



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

CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS FORUM INC.
2ND GENERAL MEMBERSHIP ASSEMBLY MEETING
“Providing Digital Access to the Grassroots”
24 July 2008, 3:00 PM
EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City

Message

by **SECRETARY RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III**

Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology

Officers and members of the Chief Information Officers Forum, led by its President, BIR Deputy Commissioner Lilia Guillermo, fellow government workers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, a pleasant good afternoon to you all.

The Commission on Information and Communications Technology, or CICT, remains steadfast in promoting the use of ICT for more effective and transparent government service. One initiative that the CICT is actively pushing for is the creation of the Chief Information Officers Council, an organization of CIOs from every agency of government. The CIO Council is envisioned to lead efforts in maximizing the government’s ICT resources and ensuring better oversight on the use of ICT in government. While this initiative is still in progress, the CICT commends the efforts of the CIO Forum, which is currently fulfilling some of the CIO Council’s responsibilities.

The CIO Forum shares our thrust of fully utilizing ICT for national development and global competitiveness. In fact, the CIO Forum is a keen supporter of the creation of a Department of Information and Communications Technology, or DICT. As a permanent executive department, the DICT will be empowered to facilitate more effective and coherent coordination and implementation of national ICT initiatives of the government. I am pleased to note that the DICT Bill is gaining momentum, having passed second reading in the House of Representatives. We have also submitted a draft bill to the Senate Committee on Science and Technology and a hearing has been scheduled for the first week of August. I would like to acknowledge the CIO Forum’s continued support for the passage of the DICT bill into law.

Today's theme "*Providing Digital Access to the Grassroots*", is a priority of the CICT as well. The CICT pushes for universal and affordable access to basic government services, information, and quality education through our Philippine Community eCenter, or CeC, Program. In pursuit of our 2010 vision of "a community eCenter in every municipality", the Program sets up shared facilities in rural communities to bring a wide array of ICT-related services to the people, including basic encoding, Internet access, voice-over-IP, online courses, access to government services, online job hunting and interviews, as well as basic computer training courses. In addition, our iSchools Project, which is both a capacity-building and computerization initiative, has connected 360 public high schools to the Internet and made them potential CeCs.

Another goal of the CICT is increasing the country's broadband penetration and realizing our vision of a PC in every Filipino home. Through our Low Cost Computing Program, we aim to bring down the cost of owning a PC. During last month's celebration of National ICT Month, Intel and CICT launched the *Nettop ng Bayan*, a full-featured, Internet-centric PC that retails for less than 10,000 pesos.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the CICT and CIO Forum for Joint Cooperation and Coordination on ICT Activities within the Public and Private Sector is another notable step toward our shared vision of full-blown ICT development in the Philippines. The MOU calls for information sharing, alignment of strategies and merging of resources between the CICT and the CIO Forum to ensure that critical ICT projects are implemented. This will facilitate coordination in the areas of ICT policy making, ICT applications in government and ICT procurement, as well as ICT training and certification programs for CIOs.

The CICT's Human Capital Development Group, or HCDG, has put in place a series of programs tailored to the needs of government CIOs, such as the National ICT Competency Standards for Government Chief Information Officers or NICS-GCIO. The CIO Forum has been provided a copy of project details for evaluation. If approved, the CICT-HCDG will work closely with the CIO Forum in the development of a competency-based training program for CIOs in government with the NICS-GCIO as basis.

Moreover, members of the CIO Forum are welcome to participate in any of the eGovernment Management Track Courses that are currently offered by the HCDG. These courses include trainings on Project Management; Managing ICT Services in Government; Enterprise Architecture and eServices Strategic Planning; IT Audit, Security and Governance; and IT Resource Planning and Acquisition: Project Terms of Reference.

I am also pleased to note that the CICT's National Computer Institute has been accredited by the United Nations Asia Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development to conduct the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders Training Program. This is an eight-module training programme intended for government CIOs in the ASEAN region that seeks to enhance their awareness on the role of ICT in addressing national development goals in education, governance, health, trade, business and others.

Today's MOU signing between the CICT and the CIO Forum affirms our mutual commitment for continuous and responsive collaboration relative to national ICT priorities. With this partnership, our common vision of an e-Philippines now looks as promising as ever.

Thank you very much and congratulations to all!