

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 2014

Statement from the Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta (PIHABF) Organizing Committee

MANILA, Philippines – The organizers of the longest running balloon event in Asia – the Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta (PIHABF): “*A Weekend of Everything that Flies*,” maintains its decision not to hold the 19th PIHABF this year, but instead, prepare for a bigger event scheduled for February 12-15, 2015.

Amidst reports of a balloon event taking place in Clark, Pampanga in April 2014, spearheaded by Mr. Ronnie Tiotuico of the Department of Tourism (DOT) Regional Office, the PIHABF Organizing Committee has issued the following statement:

Preparation for the Hot Air Balloon Fiesta is a major undertaking.

The decision not to hold a Fiesta this year was not undertaken lightly. From the perspective of the PIHABF organizers, our 2013 event (featuring more balloons than ever, the highly impressive Breitling Jet Acrobatic Team, and the myriad of other flying, ground and static events) would be a hard act to follow without allowing sufficient time to plan, prepare and book new and interesting activities.

We believe that by suspending the 2014 Hot Air Balloon Fiesta, allowing our organizing committee more time to secure a suitable venue for the fiesta and investing more time in planning, securing sponsorships and implementing enhancements, we can offer our public spectators a truly safe and world-class event in 2015.

PIHABF will not be part of the April 2014 event in Clark, Pampanga. We will not participate in the planning, organization or staging of the event. We disclaim any association with the organization or management of the said event.

We hope that the organizers of the April 2014 event, headed by Mr. Ronnie Tiotuico, have carefully looked into the many safety requirements and issues involved in staging an event of this scale. PIHABF is concerned that the length of time allocated for them to learn the processes and preparations for this kind of activity is too short. We hope they are not misrepresenting their expertise in implementing an airshow to

prospective sponsors, participants and especially the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP).

The PIHABF organizers have worked hard to develop operational and safety procedures. With an admirable safety record, we have built trust with event participants and other valued partners. We value this reputation, built on a foundation of 20 years of experience.

We recognize that the balloon fiesta is an activity that the international aviation community looks forward to. Any untoward incident would impact on the good name of PIHABF organizers and damage the reputation of the Philippines.

We assure the public that we are already working hard on the planning and preparation for a bigger and even better 19th Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta in 2015. We are excited for everyone to be a part of it.

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For more information, email:

PIHABF Organizing Committee
info@philballoonfest.com