



MESSAGE

We remember with profound gratitude the gallantry and bravery of our forebears who paid the ultimate sacrifice so that our nation and people can enjoy the freedom and sovereignty we rightly deserve.

The Philippine flag that was unfurled in Kawit, Cavite in 1898 soars proudly today for all to see, standing on the strong foundations of our Republic: a country governed by law, strengthened by democratic ideals and continuously reinvigorated by a free, involved and empowered people.

We have gone a long way as a democracy; and we have a further way to go still as we pursue greater peace, progress and prosperity for our nation.

Our commemoration of the 111th Anniversary of the Declaration of Philippine Independence underscores our duty to honor the memory of those who came before us and to ensure that those who will come after us will continue to enjoy the full promise of our democracy.

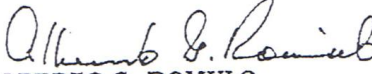
This year's theme, "***Kagitingan, Kagalingan at Kasipagan Tungo sa Tunay na Kalayaan***" challenges us all to do our utmost – to harness our individual and collective talents and abilities – in the service of our growing global nation.

The Filipino-American community – with whom the Philippines is bound by common values, shared heritage and mutual aspirations – continues to be our partner for growth.

I laud your sustained efforts to gain, a deeper understanding of our heritage and to contribute to the Philippines' full development.

In doing so, you continue to build on the democratic legacy of and bring honor to our forefathers.

Mabuhay ang diwa ng Kalayaan!
Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!
Mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino!


ALBERTO G. ROMULO
Secretary of Foreign Affairs

12 June 2009
Pasay City