



MESSAGE

Commemorating Independence Day reminds us of the courage and struggle of the men and women who paved the way for the birth of our nation. Our ancestors made great sacrifices to witness that day in 1898, when the Philippine flag was raised and the national anthem was played to mark the proclamation of our nation's independence.

One hundred and fourteen years after, we are called to remain united and steadfast to the ideals of freedom and democracy. This year's theme, *Kalayaan: Pananagutan ng Bayan para sa Tuwid na Daan*, prompts us to bear in mind that every Filipino, wherever he or she may be, has a role to play in the nation's development. Our hard-earned independence comes with responsibility to build a prosperous nation founded on truth, justice and equity.

Through good governance, the President is steering the Philippines towards rapid and sustainable economic growth, coupled with an improving quality of life for every Filipino. The Department of Foreign Affairs is one with the President in his pursuit to achieve inclusive growth for the country. In deepening our relations with other countries and engaging regional powers, the Department endeavors to advance national security and secure our territorial integrity, effectively address the needs and welfare of overseas Filipinos, and engage in a vigorous campaign to enhance economic diplomacy.

Love for country and deep faith in the Filipino people gave our heroes strength to fight for independence. As we celebrate Independence Day, may their patriotism inspire Filipinos, here and abroad, to become willing partners and dedicated collaborators of the government in attaining sustained growth and development.

*Mabuhay at Maligayang Pagdiriwang ng ating Kalayaan!*

  
ALBERT F. DEL ROSARIO  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs

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Pasay City