



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

**BizSpark Media Launch**  
10:30 AM, Thursday, 29 January 2009  
China Room, Ascott Residences, Makati City

*Closing Remarks*

**SEC. RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III**

*Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology*

Mr. Pepeng Rollan, Managing Director of Microsoft Philippines, CICT Commissioner Mon Ibrahim, Mr. George Sorio, Chair of the National ICT Conference of the Philippines, Ms. Beng Coronel, President of the Philippine Software Industry Association, industry partners, friends in the media, ladies and gentlemen, a pleasant good morning to all of you.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Microsoft Philippines for launching Microsoft's BizSpark program in the country. This initiative brings to micro, small and medium enterprises, or MSMEs, in the ICT sector the opportunity to attain their business goals and ensure their overall sustainability by providing them with the tools and platform to create and develop applications needed to increase efficiency, provide technical support, and enhance global market visibility. Amidst the current global economic crisis, the launch of BizSpark is timely, as current economic challenges pressure businesses to explore ways to innovate, expand, and remain viable, in the face of a receding economy, tightening credit, and fierce competition.

In a sector that thrives on strategic public and private partnerships, we count on the National ICT Conference of the Philippines, or NICP, the Philippine Software Industry Association, or PSIA, and the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, or BPAP, as our partners in implementing the BizSpark Program. As one of the Program's Network Partners, the CICT will lend its full support in making BizSpark an effective and sustainable Program in the country.

The CICT continues to pursue a policy and legal environment that promotes the use of ICTs for economic development, through innovative partnerships between the public and the private sectors. In line with this, the CICT, through our CyberServices Group headed by Commissioner Ibrahim, is committed to making BizSpark a successful endeavor by helping identify potential beneficiaries that can hopefully reap the benefits of the program. As one of the key players of the BizSpark project, the CICT envisions an environment where startups will be able to increase their chances of succeeding in an increasingly competitive market, as well as promote the local software economy in the global marketplace. It is an opportunity for Filipino ICT professionals and business enterprises to demonstrate their ICT skills, creativity and innovation.

As the government's lead agency for ICT development in the Philippines, the CICT aims to facilitate and sustain the growth of the sector, as well as encourage its use as an enabler of other sectors integral to the realization of our national development agenda. The CICT, together with its stakeholders, undertakes programs and projects geared towards transforming the country into an ICT-enabled society, specifically in the areas of sustaining the competitiveness of the IT-BPO sector, developing the ICT skills of our human capital, and promoting transparency in governance through ICT.

One of the CICT's mandates is to develop and promote the Cyber Corridor, one of the country's five economic super regions launched by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2006. This initiative aims to spread the economic benefits of the IT-BPO industry around the country through the establishment of regional ICT hubs. We call these hubs Next Wave Cities, and last November we launched our top ten list of cities that had the highest rankings in the area of talent, infrastructure, cost, and business environment. With your support, and our partnership with the NICP, led by its Chair, Mr. Sorio, we look forward to implementing the BizSpark program in our Next Wave Cities. The NICP, the umbrella organization of private sector-led ICT councils, will help increase the Program's area of coverage and implement it among its regional partners and stakeholders.

Once again, I would like to commend the people behind BizSpark, for making the Philippines a part of this innovative program. With the commitment and support of our ICT industry partners, we can bring a greater awareness of the tools and strategies available through this Program, and better prepare our local SMEs and startups for the world stage.

Congratulations and mabuhay!