

98th INDEPENDENCE DAY MESSAGE:
PROVING OURSELVES WORTHY OF OUR LEGACY OF FREEDOM
(Video Message Taped by H.E. PFVR on Saturday, 25 May 96)

Mga mahal na kapatid at kababayan:

Muli nating ipinagdiriwang ang dakilang araw ng ating Kalayaan -- ang ating pagsilang bilang isang bansa.

Today -- this glorious day -- we celebrate once again, our birth of freedom as a nation.

The list of the deeds and sacrifices we as a people have offered up to freedom is long and illustrious.

It goes back to Mactan, to Pugad Lawin, Bagumbayan, Kawit, Tirad Pass, Bataan, Corregidor, and then to EDSA. At every stage of this saga, courageous Filipinos -- men and women alike -- showed to all the world a peerless love of country, an abiding faith in God, and a devotion to freedom and democracy.

My beloved countrymen and countrywomen:

Today we are waging -- and winning -- a new revolution. Our enemies no longer come from across the seas, but from within. They are the fear, the apathy, the selfishness, and the incapacity that have held us back from achieving our rightful destiny. These enemies have assumed the faces of poverty, injustice, corruption, and crime.

But we will prevail over these challenges, knowing that what is at stake is no less than the sustained progress and well-being of the Filipino people. If there is anything to learn from our revolutionary past, it is that we must fight together as a caring, sharing and daring citizenry -- for the purpose of becoming capable and competitive in the 21st century.

Already we have won many difficult battles. Our national economy has surged back to health. We have largely achieved peace and political stability, and now look forward to reclaiming our place alongside Asia's most dynamic economies.

We have regained our self-confidence as a people.

We have restored our sense of national purpose.

We have recovered our faith in ourselves and in our country -- and that faith we will never lose again.

In two years' time, we shall be celebrating the centennial of our independence. With renewed resolve, let us prove to ourselves and to the world that we are worthy of our legacy of freedom.

Magka-isa tayo, magtulungan, at sama-sama nating kamtin ang mga biyaya ng ating kalayaan.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas, at mabuhay tayong lahat!