



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

## **2008 ICT MONTH CELEBRATION**

*“EDGES thru ICT: Enhancing the Delivery of Government e-Services  
(EDGES) through Information and Communications Technology (ICT)”*

Friday, 27 June 2008

Audio-Visual Room, CICT-NCC Bldg.  
C.P. Garcia Ave., Diliman, Quezon City

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### *Message*

**SECRETARY RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III**

*Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology*

Commissioner Mon Ibrahim, our partners from the private sector, fellow government workers, guests, ladies and gentlemen, a pleasant good afternoon to you all!

It has been a very exciting month for us at the Commission on ICT. In the past two weeks alone, we have partnered with several organizations in promoting our vision of empowering the Filipino through the use of ICT.

As part of our iSchools Project, we launched computer labs in public high schools in support of the President's directive of connecting all public high schools to the Internet by 2010.

In Baguio, together with the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, or BPAP, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, or TESDA, we awarded vouchers under the PGMA Training for Work Scholarship Program to over 200 potential recruits in the offshoring and outsourcing, or O&O, industry.

We also continue to promote the Philippine Cyber Corridor. Just last week, we were in Singapore attending the 19<sup>th</sup> International Communications and Information Technology Exhibition and Conference, or CommunicAsia, where we invited potential investors to come to the Philippines and explore business opportunities in the O&O sector.

Early this week, we were a co-organizer of the inaugural Philippine Open Source Summit in Cebu, where we endorsed the formation of the National Open Source Association.

These initiatives, along with today's lecture-forum, are part of our month-long celebration of National ICT Month. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo recently signed Proclamation No. 1521 declaring the month of June this year and every year thereafter as National ICT Month. The CICT has been tasked to spearhead the celebration with strong participation from other government agencies, NGOs and the private sector.

Today's lecture-forum is the culmination of our National ICT Month celebration. The presentations today introduced you to the different CICT programs and projects, as well as the latest technologies from our government and private sector partners. Today's activities also enabled us to revisit the priorities that we have set in the Philippine ICT Strategic Roadmap and assess our present stance in ICT development.

The Philippine ICT Strategic Roadmap, crafted in 2006, is a framework that outlines the government's commitments, goals and strategies for realizing its vision of a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society. The Roadmap underscores five major strategic initiatives: Universal Access to ICT, Human Capital Development, e-Governance, the Philippine Cyber Corridor and a Legal and Policy Framework.

The CICT believes that Filipinos should have affordable access to basic government services, information and quality education through the use of ICT. The Philippine Community e-Center, or CeC, Program sets up shared facilities in rural communities to enable ICT-related services to reach the people.

Universal access to ICT can only be achieved if citizens can afford PCs and broadband connectivity. Two weeks ago, through our Low Cost Computing Program in collaboration with Intel, we launched Nettop ng Bayan, which is a full-featured, Internet-centric PC that costs less than 10,000 pesos. We believe that such initiatives would help us achieve our vision of a PC in every home, thereby increasing the country's PC and broadband penetration.

The use of ICT in education and enhancement of Filipino global competitiveness are also CICT priorities. From today's presentations, you have heard about our Human Capital Development Group's iSchools and eSkwela Projects. Both projects have been successful in transforming the way Filipinos learn inside and outside the classroom. Our iSchools project has deployed 360 computer labs in public high schools to date and our eSkwela Project recently earned a Certificate of Commendation for the Non-Formal Educator Category of the UNESCO ICT in Education Innovation Awards, 2007-2008.

Further, our component agency, the National Computer Center, continuously provides opportunities for the Filipino workforce to upgrade their skills and become highly competitive in both local and global ICT markets. Its certification programs are anchored on international standards to comply with the Roadmap's goal of a world-class Filipino workforce.

E-Governance is also a prominent CICT strategy that seeks to improve citizen-to-government interaction. The eLGU Project assists local government units in establishing a web presence to allow citizens to directly access their services and information. Another project, the eSerbisyo Portal, organizes government services in practical categories for ease of use, while the eBayad Payment Gateway enables online transactions with government.

In its thrust to promote the O&O industry, the CICT strongly advocates the sustained development of the Philippine Cyber Corridor. Boasting a skilled and highly trainable workforce and a supportive government, the Philippines has become one of the premier O&O destinations in the world. In fact, the National Outsourcing Association of the UK named the Philippines "Offshoring Destination of the Year" in 2007. Our target now is to spread the economic benefits outside Metro Manila, so in cooperation with BPAP, we are developing Next Wave Cities that can host O&O operators. To date, 24 Next Wave Cities have been established, with 17 of them already with major locators.

Finally, the CICT affirms that cyber crime is a growing problem in our increasingly technological society. As such, we are focused on the passage of the Anti-Cybercrime Bill to provide us with a framework to deal with cyber criminals. Parallel to this, the CICT emphasizes the need for a

Department of ICT to be the primary government entity responsible for the country's ICT development. The DICT Bill is gaining momentum, having passed second reading in the House of Representatives and first reading in the Senate. We continue to count on your support for the passage of these bills into law.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone for participating in the this year's celebration of National ICT Month. Let us continue to nurture a responsive public-private partnership in our mutual thrust of an ICT-enabled Philippines.

Thank you very much and Mabuhay!

