



MESSAGE



On behalf of the Philippine government and our team at the Consulate General in Los Angeles, it is with great joy and pride that we greet the Filipino Community of Southern California, Southern Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas happy 119th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence!

In keeping with the President's overarching goal of effecting true socioeconomic change for all Filipinos, this year's *Kalayaan* celebration theme is "*Pagbabagong Sama-Samang Balikatin.*"

The theme reminds us that even after having gained freedom and independence more than a century ago, the task of nation-building does not end. Effecting change and improving the national welfare is the collective responsibility of the Filipino people wherever we are.

This year's celebration is a call to all Filipinos to contribute in changing the ills of the past and help the nation attain a brighter future. The challenges faced by our country, daunting they may be, would pale in comparison to the united and synergized efforts of Filipinos, not only in the Philippines but across the globe.

Change starts, not solely through right governance, though this is vital, but also individually, through our collective desire to be better citizens, better *kababayans*, better Filipinos. I am elated that the spirit of civic mindedness and the desire to bring about change in society is very much alive in this part of the USA. An overwhelming majority of Filipino-American organizations in the region have a long and rich tradition of service, both to Filipinos and Americans alike. Your hard work and dedication to your advocacies serve as catalyst for social transformation and economic development of the Philippines and the Filipino people.

Mgaminamahalkong kababayan, mgalider at kabilang sapamayanang Pilipino sa Timog California, Timog Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico at Texas, sapagdiriwang ng ating Kalayaan, nawa'y iwaksinatina ng ating mgaalitan, 'dipagkakaunawaan, pagkakawatak-watakayon sarehiyon, antas-panlipunano paksyon. Magkaisatayo at balikatinang kailangang gawin upang magkaroon ng tunay na pagbabagosaating bayan!

Mabuhay ang Sambayanang Pilipino!

ADELIO ANGELITO S. CRUZ
Consul General

12 June 2017