



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

**Philippine International IT Exposition 2008**  
**“Bridging the Digital Divide in the Country Today”**  
**30 September 2008-2 October 2008**

---

*Welcome Remarks*

**SECRETARY RAY ANTHONY ROXAS-CHUA III**

*Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology*

To be delivered by

**Commissioner Monchito B. Ibrahim**

AMENITIES.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the organizers, event partners in government, the private sector, the ICT industry and media, for supporting an event that showcases the best IT products and services available in the Philippines today. Not only that, this event also brings together the country’s best ICT professionals to discuss important issues theme-focused panels. This Expo also features an IT Job Fair that caters to our next generation ICT workforce and boasts the participation of the country’s top IT companies.

With revenues reaching 5 billion US dollars in 2007 and a 340,000 strong workforce, the business process outsourcing, or BPO, industry is one of the country’s fastest growing sectors. As the government’s cyber services champion, the Commission on Information and Communications Technology, or CICT, acts as the prime advocate of the BPO industry. With the boom in the BPO sector, President Macapagal-Arroyo named the Cyber Corridor as one of the Super Regions in her 2006 State of the Nation Address. The Cyber Corridor is a virtual channel across the country that houses BPO operators from Baguio City in the north to Davao City in the south. It is our goal to strengthen the readiness of cities and regions outside Metro Manila to become preferred destinations for BPO investors. With this strategy, we will decongest Metro Manila and spread the economic growth opportunities to other parts of the country. Our next wave cities include Baguio, Cabanatuan, Clark, Bacoor, Sta. Rosa, Lipa, Naga, Leap, Cuba, Iloilo, Dumaguete, Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro and Davao.

While the Philippines has steadily gained a reputation as a preferred outsourcing destination, achieving global recognition inspires us to work harder to strengthen the competitiveness of our BPO industry. Our Human Capital Development Group collaborates with industry players, other government bodies and international entities in conceptualizing and administering learning and certification strategies that uplift the ICT competency levels of Filipinos.

Through our Human Capital Development Group, we are implementing the iSchools Project, which provides computer labs with broadband internet connectivity and digital learning content to public high schools throughout the country. Such initiative complements the goal of the administration to connect all public high schools to the internet, and the CICT's goal of improving the students' ICT skills for future professional opportunities. Our eSkwela Project, on the other hand, delivers a computer-based alternative learning system for out-of-school youths and adults. We are proud to note that this innovative project recently received a Certificate of Commendation from UNESCO.

In line with this year's theme, "Bridging the Digital Divide in the Country Today," the CICT strives, through its e-Government Development Group to deliver government services better and in a more efficient manner, through the use of ICT. Our e-Government Group coordinates and assists in the implementation of ICT strategies of government agencies and local government units to achieve better, more transparent and more efficient public service. These strategies include computerizing frontline services to enable the citizens to interact effectively with the government, developing a services portal to enable our citizens to readily access government services, and establishing an online payment gateway to facilitate online transactions with the government. The CICT's goal is to design an electronic bureaucracy that addresses the needs of the Filipinos effectively and efficiently.

These are just some of the things that the CICT is pursuing. We recognize however that more work needs to be done, which is why we look forward to strengthening our partnerships with the private sector to continue the economic gains of the past few years. We enjoin the various IT companies, service providers, associations, and individuals to recognize their social responsibilities as well, and continue to work with government in delivering the most appropriate ICT solutions, and spread the benefits of ICT to the rest of the country and the Filipino people.

Once again, I would like to congratulate the organizers of this IT Expo and conference for holding this important IT event.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay!