

**PGMA'S STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE 1ST
REGULAR SESSION OF THE 12TH CONGRESS**

HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES, BATASANG PAMBANSA, QUEZON CITY

23 JULY 2001

HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT RAMOS, SENATE PRESIDENT DRILON AND THE OTHER SENATORS, SPEAKER DE VENECIA AND THE OTHER CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN, THE JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT, THE MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, MGA MARALITANG TAGALUNGSOD NANONOOD NGAYON SA VIDEO WALL AT SA TV; MGA MARAMING NAKIKINIG SA RADYO; MAHAL KONG KABABAYAN:

KAMAKAILAN, MAY SUMULAT SA AKING TATLONG BATANG TAGA-PAYATAS, SINA JAYSON, JOMAR AT ERWIN. GINAWA NILANG PAPER BOATS ANG LIHAM AT PINALUTANG SA PASIG RIVER PATUNGO SA MALACAÑANG.

ITO ANG SINULAT NG SAMPUNG TAONG GULANG NA SI JOMAR PABALAN: "SANA PO AY MABIGYAN NG PERMANENTENG TRABAHO ANG TATAY KO PARA HINDI SIYA MAHIRAPAN."

SABI NAMAN NI JASON VANN BANOAN, SAMPUNG TAONG GULANG: "SANA PO MATULUNGAN NINYO AKO NA MAKATAPOS SA PAG-AARAL KO HANGGANG KOLEHIYO, KASI PO ANG NAGPAPAARAL SA AKIN AY ANG LOLA KO LAMANG."

AT ANG TANGING NAIS NI ERWIN DOLERA, WALONG TAONG GULANG: IPASARA ANG PAYATAS DUMPSITE, AT BIGYAN NG LUPA ANG KANYANG PAMILYA.

NAPAKALINAW, NAPAKASIMPLE ANG HILING NG MGA ANAK NG PAYATAS: TRABAHO. EDUKASYON. SARILING TAHANAN. IDAGDAG NA RIN: PAGKAIN SA BAWAT MESA. ITO ANG MITHIIN NG MASA.

AND THIS, IN COMMON SENSE AND PLAIN TALK, IS THE CORE OF MY VISION.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE MUST BE ROOTED IN THE PAST.

A REVOLUTION GAVE BIRTH TO THE FIRST REPUBLIC IN ASIA.

A SENSE OF NATIONHOOD WAS BORN BUT ALSO THE DREAM OF A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL FILIPINOS. ANDRES BONIFACIO, THE POOR MAN, THE GREAT PLEBEIAN WHO STARTED THIS REVOLUTION, NURTURED THIS DREAM.

IN 1963, ANOTHER POOR MAN ROSE. HE ROSE TO THE MOST POWERFUL POSITION IN THE LAND AND RISKED EVERYTHING TO FULFILL THE POOR MAN'S DREAM.

INSPIRED BY THE GREAT PLEBEIAN, MY FATHER, PRESIDENT DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL, PROMULGATED THE LAND REFORM LAW TO EMANCIPATE THE PEASANT FROM A FEUDAL BONDAGE TO THE SOIL.

IN 1986 FILIPINOS PEACEFULLY RECLAIMED THEIR CIVIL LIBERTIES IN THE PEOPLE POWER REVOLUTION. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF CORAZON AQUINO, WE REAFFIRMED OUR COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ON A MERE STRETCH OF HIGHWAY -- WITH HARDLY A DROP OF BLOOD SHED OR A SHOT FIRED IN ANGER.

SIX MONTHS AGO, ON THAT SAME HIGHWAY, PEOPLE ROSE UP TO RESTORE MORALITY AS THE FIRST INSTITUTION OF SOCIETY AND AS THE ANIMATING PRINCIPLE OF JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW.

THUS, WE SEE, THE HISTORIC PILLARS OF A NATIONAL VISION: PROSPERITY, FREEDOM, JUSTICE.

ITO ANG MGA LAYUNING IPINAGLABAN NG BAYAN MULA NANG ITO'Y ISILANG:
KASAGANAAN, KALAYAAN, KATARUNGAN.

WE ALSO SEE IN OUR GREAT HISTORY A PROGRESSIVE ADVANCEMENT
TOWARDS THE ULTIMATE GOAL TO TRANSFER POWER OVER THE STATE FROM
THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BOSSES TO THE PEOPLE.

LAST MAY ONE, THE POOR RAISED THEIR VOICES IN ANGER AND THEIR FISTS IN
FURY. IMPRISONED IN POVERTY, SHACKLED TO SHAME, DENIED JUSTICE IN
SOCIETY, THEY PERSONALLY DELIVERED THE MESSAGE THAT, 100 YEARS AFTER
THEY REVOLTED TO ESTABLISH THIS NATION, THEY HAD YET TO PARTAKE OF
THE NATIONAL DREAM.

DINIG NA DINIG KO ANG PAHAYAG NILA, AT NAPAKUMBABA AKO. HINDI BA'T NASA
BALIKAT KO ANG TUNGKULING MAMUNO SA PAKIKIBAKA LABAN SA SALOT NG
KAHIRAPAN? AKO NA SIYANG ANAK NG TINAWAG NA "POOR BOY FROM LUBAO"?

I TAKE THIS DUTY UPON MY SHOULDERS.

I DO SO WITHOUT FEAR OR FOREBODING OF FAILURE.

FOR I KNOW THAT THE GREATEST OBSTACLE WE AS A NATION MUST OVERCOME
IS INSIDE US. THE ENEMY TO BEAT IS OURSELVES: WHEN WE SPREAD DIVISION
RATHER THAN UNITY; WHEN WE PUT OURSELVES ABOVE COUNTRY AND PROFIT
ABOVE FAIRNESS; WHEN WE THINK THE WORST OF THOSE WITH WHOM WE
SHOULD BE WORKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD, AND WHEN WE WALLOW IN
DESPAIR RATHER THAN RISE TO ACHIEVEMENT --INDEED, WHEN WE MAKE
POLITICS REPLACE PATRIOTISM IN OUR COUNTRY'S HOUR OF NEED.

LET US, HERE IN THE HOME OF DEMOCRACY, THEREFORE RESOLVE, TO GRAB
HOLD OF THIS ENEMY WITHIN, AND BEAT HIM.

THE INTERNAL ENEMY ENGAGED, THE BATTLE WILL NOT BE EASY. WE INHERITED VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS.

FROM 2.5 MILLION JOBLESS FOUR YEARS AGO, UNEMPLOYMENT NOW STANDS AT FOUR MILLION. FROM A BUDGET SURPLUS IN 1997 UNDER PRESIDENT RAMOS OF MORE THAN A BILLION PESOS, MY GOVERNMENT INHERITED A DEFICIT EXCEEDING 140 BILLION PESOS. IN THE SAME PERIOD, POVERTY INCIDENCE ROSE FROM 36.8 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION IN 1997 TO 40 PERCENT IN THE YEAR 2004.

