.