

MESSAGE

121st Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence 12 June 2019



On behalf of the women and men of the Department of Foreign Affairs, I greet all Filipinos in every corner of the world an auspicious celebration of the 121st anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

As we remember our heroes who fought for our independence and paid the ultimate price for the freedom that we enjoy today, so we are reminded of our duty, in fact our honor, to protect and preserve Filipino freedom until the end of time.

Halfway through the term of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, let us recall "*tapang at malasakit*" – courage and compassion –his campaign battlecry. It is the theme for this year's celebration: "*Kalayaan 2019: Courage of the Nation, Compassion for the People.*"

These are the values of daily life the President has writ large in his governance to serve our countrymen, whatever their station in life may be, and wherever they may be in the world. These are also the values that sustain the resolve of the Government to beat corruption, criminality, illegal drugs, and other social ills. They are manifest in the political stability and economic progress that we doubtless enjoy today.

Courage and compassion are also what our dedicated personnel of the Philippine foreign service demonstrate, when we vigorously pursue our independent foreign policy, when we work with other nations to benefit our country and the world, when we protect the dignity of our motherland in the international community, and when we unselfishly help our fellow Filipinos in distress.

Courage, as they say, is not the absence of fear, but to act in spite of such fear. Our foreign service is confronted with a myriad of daunting challenges, but we push and strive, as with the President and the whole Government, to serve our people with all our might with compassion. For they deserve no less, they who sacrifice each day, too.

Today, as in the days to come, it is my hope that we – those in the foreign service, overseas Filipinos, and each Filipino for that matter – will all continue to work together, with courage and compassion, to overcome our struggles, in order to uplift our families, to secure and better our communities, and to unite for the progress of our country.

Have a meaningful and joyful celebration of our *Araw ng Kalayaan. Mabuhay!*

TEODORO L. LOCSIN, JR.
Secretary of Foreign Affairs