AND, UNLIKE THE SITUATION IN 1997 WHEN A BATTERED ASIA COULD STILL LEAN ON THE STRENGTH OF THE ADVANCED ECONOMIES, TODAY OUR MAIN TRADING PARTNERS LIKE JAPAN AND AMERICA ARE SLOWING DOWN AS WELL.

BUT WE WILL PREVAIL. WE WILL PREVAIL BECAUSE THE MAINSTREAM OF OUR NATION IS UNITED.

IN THE MAY ELECTIONS, THIS ADMINISTRATION RECEIVED A SOLID MANDATE TO CARRY ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNANCE AND REFORM.

I DO NOT VIEW THIS MANDATE AS A CHOICE BETWEEN PERSONALITIES OF THIS ADMINISTRATION AND THOSE OF THE OPPOSITION.

I SEE IT RATHER AS A VOTE FOR ALL OF US -- ADMINISTRATION AND OPPOSITION -- TO ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES, STOP LOOKING BACK, AND MOVE FORWARD, MOST ESPECIALLY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MASS POVERTY.

HINALAL TAYO UPANG LABANAN ANG KAHIRAPAN, HINDI ANG ISA'T-ISA.

OUR CHALLENGE IS CLEAR: SUGPUIN ANG KAHIRAPAN.

IN THIS SPIRIT, I APPEAL TO EVERYONE HERE TODAY TO UNDERTAKE SOMETHING UNCONVENTIONAL BUT MUCH TO BE DESIRED IN THESE ESPECIALLY HARD TIMES.

FROM TODAY, LET US SET ASIDE BICKERING AND POLITICKING FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR. WE MAY CONGRATULATE OURSELVES ON OUR FORBEARANCE AT THE NEXT STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS.

SA HALIP NG ALITAN, ISANG TAON TAYONG MAGTULUNGAN SA IKABUBUTI NG TAONG BAYAN.

THIS IS OUR DUTY. THIS IS OUR MANDATE. THIS IS OUR MISSION.

UNITY FOR THE COUNTRY'S RECOVERY WILL SET THE STAGE FOR NATIONAL MOBILIZATION NEEDED TO UNDERTAKE THE GREAT AND DIFFICULT TASKS AHEAD.

WHAT ARE THESE TASKS?

WHEN I BECAME PRESIDENT LAST JANUARY, I TOLD THE PEOPLE ABOUT MY VISION OF WINNING THE WAR AGAINST POVERTY WITHIN THE DECADE.

TO SUCCEED, THE TEMPLATE OF OUR NATIONAL AGENDA MUST REVOLVE AROUND FOUR COMPONENTS -- APAT NA ELEMENTO NG PAKIKIBAKA SA KAHIRAPAN.

THE FIRST IS AN ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY OF FREE ENTERPRISE APPROPRIATE TO THE 21st CENTURY. PAGNENEGOSYO UPANG DUMAMI ANG TRABAHO. NOT A PITILESS FREE-FOR-ALL BUT FREE ENTERPRISE WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE.

THE SECOND COMPONENT IS A MODERNIZED AGRICULTURAL SECTOR FOUNDED ON SOCIAL EQUITY. PALALAGUIN ANG KITA AT ANI NG MARALITANG TAGABUKID.

THE THIRD COMPONENT IS A SOCIAL BIAS TOWARD THE DISADVANTAGED TO BALANCE OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN. PAGKALINGA SA MGA BAHAGI NG LIPUNAN NA NAIIWANAN NG KAUNLARAN.

AND THE FOURTH COMPONENT IS TO RAISE THE MORAL STANDARDS OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY. MORALIDAD SA GOBYERNO AT LIPUNAN BILANG SALIGAN NG TUNAY NA KAUNLARAN.

PAGNEGOSYO, PAGPAPAUNLAD NG AGRIKULTURA, KALINGA SA NAGIGIPIT NA SEKTOR, AT MORALIDAD SA GOBYERNO AT LIPUNAN -- ITO ANG MGA SANDATA NATIN SA DIGMAANG-BAYAN LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN.

I HAVE THEREFORE ORGANIZED MY INTERPRETATION OF THE STATE OF THE NATION ALONG THESE FOUR COMPONENTS OF OUR NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY IDEOLOGY.

THE FIRST IS AN ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY FOR THE 21st CENTURY. UNDER THIS PHILOSOPHY, THE WAY TO FIGHT POVERTY IS TO CREATE JOBS, NOT DESTROY THEM.

TO CREATE JOBS, WE WILL ATTRACT INVESTMENTS. TO ATTRACT INVESTMENTS, WE WILL ATTEND TO MACRO MEASURES AND CONCERNS.

IN ADDRESSING MACRO CONCERNS, WE WILL FOCUS ON LONG-TERM STRUCTURAL ISSUES. WE STARTED WITH THE REFORM OF THE POWER SECTOR, AND I CONGRATULATE THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE HERE AND WHO WERE IN THE PREVIOUS CONGRESS FOR THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT. NOW, WE WILL TURN TO OTHER BASICS LIKE INFRASTRUCTURE, PRODUCTIVITY, AND THE SAVINGS RATE.

IN FOCUSING ON INFRASTRUCTURE, WE WILL HARNESS THE PRIVATE SECTOR VIA THE BUILD-OPERATE-AND-TRANSFER LAW. OUR PRIORITIES INCLUDE TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES FOR HIGH-SPEED PRODUCTIVITY AT LOW COST, ROADS TO TARGET TOURIST DESTINATIONS, INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE, MASS TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR METRO MANILA, AND COMMUTER AND TRANSPORT SYSTEMS TO DISPERSE COMMUNITIES TOWARDS SUBIC-CLARK AND CALABARZON.

WE WILL MINIMIZE BOTTLENECKS TO PRODUCTIVITY, SUCH AS THE HIGH COST OF POWER, DETERRENTS TO INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURE, OVERLY CONFRONTATIONAL LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS, AND CORRUPTION AND RED TAPE AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVELS.

TO REDUCE THE COST OF POWER, WE WILL BEGIN IMPLEMENTING THE POWER SECTOR REFORM LAW WHICH THE PREVIOUS CONGRESS JUST PASSED.

TO REDUCE DETERRENTS TO INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURE, I ASK CONGRESS TO ENACT A LAW MAKING FARM LAND ACCEPTABLE AS LOAN COLLATERAL.

