



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

SENTRO K3 (KAGALINGAN, KAISAHAN AT KALAYAAN NG BAYAN)
12 June 2008
Baguio Convention Center, Baguio City

Message

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

AMENITIES.

For one hundred and ten years that Philippine Independence has been observed, this year is a radically new experience, not only for the government officials who are leading the celebrations, but for the Filipino people as well. With this year's theme, "Republic Service, Tungo sa Ganap na Kalayaan at Kaunlaran," the government has done away with the usual parade and focused on the more salient feature of a free nation—public service.

For this year's 110th Independence Day celebration, the activities include simultaneous flag-raising and a showcase of government services at Sentro K3 (Kagalingan, Kaisahan at Kalayaan ng Bayan) to be put up in Luneta Park and replicated all over the country, such as the one here in Baguio Convention Center. These regional celebrations are each steered by a Cabinet Member designated by Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and it is with great pleasure that I, as Chairman of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology, or CICT, lead the celebration here in Baguio City.

Today we celebrate Independence Day not only for Baguio City, but also for the entire Cordillera Administrative Region, or CAR. CAR has much to be proud of in its history, being a land that remained unconquered during three centuries of Spanish rule. It is therefore fitting that we celebrate Independence Day in CAR as a tribute to the rich cultural heritage, tradition, bravery and honor of the unconquered and truly independent people of the Cordilleras.

The CICT recognizes the rich heritage and vast resources of CAR and supports the government's development plans for the region. President Arroyo has included CAR in the Northern Luzon Agribusiness Quadrangle, or NLAQ, due to its immense wealth of agricultural and fishery products. NLAQ is envisioned as the "agricultural basket" of the country with its products reaching our ASEAN neighbors and the rest of the world. To realize this vision, the government has invested in airport/seaport development, irrigation projects and construction of farm-to-market roads.

Moreover, CAR is becoming an integral part of the Cyber Corridor as well. The Cyber Corridor, like NLAQ, is one of the five Super Regions established by President Arroyo to represent the five major economic regions of the country. The Cyber Corridor traverses the four other super regions and stretches from Baguio to Davao, housing technology centers and companies in the offshoring and outsourcing, or O&O, industry, which includes call centers, back office outsourcing, software development, medical transcription, engineering design, animation and game development. Through our Cyberservices Group, the CICT continuously assesses cities for inclusion in the Cyber Corridor using criteria such as talent, infrastructure, cost, and business environment. Baguio City has already been identified as one of our Next Wave Cities, boasting the presence of several major O&O operators and having been included as one of three Philippine cities in Global Services/Tholons' Top 50 Emerging Outsourcing Cities. We hope that more cities within the CAR can develop into regional ICT hubs and partake in the economic benefits of the O&O industry.

In support of this, we have collaborated with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, or TESDA, on the PGMA Training for Work Scholarship Program, or TWSP. This program aims to provide additional training for near-hires, so they may qualify for employment in the O&O industry. Today we will be awarding 232 TWSP vouchers to deserving residents of the region, so they may have the opportunity to join the O&O industry and uplift the quality of their lives and the lives of their families.

As we commemorate our 110th Independence Day, we would also like to open the doors of the World Wide Web to the Cordillera people. The CICT, in cooperation with Intel and Smart Communications, have set up Internet kiosks with free broadband Internet access as our contribution to Sentro K3. Our Internet kiosks will be open all day from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, so please take advantage of this opportunity to explore what the Internet has to offer.

In closing, I would like to encourage everyone to visit the booths here at Sentro K3 and actively participate in the activities laid out for today. I hope that everyone enjoys today's festivities and leaves this event with renewed enthusiasm in transforming the Philippines into a world-class knowledge economy.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang malayang Pilipino!