

AQUINO APPOINTS NAVAL OFFICER, TOP INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ACADEMICIAN AS NEW MARINA ADMINISTRATOR



Manila, Philippines - President Benigno S. Aquino III has recently appointed Dr. Maximo Q. Mejia, Jr as Administrator of the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) to continue serving the term that was left vacant following the retirement of its former Administrator, Emerson M. Lorenzo, more than a year ago.

Mejia, a top international maritime academic and a former naval and coast guard officer, assumes the position at a time when the country's maritime industry is facing serious challenges such as the declining registry of ships under the Philippine flag and the threat of withdrawal of the recognition by the European Union of certificates issued by the Philippine government under the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers, as amended, the international regulatory instrument that sets the global standard for maritime education, training and certification of seafarers who wish to be employed on-board merchant ships trading international waters.

He is assuming the Office today and will receive a briefing from the MARINA Management Committee led by Atty. Nicasio A. Conti, Deputy Administrator for Planning who served as Officer-in-Charge of the Authority since Lorenzo retired. Mejia is expected to pronounce his policy directions for the industry for the next three (3) years.

"I look forward to meeting the men and women of MARINA on Tuesday and look forward to working with you on the most pressing issues facing our very important maritime industry," Mejia said to Conti who facilitated the assumption of office of the new MARINA chief.

At the time of his appointment, Mejia was Professor at the World Maritime University (WMU), an educational institution established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to serve as the global center for advance maritime education and research in Malmö, Sweden, and the Head of its Maritime Law and Policy program. While at WMU, he also held visiting professorships at the United States Coast Guard Academy and Lund University Faculty of Law.

He has been a lecturer and speaker at workshops and conferences in 30 different countries, in all the world's continents except Antarctica – from as far north as Svalbard/Spitzbergen in the polar circle to down under in Australia. The author of 60

published papers and the author/editor of 7 books, Dr. Mejia teaches and writes on maritime policy, maritime law, human factors, safety, and security-related issues.

He earned a *Bachelor of Science* at the United States Naval Academy (Annapolis, Maryland) and a *Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy* at the Fletcher School (Tufts University, Massachusetts). He also has a *Master of Science in Maritime Safety Administration* from the World Maritime University (Malmö, Sweden) and a *Doctor of Philosophy* from Lund University (Lund, Sweden).

Before joining the World Maritime University, Mejia served as a commissioned officer in the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard. He saw duty on board various naval and coast guard vessels as well as shore-based facilities in the Philippines. Among his notable assignments were Deputy Executive Director, Secretariat of the Multi-Sectoral Task Force on Maritime Development; Assistant Chief of Staff for Navigational Safety, CG-10; Station Commander of Coast Guard Station Iligan; and Commanding Officer of Port State Control Manila.

Mejia is a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1988 and the Don Bosco (Mandaluyong) High School Batch of 1981. He and Mrs. Rebecca Mejia are parents to Jemima, Maxine, and Isaac.