TO REDUCE EXCESSIVE FRICTION IN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS, WE WILL GO THE EXTRA MILE TO WORK FOR INDUSTRIAL PEACE, AND TO WORK WITH LABOR AND BUSINESS TO RETRAIN WORKERS FOR THE FAST-CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES OF THE NEW ECONOMY.

TO REDUCE CORRUPTION IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, CABINET SECRETARIES WILL HAVE TO DELIVER TANGIBLE RESULTS WITHIN 12 MONTHS IN FIGHTING GRAFT. OUR NEW E-PROCUREMENT PROGRAM WILL SAVE BILLIONS AND MINIMIZE ANOMALIES. AND I GAVE THE REINFORCED PRESIDENTIAL ANTI-GRAFT COMMISSION ADDED TEETH TO INVESTIGATE AND PROSECUTE MOTO PROPIO CORRUPTION IN HIGH PLACES. AND WE WILL MAKE THE B.I.R. AND CUSTOMS SHOWCASES IN THIS FIGHT AGAINST GRAFT AND CORRUPTION.

TO REDUCE CORRUPTION AMONG ELECTIVE OFFICIALS, WE WILL HELP HONEST PEOPLE GET ELECTED BY FINANCING THE FULL COMPUTERIZATION OF ELECTIONS. WE HAVE RELEASED TWO BILLION PESOS OF THE NEEDED 3.4

NEEDED FOR COMPUTERIZATION. I ASK CONGRESS TO ADD ANOTHER 500 MILLION IN THE 2002 BUDGET. LET US MAKE THE POLLS OF MAY 14, 2001 THE LAST NATIONAL ELECTIONS THAT USE PRIMITIVE METHODS OF VOTER IDENTIFICATION AND BALLOT TABULATION.

TO REDUCE RED TAPE IN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, WITHIN 12 MONTHS, ALL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WILL IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO CUT IN HALF THE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES REQUIRED FOR THEIR SERVICE. HOUSING PERMITS SHALL ONLY NEED 45 APPROVALS, INSTEAD OF 188. IF LEGISLATION IS REQUIRED TO EFFECT THIS EFFICIENCY, THE AGENCIES CONCERNED WILL DRAFT APPROPRIATE BILLS FOR MY ENDORSEMENT TO CONGRESS.

I CONGRATULATE THE LTO FOR ISSUING LICENSES IN HALF AN HOUR. I CONGRATULATE THE NBI FOR ISSUING CLEARANCES IN ONE DAY.

I ASK OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS LIKEWISE TO STREAMLINE THEIR OPERATIONS AND SLASH RED TAPE. THERE MUST BE CONTINUITY BETWEEN NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BE INVESTOR-FRIENDLY.

WE WILL ADDRESS ISSUES RELATED TO THE SAVINGS RATE, SO THAT THE COST OF DOMESTIC CAPITAL CAN BE REDUCED. THESE ISSUES ARE TIED UP WITH THE STRENGTH OF THE FINANCIAL AND FISCAL SECTORS.

WITH REGARD TO THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, I ASK CONGRESS TO AMEND THE BSP CHARTER AND THE BANKING ACT TO IMPROVE SUPERVISION AND PROMOTE FINANCIAL PRUDENCE. THESE AMENDMENTS SHOULD TAKE US OUT OF THE MONEY-LAUNDERING LIST.

WE ADHERE TO A FREELY CONVERTIBLE PESO AND MARKET EXCHANGE RATES. HOWEVER, WE SUPPORT THE CENTRAL BANK'S MEASURES TO CURB SPECULATION.

TO THOSE SPECULATING AGAINST THE PESO, I ONLY HAVE THIS TO SAY: HAVE YOU NO PITY FOR THE COMMON PEOPLE, HAVE YOU NO LOVE FOR YOUR COUNTRY? MAKONSYENSYA NAMAN KAYO.

INSTEAD OF SPECULATING, LET US FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR. WE WILL DESIGN INNOVATIVE POLICIES TO DEVELOP OUR CAPITAL MARKET. WE WILL SET UP A SECONDARY HOUSING MORTGAGE MARKET, AN ASSET MANAGEMENT COMPANY, AND A PROVIDENT FUND FOR OVERSEAS FILIPINOS. WE WILL SIMPLIFY AND CLARIFY THE SYSTEM OF INCENTIVES. WE WILL INTERPRET INVESTMENT LAWS IN FAVOR OF THE INVESTOR.

AND I ASK CONGRESS TO ENACT LAWS ON CAPITAL MARKET REFORM SUCH AS THE PERSONAL EQUITY RETIREMENT ACT, THE INVESTMENT COMPANY ACT, THE SECURITIZATION ACT, AND AMENDMENTS TO THE SECURITIES REGULATION CODE.

WITH REGARD TO THE FISCAL SECTOR, WE WILL CONTROL THE BUDGET DEFICIT BY COLLECTING TAXES VIGOROUSLY AND SPENDING MONEY PRUDENTLY. FOR THE LONGER TERM, I ASK CONGRESS TO ENACT A LAW PROVIDING FOR A GROSS INCOME TAX.

ALISIN NA NATIN ANG MGA TAX DEDUCTION NA NAGIGING SANHI LAMANG NG KATAKUT-TAKOT NA CORRUPTION.

THE STRENGTH OF THE FINANCIAL AND FISCAL SECTORS PARTLY LIES IN HOW WE USE THE REALITIES IN THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT TO OUR BENEFIT. THUS WE WILL ENHANCE OUR RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, WHOSE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER CONTINUES TO MAKE IT IMPORTANT AS A FACTOR IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE REGION AND IN THE NATION. WE WILL ALSO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH JAPAN, OUR BIGGEST SOURCE OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND A MAJOR TRADING PARTNER. AND MORE AND MORE, WE WILL DESIGN FOREIGN POLICY AND FOREIGN TRADE POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF ASEAN. AND I ASK CONGRESS TO ENACT A LAW GIVING OVERSEAS FILIPINOS, WHO CONTINUE TO PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STABILITY, GIVING THEM THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

PREPARING OUR GROWTH SECTORS OF THE FUTURE ENABLES US TO TAP THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE 21st CENTURY.

WE WILL PROMOTE FAST-GROWING INDUSTRIES WHERE HIGH-VALUE JOBS ARE MOST PLENTIFUL. ONE OF THEM IS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, OR ICT, OUR ENGLISH LITERACY, OUR APTITUDE AND SKILLS GIVE US A COMPETITIVE EDGE IN ICT. FILIPINO WORKERS ARE RANKED NUMBER ONE IN THE FIELD, NUMBER ONE AMONG KNOWLEDGE WORKERS. AND ANALYSTS POINT TO TWO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS THE LIKELY WORLD CENTERS FOR SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT AND DATA MANAGEMENT IN THIS DECADE: INDIA AND THE PHILIPPINES. WE WILL LIVE UP TO THAT FORECAST.

