Philippine Declaration of Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Created</th>
<th>May–June 1898</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratified</td>
<td>June 12, 1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>National Library of the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, Emilio Aguinaldo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signatories</td>
<td>98 delegates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To proclaim the sovereignty and independence of the Philippines from the colonial rule of Spain</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Philippine Declaration of independence was proclaimed on June 12, 1898 in Cavite II el Viejo (present-day Kawit, Cavite), Philippines. With the public reading of the Act of the Declaration of independence (Spanish: Acta de la proclamación de independencia del pueblo Filipino), Filipino revolutionary forces under General Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed the sovereignty and independence of the Philippine Islands from the colonial rule of Spain.

**History**

**Background**

In 1896, the Philippine Revolution began. Eventually, the Spanish signed an agreement with the revolutionaries and Emilio Aguinaldo went into exile in Hong Kong. At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Commodore George Dewey sailed from Hong Kong to Manila Bay leading a squadron of U.S. Navy ships. On May 1 1898, the United States defeated the Spanish in the Battle of Manila Bay. Later that month, the U.S. Navy transported Aguinaldo back to the Philippines.

**The Proclamation on June 12**

Independence was proclaimed on June 12, 1898 between four and five in the afternoon in Cavite at the ancestral home of General Emilio Aguinaldo some 30 kilometers South of Manila. The event saw the unfurling of the National Flag of the Philippines, made in Hong Kong by Marcela Agoncillo, Lorenza Agoncillo, and Delfina Herboza, and the performance of the Marcha Filipina Magdalo, as the national anthem, now known as Lupang Hinirang, which was composed by Julián Felipe and played by the San Francisco de Malabon marching band.

![The original Flag raised by President Emilio Aguinaldo in declaring the independence in 1898](image)
The Act of the Declaration of Independence was prepared, written, and read by Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista in Spanish. The Declaration was signed by ninety-eight people, among them an American army officer who witnessed the proclamation. The final paragraph states that there was a "stranger" (extrangero in the original Spanish, meaning foreigner) who attended the proceedings, Mr. L. M. Johnson, described as "a citizen of the U.S.A, a Corone of Artillery."[1] The proclamation of Philippine independence was, however, promulgated on 1 August, when many towns had already been organized under the rules laid down by the Dictatorial Government of General Aguinaldo.[2][3]

Later at Malolos, Bulacan, the Malolos Congress modified the declaration upon the insistence of Apolinario Mabini who objected to that the original proclamation essentially placed the Philippines under the protection of the United States.

Subsequent Events
The declaration was not recognized by the United States nor Spain and Spain later sold the Philippines to the United States in the 1898 Treaty of Paris that ended the Spanish-American War.

The Philippine Revolutionary Government did not recognize the treaty or American sovereignty, and subsequently fought and lost a conflict with United States now called the Philippine-American War, which ended when Emilio Aguinaldo was captured by U.S. forces,[4] and issued a statement acknowledging and accepting the sovereignty of the United States over the Philippines.[5] This was then followed on July 2, 1902, by U.S. Secretary of War Elihu Root telegraphing that the insurrection the United States had come to an end and that provincial civil governments had been established everywhere except those areas inhabited by Moro tribes.[6] Pockets of resistance continued for several years, however.

Following World War II, the US granted independence to the Philippines on 4 July 1946 via the Treaty of Manila.[7] July 4 was observed in the Philippines as Independence Day until August 4, 1964 when, upon the advice of historians and the urging of nationalists, President Diosdado Macapagal signed into law Republic Act No. 4166 designating June 12 as the country's Independence Day.[8] June 12 had previously been observed as Flag Day and many government buildings are urged to display the Philippine Flag in their offices.

The text of the "Act of Proclamation of the Independence of the Filipino People"

The Act of Proclamation of the Independence of the Filipino People (Spanish: Acta de la proclamación de independencia del pueblo Filipino) is part of a long line of declarations of independence including the United States Declaration of Independence. It includes a list of grievances against the Spanish government stretching back to Ferdinand Magellan's arrival in 1521 and "confer(s) upon our famous Dictator Don Emilio Aguinaldo all the powers necessary to enable him to discharge the duties of Government, including the prerogatives of granting pardon and amnesty."[9]

The original proclamation is kept in the National Library of the Philippines in Manila.

Notes


"Invitations to the ceremony of the declaration of independence were sent to Admiral Dewey; but neither he nor any of his officers were present. It was, however, important to Aguinaldo that some American should be there whom the assembled people would consider a representative of the United States. 'Colonel' Johnson, ex-hotel keeper of Shanghai, who was in the Philippines exhibiting a cinematograph, kindly consented to appear on this occasion as Aguinaldo's Chief of Artillery and the representative of the North American nation. His name does not appear subsequently among the papers of Aguinaldo. It is possible that his position as
colonel and chief of artillery was a merely temporary one which enabled him to appear in a uniform which
would befit the character of the representative of a great people upon so solemn an occasion!"

Worcester attributes this to "Taylor, 26 A J.", referring to Major J. R. M. Taylor, who translated and compiled Insurgent records


The Laws of the First Philippine Republic (The Laws of Malolos) 1898-1899. (http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text-idx?c=philamer;iel=1;view=toc;idno=aab1246.0001.001), Manila: National Historical Commission, , retrieved 2008-03-26. (Original handwritten Spanish)

Worcester 1914, p. 175 (http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=56151&pageno=175)

Worcester 1914, pp. 175-176 (http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=56151&pageno=175)


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