

FINAL

PARTNERS IN SOCIAL REFORM

**Opening Statement of
H.E. President Fidel V. Ramos
Social Reform Summit
PICC, Roxas Boulevard, Manila
September 27, 1994**

INTRODUCTION

WE CONVENE HERE THIS MORNING TO ADVANCE ONE MORE STEP FORWARD THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL REFORM TO WHICH WE ARE ALL COMMITTED.

TODAY'S MEETING AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE NATION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS ALSO MARKS THE FIRST YEAR OF OUR PEOPLE'S MULTISECTORAL SUMMIT OF SEPTEMBER 1993 WHICH PRODUCED THE SOCIAL PACT FOR EMPOWERED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (SPEED).

THREE MONTHS AGO, AT THE PEOPLE'S EMPOWERMENT CAUCUS LAST JUNE, MANY OF US FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND THE LEADERS OF THE BASIC SECTORS -- FARMERS, FISHERFOLK, URBAN POOR, RURAL POOR, WORKERS, WOMEN, YOUTH, THE ELDERLY, THE HANDICAPPED AND OTHERS -- FORGED A SOCIAL REFORM AGENDA FOR THE UPLIFT OF THE POOR IN OUR COUNTRY IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY'S EVENT.

SOCIAL REFORM AGENDA

IN BOTH MILESTONE MEETINGS, WE DECLARED OUR COMMON COMMITMENT THAT OUR PEOPLE SHOULD BE AT THE CENTER OF DEVELOPMENT, AND THAT THE REAL MEASURE OF GROWTH MUST BE THE WELL-BEING OF ORDINARY FILIPINOS WHOM WE CALL THE COMMON TAO.

IN OUR JUNE SOCIAL REFORM AGENDA, WE SET FORTH A PACKAGE OF SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS TO SPEEDILY INTEGRATE THE MOST DISADVANTAGED AMONG US INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF OUR SOCIETY BY PROVIDING FOR THEIR MOST BASIC NEEDS AND EXTENDING THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP THEMSELVES.

THE AGENDA DID NOT MERELY TALK OF GOALS; IT FORMULATED STRATEGIES AND SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OF ACTION. IT FOCUSED ON WHAT WAS DOABLE, NOT ON WHAT WE MERELY WISHED FOR.

AND IT RECOGNIZED AN IMPERATIVE FOR SUCCESS -- THAT THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS IN OUR COUNTRY JOIN TOGETHER IN THE REFORM EFFORT.

SINCE OUR MEETING LAST JUNE, I HAVE ISSUED MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 213, WHICH FOCUSED ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT'S PACKAGE OF SOCIAL REFORM INTERVENTIONS, ESPECIALLY IN OUR 19 POOREST PROVINCES WHICH HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED AS PRIORITY AREAS FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. AS WE MEET TODAY, THE WORK OF REACHING OUT TO OUR POOR COMMUNITIES IS CONTINUING, CARRIED OUT WITH DEDICATION BY THOUSANDS OF GOVERNMENT WORKERS AND PRIVATE SECTOR VOLUNTEERS, NGOS AND PEOPLES ORGANIZATIONS.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

OUR SUMMIT TODAY EXPANDS THIS EFFORT OF EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION BY ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS IN IMPLEMENTING OUR AGENDA OF SOCIAL REFORM.

IN THIS ASSEMBLY ARE GATHERED THE LEADERS OF BOTH CHAMBERS OF CONGRESS, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 19 PRIORITY PROVINCES, LEADERS OF BUSINESS, THE CHURCHES, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS, FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS, AND OFFICIALS OF DIFFERENT AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

FROM OUR EARLIER WORK TOGETHER, WE HAVE ALREADY SUCCEEDED IN DEFINING THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM WE MUST UPROOT AND THE STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS TO DO IT.

WE KNOW THAT THOSE WHO HAVE LOW INCOMES IN OUR COUNTRY TEND ALSO TO HAVE LITTLE EDUCATION, POOR HEALTH, MARGINAL SHELTER, NO LAND, LESS ACCESS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND MORE CHILDREN.

AND KNOWING THIS, WE NOW RECOGNIZE THAT EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION MUST INVOLVE ACTION IN EDUCATION, HEALTH, FAMILY PLANNING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ACCESS TO CREDIT AND LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES, JOB GENERATION AND SAFETY IN OUR HOMES AND STREETS.

IN OUR RESPECTIVE ROLES, YOU IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND WE IN GOVERNMENT ARE ALREADY IMPLEMENTING VARIOUS PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS TO ADDRESS THE MASSIVE CHALLENGE OF POVERTY. YET, AS OUR SOCIAL REFORM AGENDA SO WELL RECOGNIZES, WE CAN ACCOMPLISH MUCH MORE AND DO THEM MUCH MORE QUICKLY IF WE LINK TOGETHER AND NETWORK OUR EFFORTS, IF WE SHARE INFORMATION, EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE REFORM EFFORT -- IN A WORD, IF WE ARE PARTNERS IN THIS NOBLE CAUSE.

ONLY THROUGH EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP, CAN THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF OUR WORK ON OUR POOR COMMUNITIES BE MULTIPLIED, ONLY THROUGH SUCH INTERACTION AND COOPERATION CAN WE MEASURE METHODICALLY AND ACCURATELY THE EFFICACY OF OUR PERFORMANCE AND THE PROGRESS WE ACHIEVE.

PROVIDING THE NATIONAL CAPACITY

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL BRING TO THESE DISCUSSIONS YOUR PROFESSIONALISM, YOUR CANDOR, YOUR EXPERTISE, YOUR GENEROSITY, AND ABOVE ALL YOUR ENTHUSIASM.

FOR WE ARE ALL PART HERE OF A CAUSE MUCH LARGER THAN OURSELVES. WE KNOW THAT BEYOND THIS HALL ARE MILLIONS OF OUR COUNTRYMEN WHO DESPERATELY NEED HELP AND WHOSE LIVES WILL BE IMMEASURABLY BRIGHTENED BY PROGRAMS UNDER OUR SOCIAL REFORM AGENDA, AND BY THE COMPASSION AND DARING OF CONCERNED FILIPINOS.

THE WAY TO EFFECTIVELY HELP IS CLEAR. LET US NOW PROVIDE THE WILL AND DEVELOP OUR NATIONAL CAPACITY TO MAKE THE SOCIAL REFORMS HAPPEN.

WE ALL HAVE COME TODAY TO MANIFEST OUR COLLECTIVE WILL AND CONTRIBUTE OUR COLLECTIVE CAPACITY TO SPEED UP SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

WE CAN DO IT. *KAYA NATIN ITO!*

MARAMING SALAMAT PO!