AS A FIRST STEP, LET US DECLARE THAT TECHNOLOGY IS THE FOUNDATION OF FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AS CHINA DID IN 1998. ICT WILL JUMPSTART OUR OLD STALLING ECONOMY AND MAKE IT LEAPFROG INTO THE NEW ECONOMY.

HIGH-SPEED CONNECTIVITY AT LOW COST WILL INCREASE THE USE OF ICT. IT IS ALSO THE WAY FOR SMART AND GLOBE TO PROPERLY INTERCONNECT. THEN WE WILL FINALLY HEAR THE LAST OF THOSE ANNOYING WORDS, "NETWORK BUSY."

OUR RULES WILL PROMOTE RATHER THAN REGULATE ICT, BUT IN TURN, I ASK CELLULAR PHONE COMPANIES TO STOP CHARGING ON DROPPED CALLS, THIS IS BOTH IRRITATING AND UNFAIR TO THE PUBLIC.

I ASK CONGRESS TO ENACT LAWS TO ADDRESS INTERNET PRIVACY AND SECURITY, ALLOW FOR MULTI-MEDIA CONVERGENCE, AND CREATE A DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

TO PREPARE OUR YOUTH TO BE THE NEXT GENERATION OF KNOWLEDGE WORKERS, WE WILL UPGRADE MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHING IN BASIC EDUCATION.

WE WILL TAKE A HARD LOOK AT EDUCATION AND ASK: IS IT PREPARING THE YOUTH FOR THE JOBS OF THE NEW ECONOMY? OR IS IT JUST-KEEPING-THEM-OFF-THE-STREETS-UNTIL-THEY-ARE-THROWN-THERE JOBLESS AFTER GRADUATION? IF THEY FINISH SCHOOL AT ALL.

TO INCREASE THE CHANCES OF FILIPINO CHILDREN FINISHING SCHOOL, WE WILL MINIMIZE THE COST OF GOING TO SCHOOL. WHEN WE STOPPED THE COLLECTION OF MISCELLANEOUS FEES LAST ENROLLMENT DAY, 900,000 MORE STUDENTS ENROLLED THAN ANTICIPATED. AND TO REDUCE THE TIME AND MONEY SPENT TO ACTUALLY TRAVEL TO SCHOOL, I WANT A SCHOOL BUILDING IN EVERY BARANGAY BY 2004. IBIG NATING TUMALAS ANG ULO NG MGA ESTUDYANTE, AT HINDI MALASPAG ANG PAA.

TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AS REQUIRED BY THE NEW ECONOMY, WE WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEXTBOOKS PER STUDENT AS WELL AS THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION. THIS YEAR ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL HAVE TEXTBOOKS FOR PRIORITY SUBJECTS IN GRADES ONE TO FOUR AND IN THE FIRST AND SECOND YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL. AND THEY WILL HAVE BETTER PAID AND THEREFORE BETTER MOTIVATED TEACHERS NOT TO MENTION MORE TEACHERS BECAUSE SOUND FISCAL MANAGEMENT ENABLED US TO PROVIDE A SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET OF 1.5 BILLION PESOS TO HIRE MORE TEACHERS AND INCREASE THEIR PAY WITHOUT INCREASING OUR DEFICIT.

ASIDE FROM ICT, WE ALSO HAVE THE COMPETITIVE EDGE IN TOURISM IN THE NATURAL WONDERS OF OUR COUNTRY AND THE NATURAL WARMTH OF OUR PEOPLE. WE WILL PROVIDE THE ROADS TO THOSE WONDERS AND THE MEANS TO TAKE THE TOURISTS THERE. THUS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO LIBERALIZE THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY.

THE SECOND COMPONENT OF OUR NATIONAL AGENDA TO FIGHT POVERTY IS THE MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE FOUNDED ON SOCIAL EQUITY.

NASA BUKID ANG NAKARARAMING MARALITA, KAYA PAYAYAMANIN NATIN ANG PAGSASAKA AT PANGINGISDA.

THERE CAN BE A MILLION NEW JOBS IN AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES. WITHIN THE YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SHALL BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM TO GENERATE THEM. WE WILL APPROACH THIS WITH A SENSE OF URGENCY. I DO NOT WANT THE ONE MILLION NEW JOBS TO COME IN THE LONG TERM. I WANT A TIMETABLE. I WANT TO IDENTIFY ACCOUNTABILITIES. I WANT MILESTONES.

HINDI ITO PANGAKONG MAPAPAKO DAHIL NAKASALALAY RITO ANG KABUHAYAN NG MILYUNG-MILYONG MARALITANG PILIPINO.

MGA KABABAYAN KONG MAGSASAKA, ANG INYONG PANGULO MISMO ANG MAGBABANTAY SA KAGALINGAN NINYO.

STARTING TOMORROW I WILL HOLD OFFICE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, UNTIL I CAN GET A CLEAR AND DEMONSTRABLE PICTURE OF OUR AGRICULTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR OUR FIRST 100 DAYS AND I CAN SEE THE PROGRAM FOR THE MILLION NEW JOBS GET OFF THE GROUND, AND I CAN SEE THAT SHORT-TERM GOALS ARE IN SYNCH WITH THE GOALS OF FARMER GROUPS AND AGRIBUSINESS.

UPANG LUMIKHA NG ISANG MILYONG TRABAHO SA KANAYUNAN, TUTUPARIN NATIN SA WAKAS ANG AGRICULTURAL AND FISHERIES MODERNIZATION ACT O AFMA. HINDI BABABA SA DALAWAMPUNG BILYONG PISO ANG GAGASTUSIN UPANG MAPALAKAS ANG KITA, ANI AT HULI NG MAGSASAKA AT MANGINGISDA. KASAMA NA RITO ANG MGA SUMUSUNOD: ANIM NA BILYON SA PATUBIG; DALAWANG BILYON SA POST-HARVEST FACILITIES; DALAWANG BILYON SA IMPRASTRATURA; DALAWANG BILYON SA PAUTANG; AT DALAWANG BILYON SA RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

THERE IS MONEY -- AND THERE WILL BE MONEY -- AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SHALL DEMONSTRATE ITS CAPACITY TO USE THESE FUNDS.

SA ANIM NA BILYONG PISO SA PATUBIG AT DALAWANG BILYON SA POST-HARVEST MULA APARRI HANGGANG JOLO, MAKAKALIKHA TAYO NG WALONGDAANG LIBONG TRABAHO. SA PAGBUKAS NG DALAWANGDAANG LIBONG EKTARYA NG

BAGONG LUPANG MASASAKA MAKAKALIKHA ITO NG DALAWANGDAANG LIBONG TRABAHO. SA GANITONG PARAAN MALILIKHA ANG ISANG MILYONG TRABAHO SA KANAYUNAN.

