



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

**110TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF
PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE**
“Republic Service, Tungo sa Ganap na Kalayaan at Kaunlaran”
12 June 2008
Rizal Park, Baguio City

Message

SECRETARY RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III
Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology

AMENITIES.

Since the beginning of the Spanish colonization in 1565, the Spanish made repeated attempts to colonize the lush lands of the Cordilleras. The Spanish conquerors were particularly interested in the gold mines of the Igorots. The colonizers conducted several expeditions into the Cordilleras, but were effectively repulsed by strong Igorot resistance. As a result, the region remained largely unconquered throughout three centuries of Spanish rule.

Despite the failure of the colonizers and even the revolution to reign completely over the people of this region, the Cordilleras still achieved significance in Philippine history. Deodato Arellano, one of the founders of the Katipunan was designated as a politico-military leader in La Trinidad and died there. The first provincial government was established by the Americans in Benguet in 1900. Prior to World War II, Camp John Hay in Baguio City served as the official summer residence of the American Governor-General. Lastly, Baguio City was the site of the unconditional surrender of Japanese General Tomoyuki Yamashita to American and Filipino forces on September 3, 1945, marking the end of the Japanese occupation.

Today, the Cordillera Administrative Region, or CAR, is proud to have been one of the only two Philippine territories able to resist colonialism. Along with Mindanao, CAR has preserved its indigenous way of life and rich culture. As we celebrate our 110th Independence Day, we commemorate the heroism and bravery displayed by our Cordilleran ancestors. It was their ardent struggle for independence that made this region what it is now—a budding tourism and commercial center.

Years after the last traces of colonialism and war have disappeared, the Philippines is confronted with yet another battle. This time it is the struggle to remain at par with the rest of the world in this age of globalization. As societies become increasingly intertwined in the global information age, national boundaries begin to blur and we come face-to-face with a completely borderless world. Hence, the sharing of information, cultures, expertise and lifestyles among various countries is inevitable.

The Commission on Information and Communications Technology, or CICT, recognizes the role of ICT in our everyday lives. It is in practically everything that we do—business, education, communications, entertainment, public service—and the applications will increase with time. More importantly, it is the great equalizer, allowing people from all segments of the population to conveniently and inexpensively access goods and services for a better quality of life. Indeed, ICT has become an extremely powerful tool for empowering the Filipino people.

With this in mind, the CICT hopes to bring the wonders of ICT closer to the Cordillera people on this 110th Independence Day celebration. We have set up Internet kiosks with free broadband Internet access to enable local residents to explore the vast wealth of the World Wide Web. From the global recognition achieved by talented Filipina singer Charice Pempengco to Internet-based communications and remittance services that make our OFWs lives easier, the benefits of ICT and broadband Internet access are practically endless. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to see what the World Wide Web has to offer.

Our activities today also include the inauguration of computer labs as part of our iSchools Program. The Program provides computer workstations, broadband Internet access, digitized content and relevant training to public high school recipients. The Program aims to allow students and teachers to experience first-hand how ICT tools enrich the classroom learning environment.

Finally, in line with our commitment to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Ten Point Agenda of creating six to ten million jobs, we will be awarding training vouchers as part of the PGMA Training for Work Scholarship Program. Two hundred thirty-two recipients from CAR will be given an opportunity to improve their ICT skills and qualify for employment in the offshoring and outsourcing, or O&O, industry.

This year's Independence Day celebration has transformed the definition of freedom. Today we realize that freedom for Filipinos is not only exemplified by the commemoration of heroes. It also means a government committed to providing services that improve the lives of our fellow Filipinos.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang malayang Pilipino!