



Office of the President of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

**PARTNERS MEETING AND LOI SIGNING FOR THE TELECENTRE.ORG –
PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY E-CENTER ACADEMY**

26 November 2007

Manila Peninsula Hotel, Makati City, Philippines

Message

SECRETARY RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III

Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology

I would like to start by thanking all the partners gathered here in this very significant event for the Community eCenter movement in the country. The signing of the Letter of Intent among our respective agencies not only concretizes aspirations of various CeC stakeholders but also serves to consolidate and build upon the strength of many similar efforts already ongoing. This is a concrete example of a multi-stakeholder partnership at work.

The 2006-2010 Philippine Strategic Roadmap for the ICT sector, in making the Philippine Community eCenter program a priority undertaking, *emphasizes the need to connect the various segments of society and bridge the growing digital divide*. In its own words, the Philippine ICT roadmap identifies the CeC program as the heart and soul of the government's efforts to bridge the digital divide as it takes all steps necessary to ensure that all citizens have access to ICT goods and services.

The place of CeCs as tools for development by providing the last mile bridge to unserved areas have likewise been enshrined in The Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2004 – 2010 which in Chapter 6, item 5 reads:.

“The digital divide within the country will be reduced by establishing more public access points such as Community e-Centers for delivery of e-government and other services to provide universal access to information and communications services in unserved areas, link communities, facilitate trade and commerce, and empower rural communities socially, economically and politically.”

It is towards this goal that the Philippine CeC Roadmap for 2008-2010 has been formulated, as a vital blueprint of the Philippine CeC network. It is towards this same end that we, through cooperation and collaboration set into motion this day the Philippine CeC Academy.

The LOI marks the first step whereby the Commission on Information and Communications Technology, telecentre.org and other partners from the Philippine Community e-Center Network (PhilCeCNet) will establish a national level training and capacity building consortium of capability building institutions involved in the delivery of ICT4D and CeC related training programs, called the telecentre.org- Philippine Community e-Center Academy, aimed at developing competent CeC managers and knowledge workers in the Philippines.

Presently, there are about 800 community e-centers/telecenters in the country. This excludes the over 2,600 internet-connected high schools which are potential telecentres or CeCs. The number is even expected to increase as we strive to attain the Philippine CeC roadmap vision of a CeC in every municipality.

The PhilCeC academy, being the sole strategy to attain the roadmap’s goal of ensuring the availability of competent CeC workers, shall play a very important role in seeing this vision fulfilled. Right now it is the much anticipated response to the cry of CeCs all over in the country for capacity building which is a major sustainability and efficiency concern.

The telecenter.org-PhilCeC academy consortium is borne to a noble yet formidable mandate. In the next couple of months we shall be seeing it evolve into the premier CeC training academy of the country. With your cooperation and support, this shall be a reality. The future of the CeC movement in the country is as bright as ever.

I would like to close by acknowledging the support of IDRC and Telecentre.Org which are major partners in this initiative. They have also supported our efforts drafting of the CeC Roadmap, the activation of the PhilCeCNet and the development of the CeC portal.

I would like also to acknowledge and thank all of the partners here, the Development Academy of the Philippines, Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, National Telehealth Center, University of the Philippines-Open University, Phil Rice- Open Academy for Philippine Agriculture, Intel Technology Philippines Incorporated and Microsoft Philippines Incorporated for making this academy a reality. Know that you all play very significant roles in the academy and predestined for such a time as this. Thank you for owning the dream and sharing the vision.

For its part, CICT will continue to exhaust all means necessary to see PhilCeC Academy take off and realize its mission. Congratulations to all of us.