NGUNIT DAPAT TIYAKIN ANG MERKADO NG PRODUKSYON NG MGA BAGONG MAGTATRABAHO SA AGRIKULTURA AT PANGINGISDA PATI NA RIN NG KASALUKUYANG MAGSASAKA AT MANGINGISDA.

PARA SA KAGINHAWAAN NG TAONG-BAYAN, DAPAT HINDI NAGKUKULANG ANG BIGAS. SABI NGA NG AFMA, SIKAPIN NATING MAGKARON NG RICE SELF-SUFFICIENCY. IN THE MEANTIME, WE WILL REMOVE THE MONOPOLY OF THE NFA IN IMPORTATION. IF A SHORTAGE SEEMS LIKELY, WE WILL ALLOW THE FARMERS THEMSELVES TO IMPORT RICE, BASTA MAGBAYAD SILA NG CUSTOMS DUTIES. GAGAMITIN NAMAN ANG BINAYARANG BUWIS PARA SA MODERNISASYON NG RICE PRODUCTION.

MURANG BIGAS AT MASAGANANG MAGSASAKA -- ITO ANG HANGAD NATIN PARA SA MASA.

MAS MALAKI PA ANG MATUTULONG NG GOBYERNO SA MGA MAGSASAKA NG NIYOG ORAS NA MARESOLBA PABOR SA MAGSASAKA ANG KASO NG COCONUT LEVY. KAPAG MANGYARI ITO, GAGAMITIN ANG PONDO PARA SA MODERNISASYON NG MGA NIYUGAN. PINAWALANG-BISA KO ANG KAUTUSAN SA COCONUT LEVY MULA SA DATING ADMINISTRASYON UPANG HINDI MADEHADO ANG MAGSASAKA. HINDI TAYO HIHINTO HABANG HINDI NAKIKINABANG ANG MANGNYO-NIYOG SA COCO LEVY FUND.

TO FIGHT POVERTY, AGRICULTURAL MODERNIZATION WILL BE SOCIALLY EQUITABLE. WE SHALL REDEEM IN EARNEST THE PROMISE OF LAND REFORM, A COMMITMENT THAT SPANS SEVERAL PRESIDENTS. ISA PA ITONG PANGAKONG HINDI DAPAT MAPAKO.

BAWAT TAON, MAMAHAGI ANG GOBYERNO NG (DALAWANGDAANG) LIBONG EKTARYA PARA SA REPORMA SA LUPA: 100,000 OF PRIVATE LAND AND 100,000

HECTARES OF PUBLIC LAND, INCLUDING 100 ANCESTRAL DOMAIN TITLES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.

WE WILL BRING OUR WAR AGAINST POVERTY TO RURAL MINDANAO, ESPECIALLY THE AREAS MOST AFFECTED BY THE PAST CONFLICTS. WE HAVE HELPED MORE THAN HALF OF THE 27,000 EVACUEE FAMILIES RETURN TO THEIR FARMS AND REHABILITATE THEIR HOMES. THE REST WILL GO BACK HOME THIS YEAR. IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE WILL SPEND 500 MILLION PESOS FROM THE OPEC FUND FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN THESE AREAS.

IF THE LONG-DELAYED MALMAR IRRIGATION DAM IS NOT COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER, I WILL TRANSFER ITS CONSTRUCTION TO THE ARMY ENGINEERING BRIGADE. THIS DAM IS SO IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT WILL IRRIGATE 3,000 HECTARES IMMEDIATELY, WITH ANOTHER 10,000 TO FOLLOW NEXT YEAR.

WE WILL MAKE MINDANAO THE GATEWAY TO ASEAN BY PUTTING BACK ON TRACK THE EAST ASEAN GROWTH AREA.

INSHALA, MAHIMO TINU-OD ANG SAAD SA MINDANAO UBOS SA AKONG ADMINISTRASYON.

THE THIRD COMPONENT OF OUR NATIONAL AGENDA IS A SOCIAL BIAS TO BALANCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

THIS SOCIAL BIAS CONSISTS IN IMMEDIATE MEASURES FOR THE POOR AS WELL AS IMPROVING AND ENSURING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE MASSES.

BUKOD SA MAGBUBUKID, MARALITANG TAGA-LUNGSOD ANG MALAKING SEKTOR NA KAILANGAN ANG DAGLIANG TULONG.

UPANG AGAD SILANG MATULUNGAN, NABIGYAN NA NG ATING ADMINISTRASYON ANG KARAPATANG BUMILI NG LUPANG TINITIRAHAN SA MAHIGIT WALUMPUNG

LIBONG PAMILYANG MARALITA. AND WE WILL WORK DOUBLE TIME TO GIVE SECURITY OF LAND TENURE TO 150,000 URBAN POOR FAMILIES EVERY YEAR. SANDAAN AT LIMAMPUNG LIBONG PAMILYA TAUN-TAON ANG MAGKAKARON NG KARAPATAN NA BUMILI NG SARILING TIRAHAN. GINAGAWA KO ITO DAHIL NALULUNGKOT AKO 'PAG MAY NAKIKITA AKONG SQUATTER SA SARILING BAYAN.

DAPAT DIN TUGUNAN ANG KARAINGAN NG MADLA SA MAHAL NA BILIHIN AT KULANG NA SAHOD. UMAASA AKONG MAGPAPASYA ANG KONGRESO O WAGE BOARD SA NARARAPAT NA SWELDO. PANSAMANTALA, NANANAWAGAN AKO SA MGA NEGOSYANTENG MAY KAKAYAHAN: MAGBIGAY NA KAYO AGAD NG EMERGENCY COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE. MAAARI NAMAN ITONG I-CREDIT KAPAG MAY BAGONG SAHOD O ALLOWANCE MULA SA BATAS O SA WAGE BOARD.

SA KABILANG DAKO, KUMIKILOS ANG GOBYERNO UPANG MAPIGILAN ANG PAGTAAS NG PRESYO NG MGA PANGUNAHING PANGANGAILANGAN NG MANGGAGAWA. BINABANTAYAN ANG PRESYO NG LANGIS, AT SALAMAT NAMAN NA BUMABA ITO NOONG BIYERNES. PINAGSISIKAPAN DIN NG GOBYERNONG HUWAG ITAAS ANG PASAHE, LALO NA ANG LRT.

DAHIL PRESYO NG BIGAS AY NAPAKAIMPORTANTE SA MGA MANGGAGAWA, MAGPAPASADA TAYO NG ISANLIBONG ROLLING STORES. ANG MGA MANGGAGAWA AT MARALITA AY MAKAKABILI DITO NG BIGAS SA HALAGANG LABING-APAT NA PISO SA HALIP NA LABING-WALO BAWAT KILO.

