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FURNITURE FOR APEC MEETINGS TO BE AUCTIONED OFF

MANILA, Nov 25 (Bernama) - The Philippines' "world-class" furniture the Asia-Pacific leaders used during their Manila meetings will be auctioned off on Wednesday, an official said today.

APEC secretariat chief Delia Albert said the items include chairs, tables and furnishings that adorned the leaders' functions rooms at the state-owned Philippines International Convention Centre (PICC).

The PICC, located along Manila's scenic Roxas boulevard, was the venue of informal meetings of APEC heads of state prior to their summit at Subic freeport today.

Albert, the Philippines envoy to Australia, said they were still drawing up the mechanics in disposing of the items which were donated by furniture exporters "for the love of country."

But, she said, "I think the items now are worth more than their actual prices because of added historical value."

Expected to fetch a premium price are those pieces of furniture assigned to the function rooms of US President Bill Clinton and other leaders, including Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Owners of the furniture, however, have the option to keep them or put them on sale at a premium price.

Albert said leading Filipino furniture makers, interior designers, horticulturists and gallery owners displayed their "best wares" at the PICC "at no cost to the government."

Others included the Centre for International Trade and Exhibition Mission, the Philippines Institute of Interior Designs, the Chamber of Furniture Manufacturers and the Antique Association of the Philippines.

This was in response to President Fidel Ramos' appeal for private sector involvement in an international event of tremendous significance to the Philippines, Albert said. -- BERNAMA

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