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Rome takes campaign to host World Expo to PH

By Franco Jose C. Baroña

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However, Romeo Orlandi, special ambassador for Bid Committee Expo 2030 Roma, is optimistic that Rome will eventually win the bid.

"We are confident because our candidacy is pretty much in line with the needs of humankind these days. We face stiff competition, but we are fully confident that our candidacy is strong," Orlandi said in an interview with The Manila Times on Friday. "The Italian government is fully behind the project, which has been respected for its openness and its capacity to be sustainable."

Orlandi, a special ambassador appointed by the Italian government, will travel around the world to try to convince the government of the delegates at the Paris "votation" next year to choose Rome. His first stop is Manila.

"I have been given the task to convince 22 countries in Asia from Armenia to the Philippines, from Caucasus to the countries in the Pacific Ocean," he said.



FOUR DIPLOMATS AND A LADY (From left to right) Michael Alexander Ang, Consul ad honorem, Honorary Consulate of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Manila, Italian Ambassador to the Philippines Marco Clemente, Manila Times President and COO Blanca Mercado, Special Envoy Romeo Orlandi and Deputy Head of Mission Eugeniu Rotaru at The Manila Times office in Intramuros on Friday, Oct. 7, 2022. PHOTO BY RENE H. DILAN

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The title chosen by Rome for the exhibition is "People and Territories" which, according to Orlandi, is "a challenging synopsis."

"To put together people from different territories is in a sense an example of democracy, openness, inclusion. We want to hear what the other countries can offer, and we are ready to offer something else," he said.

Orlandi said in choosing the title, Rome is creating a synthesis rather than selling a product to other countries.

"We are not selling our vision of the future, we are not selling our solution to common problems, but we are ready to discuss within the framework of the openness of people and territories," he emphasized.

Rome has always been a host of different cultures "always with the idea to integrate different cultures and not to reject them," Orlandi said.

He cited as an example the huge Filipino community in Italy, particularly in Rome.

"Filipinos are well respected, and they are well integrated in Italian society. They create an economic value," said Orlandi.

He noted that Italy firmly holds the belief that being tolerant and respectful of minorities are not only duties that human beings have but something that can also have an

"The more you integrate people the better it is not only for society but also for the economy," said Orlandi.

The symbol chosen by Rome for its possible hosting of the World Expo 2030 is the arch, which is the symbol of openness.

"We are saying that the door is open, please go through the arch and we are ready to welcome you in Rome," said Orlandi.

He stressed that the opening of the arch indicates a common path, where there is no arrogance and no individualism but openness to walk together because the world needs shared solutions for common problems.

"We must be united, this is our message," said Orlandi. "We are ready as a country to discuss with other countries. We are not just going to sell a package and this means helping in the selection of the site, construction and dismantling of the pavilions. We offer a collaboration rather than exchanging as a quid pro quo from one government to another government."

He said this is in line with Italy's society, economy, and political values.

The official election of the host country for World Expo 2020 will be done next year in November in Paris by Bureau International des Expositions member states.

A total of 170 countries will take part in the exhibition including the Philippines.

"If we win, 30 million people are expected to visit Rome," said Orlandi. "We are not going to cut any tree, we are not going to leave any monumental legacy such as huge buildings. Whatever will build will be either recycled or given to the population there."