BABABA DIN ANG PRESYO NG GAMOT. SA LOOB NG ISANG TAON HAHATIIN NATIN ANG PRESYO NG GAMOT NA MADALAS BILHIN NG MADLA.

AT UPANG IWASAN ANG MALAKING GASTOS SA PAGPAPAGAMOT, ITONG TAON, ILALAHOK SA NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE ANG KALAHATING MILYONG MARALITANG TAGA-LUNGSOD. SA GANOONG PARAAN, ANG INSURANCE ANG MAGBABAYAD NG PAGPAPAGAMOT.

AT UPANG MAIWASAN ANG PAG-UPA NA NAGBABANTANG TUMAAS, TINUTULUNGAN NATIN NA MAGKARON NG SARILING TAHANAN ANG MGA MANGGAGAWA AT MARALITA. HANDA NA ANG SAMPUNG LIBONG TAHAHAN SA

IBA'T-IBANG LUGAR PARA LUMIPAT NA RITO ANG MANGGAGAWA AT MARALITA. PINONDOHAN NA RIN NATIN ANG PAGTAYO NG LABING-WALONG LIBO PANG TAHANAN. TAUN-TAON, MAGTATAYO NG SANDAANG LIBONG TIRAHAN PARA SA MANGGAGAWA AT LIMAMPUNG LIBONG PABAHAY PARA SA HIGIT NA MARALITA. NAKAHANDA SA GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ANG DALAWAMPUNG BILYONG PISO PARA SA PABAHAY NG MANGGAGAWA.

ITAGA NINYO: DALAWAMPUNG BILYONG PISO PARA SA MGA TAHANAN NG MASA. ITO ANG HANDOG NG GOBYERNO PARA SA SEGURIDAD NG PAMILYANG PILIPINO.

UPANG MAPATAKBO NG MABUTI ANG MGA PROGRAMANG ITO, HINIHLING KO SA KONGRESO NA LUMIKHA NG KAGAWARAN NG PABAHAY. A DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING WILL NOT ONLY BUILD HOMES FOR THE POOR, IT WILL ALSO SPARK THE HOUSING INDUSTRY AND CREATE JOBS.

HINIHLING KO RIN SA KONGRESO NA SA TAX REFORM NA GAGAWIN NINYO, DAMIHAN ANG KATEGORIYA NG MANGGAGAWANG HINDI NA KAILANGANG MAGBAYAD NG BUWIS.

MAYROON TAYONG ESPESYAL NA PROYEKTO PARA SA MGA KABATAANG MARALITA NG METRO MANILA NA HINDI NA MAKAPAG-ARAL, NGUNIT WALANG TRABAHO. THIS IS THE EMERGENCY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. BAWAT TAON, DALAWAMPUNG LIBONG OUT-OF-WORK, OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ANG BIBIGYAN NG DAGLIANG TRABAHO. MAAARI MAGTAGPI NG BUBONG, MAG-AYOS NG RAILING, MAG-GWARDYA SA ESKWELA NG KANILANG BARANGAY, MAGLINIS NG KALSADA O ESTERO, O IBA PANG DAGLIANG TRABAHO.

THE SOCIAL BIAS IN OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN INVOLVES ENSURING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE MASSES.

SA SULAT NI ERWIN NA TAGA-PAYATAS -- 'YUNG BINANGGIT KO KANINANG PAG-UMPIISA NG DISKURSO -- HINILING NIYA NA IPASARA ANG DUMPSITE. TALAGA NAMANG DAPAT NANG MAGKAROON TAYO NG BAGONG SISTEMA SA PAG-AASIKASO NG BASURA. BASURA ANG SANHI NG MARAMING PROBLEMA SA SIYUDAD: MASAMANG HANGIN, PAGLAGANAP NG SAKIT, TRAPIK, AT IBA PA.

TAPUSIN NA NATIN ITO. INATASAN KO ANG METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY NA BAGO MAKALIPAS ANG ISANG TAON, MAGLUNSDAD NG PROGRAMA UPANG AYUSIN ANG PROBLEMA NG BASURA.

SUYANG-SUYA NA RIN TAYONG LAHAT, LALO NA ANG MADLA, SA TRAPIKO NG METRO MANILA. BABAWASAN ANG TRAPIK SA TULONG NG MASS TRANSIT. NAGTATAYO TAYO NG LIMANG BAGONG LINYA NG MASS TRANSIT PARA MAKAPAGBIGAY-GINHAWA SA HALOS APAT NA MILYONG PASAHERO. TATLONG LINYA MATATAPOS SA 2004, ISA SA 2005, AT ISA PA SA 2006. THESE FIVE MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS ARE BEING PRIORITIZED BECAUSE THEY WILL ADD 119 KILOMETERS OF RAILWAY PROJECTS. DURING CONSTRUCTION, I EXPECT THE MMDA TO MINIMIZE THE RESULTING CONGESTION, AND I EXPECT IT TO MINIMIZE THE CURRENT CONGESTION WITHIN SIX MONTHS.

MASYADONG MASIKIP ANG METRO MANILA, KAYA MISERABLE ANG BUHAY SA SLUM AREAS. MAGKAKARON NG MABILIS NA TRANSPORTASYONG MAGDURUGTONG NG MGA KARATIG-REHIYON SA KAMAYNILAAN. ANG NASISIKIPAN NA SA MAYNILA, MAKAKALIPAT BALANG ARAW SA MAALIWALAS NA LALAWIGAN.

WE WILL DECONGEST METRO MANILA BY ATTRACTING COMMUNITIES NORTH TOWARDS SUBIC-CLARK, AND SOUTH TOWARDS CALABARZON AND BATANGAS PORT. WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS NOT BY DEMOLISHING SHANTIES BUT BY BUILDING COMMUTER AND TRANSPORT SYSTEMS TO BETTER HOMES.

WHETHER IN METRO MANILA OR IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, WE WILL MAKE MICROFINANCE A CORNERSTONE IN OUR FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY. ANG IBIG SABIHIN NITO AY MALILIIT NA PALUWAGAN PARA SA MALILIIT NA NEGOSYO. KAKALISENSIYA LANG NG OPPORTUNITY MICROFINANCE BANK, ANG UNANG MICRO-LENDING PROGRAM SA BANSA NA NAGING BANGKO. BAWAT TAON, DADAGDAGAN NATIN NG TATLONGDAANG LIBONG MARALITANG KABABAIHAN ANG MAKIKINABANG SA PALUWAGANG PROGRAMA NG MICROFINANCE.

PANAHOON NA UPANG MAKINABANG ANG MALILIIT SA INIIMPOK NG BAYAN. AT UMASA KAYO, NAGBABAYAD ANG MASA. IN MICROFINANCE, THE REPAYMENT RATE IS 98 PERCENT.

WALA PANG KORYENTE ANG MARAMI NATING BARANGAY. KAYA ARAW-ARAW, GABI-GABI, MAGKAKABIT NG KORYENTE SA APAT NA BARANGAY. SA GANOON, WALUMPU'T-LIMANG PORSYENTO NG BARANGAY AY MAGKAKAILAW NA SA LOOB NG ISANG TAON.

WITH EXPORTS SLOWING DOWN DUE TO THE WORLD DOWNTURN, WE WILL STRENGTHEN THE DOMESTIC MARKET. WE WILL INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO PROMOTE SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES OR SMEs ESPECIALLY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. LAST FRIDAY I INAUGURATED THE SME BOARD IN THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE. TO HELP SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, I WILL RESTORE THE POLICY OF PROVIDING GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE FOR THEIR BANK LOANS.

THE FOURTH COMPONENT OF OUR NATIONAL AGENDA IS IMPROVING MORAL STANDARDS AND THE RULE OF LAW.

WE NEED EVERY OUNCE OF RESOURCE TO WAGE THIS WAR ON POVERTY. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE ANYTHING TO WASTE OR GRAFT AND CORRUPTION.

FIRST WE MUST STRENGTHEN JUSTICE AND THE ENFORCEMENT OF LAW AND ORDER.

THIS PERTAINS TO TWO LEVELS. AT THE LEVEL OF PRINCIPLE, THIS ADMINISTRATION AFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT NO ONE IS ABOVE THE LAW.

THUS, OUR POLICY IS TO SUPPORT THE FAIR AND SPEEDY TRIAL OF ALL THE ACCUSED INVOLVED IN THE CASES AGAINST FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA.

IF THERE WERE TIMES THAT I SHOWED CONCERN FOR THE PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE FORMER PRESIDENT, IT IS NOT A SIGN OF DIMINISHED DETERMINATION TO SEE JUSTICE DONE.

RATHER, IT IS OUT OF SENSITIVITY TO THE FEELINGS OF THE SEGMENTS OF OUR MASA WHO HAVE CONTINUED TO IDENTIFY WITH HIS PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

BUT AS I SOMETIMES EXTEND A HAND COVERED BY A VELVET GLOVE, INSIDE IT IS AN IRON HAND WHERE JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW ARE CONCERNED.

AS A SIGN OF THIS, I WILL SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE CHARTER OF THE OMBUDSMAN SO HE CAN ACCEPT THE SERVICES OF PRIVATE PROSECUTORS.

THE SECOND LEVEL PERTAINS TO OUR SENSE THAT JUSTICE PREVAILS AND THE RULE OF LAW WORKS IN OUR DAILY LIVES.

A RE-ENERGIZED POLICE WILL STAMP OUT THE CRIMES THAT HAVE PLAGUED OUR BUSINESSES, TERRORIZED THE COMMON FOLK, AND EMBARRASSED OUR COUNTRY. IN THE ECONOMICS OF FIGHTING CRIME, THE MORE RESOURCES DEVOTED TO CRIME PREVENTION, THE LESS THE AMOUNT OF CRIME. OUR ADMINISTRATION WILL SPEND TO MODERNIZE AND PROFESSIONALIZE THE POLICE. WE WILL START WITH ONE BILLION PESOS.

ALTHOUGH THE NUMBERS SAY THAT INDEX CRIMES IN THE FIRST SEMESTER WERE DOWN 14 PERCENT SINCE A YEAR AGO, WE ARE DETERMINED TO STAMP OUT VIOLENT CRIMES ALTOGETHER. THE ONGOING REORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE IS PART OF THE EFFORT TO ADD VIGOR TO ITS ANTI-CRIME DRIVE. THE NEW NATIONAL ANTI-CRIME COMMISSION WILL TIGHTEN COORDINATION AMONG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AS WELL AS WITH THE CHINESE-FILIPINO COMMUNITY. WE ARE GIVING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE KIDNAP-FOR-RANSOM SYNDICATES. I WANT THE BULK OF THEM TO BE BEHIND BARS BEFORE THE YEAR IS OVER, SO THAT EVERY FILIPINO WILL AT LAST FEEL SAFE IN HIS HOME, IN HIS WORKPLACE, AND IN HIS STREETS.

ON THE DRUG FRONT, I ASK CONGRESS TO ENACT A LAW REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF DRUGS IN A SUSPECT'S POSSESSION FOR HIM TO BE CHARGED WITH DRUG TRAFFICKING.

WE WILL UPHOLD LAW AND ORDER THROUGH A HOLISTIC RESPONSE CONSISTING OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, PSYCHOSOCIAL AND SECURITY COMPONENTS. WE WILL MEET THE DEFENSE AND SECURITY CHALLENGES OF THIS ERA. TO ACHIEVE THIS END, WE HAVE EARMARKED ADDITIONAL FUNDING IN SEVERAL BILLIONS OF PESOS FOR THE AFP MODERNIZATION PROGRAM.

WE HAVE GIVEN THE ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE THE LEEWAY TO FIGHT A TREACHEROUS AND ELUSIVE ENEMY IN BASILAN. BUT IT MUST END, AND IT WILL END SOON, FOR GOOD. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ABU SAYYAF HAS STARTED TO FALL. THE CRACKDOWN HAS NEUTRALIZED 130 OF THEM. MANY OF THEM HAVE COME DOWN FROM THEIR MOUNTAINS BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN ABANDONED BY THEIR LEADERS. ITAGA NINYO SA BATO: TATAPUSIN NATIN ITO.

ON THE PEACE PROCESS, WHILE THE AFP STANDS READY TO PROTECT OUR PEOPLE AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE, WE WILL CONTINUE TO TALK WITH THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT AS LONG AS ALL SIDES MAINTAIN GOOD FAITH. OUR CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT WITH THE MILF LAST MONTH ENCOURAGED US IN THIS.

TO ATTAIN OUR FULL POTENTIAL AS A NATION, LET US COME TO TERMS WITH THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES IN MINDANAO. LET US FORGE CONSENSUS ON A JUST, LASTING, AND HONORABLE PEACE IN ONE COUNTRY. PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ARE INSEPARABLE TWINS. BUT OUR FRAMEWORK MUST NOT COMPROMISE CONSTITUTIONALITY, NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. INSTEAD, LET US RECOGNIZE THAT WE HAVE A MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY WHICH SHOULD BE FOUNDED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL AND INSTITUTIONALIZED ACCOMMODATION OF ETHNIC TRADITIONS. THIS WOULD FINALLY INTRODUCE A NEW CULTURE IN OUR NATION'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS MINDANAO.

WE WILL ALSO INTRODUCE A NEW CULTURE IN GOVERNANCE: A CULTURE OF PLAIN TALK AND COMMON SENSE.

CABINET SECRETARIES WILL DO LESS CLUSTER AND INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE WORK SO THEY CAN CONCENTRATE ON RUNNING THEIR DEPARTMENTS. LESS MEETINGS, MORE ACTION, MORE TANGIBLE RESULTS WHETHER IN GENERATING JOBS, IMPROVING PEACE AND ORDER, OR FIGHTING GRAFT.

I THROW FULL SUPPORT BEHIND BIR COMMISSIONER RENE BA"EZ. HE HAS UNDERTAKEN A MISSION MANY BELIEVE IMPOSSIBLE: OVERHAULING THE BIR WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR 80 PERCENT OF OUR TAX REVENUES.

RENE HAS BEEN THREATENED. HE HAS BEEN BLOCKED BY RESTRAINING ORDERS AT EVERY TURN. AFTER THE SUPREME COURT RULED IN HIS FAVOR, HE WAS ACCUSED OF THE VERY CORRUPTION HE IS STAMPING OUT.

THIS MAN NEEDS FRIENDS, WHO SHARE HIS GOALS, AND I KNOW HE WILL FIND THEM IN THIS YOUNG CONGRESS.

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS IS EXCEEDING COLLECTION TARGETS. BUT THE ANTI-SMUGGLING DRIVE MUST BE RELENTLESS. SO MUST THE DRIVE AGAINST THE HARASSMENT OF LEGITIMATE BUSINESSMEN DOING LEGITIMATE IMPORTS. I CALL ON ALL CONCERNED TO HELP END THE OPEN DRAWER SYNDROME.

BUT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT DO IT ALONE. IT CANNOT DO IT ALONE IN CUSTOMS, IT CANNOT DO IT ALONE IN FIGHTING GRAFT, IT CANNOT DO IT ALONE IN FIGHTING POVERTY. I'M NOT A MIRACLE WORKER. ALL OF US MUST DO OUR SHARE. WE HAVE TO THINK FILIPINO, BUY FILIPINO, INVEST FILIPINO. I INVITE THE TAIPANS AND OTHER BUSINESS PEOPLE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TO START PUMP-PRIMING THE ECONOMY BY INVESTING ONCE AGAIN IN THE PHILIPPINES. I INVITE YOU TO CREATE JOBS, ACCELERATE PROGRESS, AND THEREBY ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE CRIME AND UNREST THAT SO MUCH ALARM US.

SA MADALING SALITA, MGA KABABAYAN, MAGKAISA TAYO AT MAGTULUNG-TULONG UPANG LABANAN ANG SALOT NG KAHIRAPAN AT ISULONG ANG KASAGANAAN, KAPAYAPAAAN, AT KATARUNGAN SA BAYAN. MAGKAISA TAYO. LABANAN ANG KAHIRAPAN.

MARAMI NA AKONG SINABI TUNGKOL SA GAGAWIN KO. SUBALIT MABIBIGKAS SA ILANG SALITA LAMANG ANG PAKAY NG LAHAT NG MGA PLANO, PROGRAMA AT PANUKALANG TINUKOY KO: TRABAHO, EDUKASYON, SARILING TAHANAN, PAGKAIN SA BAWAT MESA.

SA LAHAT NG MABIBIGAY KO SA BAYAN, KABUHAYAN, KARUNUNGAN, TAHANAN AT PAGKAIN PARA SA MASA ANG IPAGMAMALAKI KO NANG HIGIT SA LAHAT.

LAHAT NG ITO AY PARA SA MGA KABATAANG TULAD NILA JAYSON, JOMAR AT ERWIN, AT SA MAGIGING ANAK NILA DAHIL TUNGKULIN NATIN ITO SA MGA DARATING NA HENERASYON.

MGA KABABAYAN, NAIS KO PONG IPAKILALA SA INYO ANG MGA ANAK NG PAYATAS. ETO SINA JASON, JOMAR, AT ERWIN.

SALAMAT SA INYO, JASON, JOMAR AT ERWIN. SALAMAT AT SUMULAT KAYO SA AKIN NG MGA LIHAM NA GINAWA NINYONG BANGKANG PAPEL AT PINALUTANG SA PASIG.

JASON, JOMAR AT ERWIN, PAKINGGAN NIYO AKO.

PAPARAMIHIN NATIN ANG MGA KABABAYANG MAY TRABAHO. PAPARAMIHIN NATIN ANG MGA BATANG MAKAPAG-AARAL SA KOLEHIYO. PAPARAMIHIN NATIN ANG MGA KABABAYANG MAY SARILING TAHANAN. PAPARAMIHIN NATIN ANG PAMILYANG MAY PAGKAIN SA MESA. ANG PANGARAP NINYO AY PANGARAP KO RIN. GAGAWIN KO ANG LAHAT UPANG MATUPAD ANG PANGARAP NATIN.

MGA KABABAYAN: TULUNGAN NINYO AKONG TUPARIN ANG PANGARAP NILA JASON, JOMAR, AT ERWIN. MAGKAISA TAYO UPANG LAHAT NG KABATAAN -- KASAMA ANG KANILANG MAGULANG -- AY MAGKAROON NG BAGONG BUHAY AT BAGONG PAG-ASA SA HINAHARAP.

TRABAHO. TAHANAN. EDUKASYON. PAGKAIN SA BAWAT MESA.

SALAMAT, JAYSON, JOMAR AT ERWIN PINAALALA NINYO SA AKIN ANG NAPAKAHALAGANG TUNGKULIN KO.

PINAALALA NINYO SA AMING LAHAT KUNG BAKIT KAMI AY NARITO NGAYON SA BULWAGANG ITO.

MGA SENADOR AT KONGRESISTA: IPANGAKO NATIN SA KANILA, SA HARAP AT SA TULONG NG POONG MAYKAPAL, NA SA MGA SUSUNOD NA ARAW, BUWAN AT TAON, TAYONG MGA HINALAL, TAYONG MAY PANANAGUTAN SA KANILANG KINABUKASAN AY HANDANG MAGSAKRIPISYO AT MAGKAISA PARA SA KABUTIHAN, KAUNLARAN, KATATAGAN NG BAYAN AT SA KINABUKASAN NG KABATAAN.

JASON, JOMAR, AT ERWIN, HINDI NAMIN KAYO BIBIGUIN.

I AM NOT A MIRACLE WORKER. BUT I WILL DO WHAT IS RIGHT AND I WILL DO MY BEST. LET US ALL DO WHAT IS RIGHT, LET US ALL DO WHAT IS BEST AND GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF THE REST.

MARAMING SALAMAT SA INYONG LAHAT.