

WELCOME REMARKS

Launching of the 2012/2013
Philippine Human Development Report
and
6th Gawad sa Makataong Pag-unlad
29 July 2013; 8:15 AM – 12:00 NN
Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria Hotel
Origas corner ADB Avenue
Quezon City

by

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President, Human Development Network

Before I begin, a word first to Mayor Oscar Moreno: Sir, on behalf of the Executive Committee and members of the Human Development Network I would like to say that our thoughts today are with you and the victims of the senseless and cruel bombing in your city that killed and maimed visitors and residents alike. We stand in solidarity with you.

I now bid welcome to all our distinguished guests to this public launch of the 2013 Philippine Human Development Report. Thank you for finding the time to be with us this morning.

The Philippine Human Development Report is only issued roughly once every three years, and in each case there are two outputs: the first is generation of the Human Development Index as well as other measures of human development at the subnational level. Always based on the latest data available, this series has been generated by the HDN since 1994, and it has proven an invaluable tool among policy-makers, researchers, and students of development. In this issue we have been especially fortunate in obtaining the collaboration of the National Statistical Coordination Board, led by Dr. Ramon Albert and before that, his predecessor Dr. Romulo Virola, so that the statistics we produce have that extra seal of good housekeeping from the Republic's premier body for statistical aggregation.

The second output of the PHDR has always been the raising of an issue—autonomously selected by the HDN membership—that is deemed of importance to the country. This theme for this issue is the connection between *geography and human development*. This is an aspect of human development we have hitherto not fully discussed but which we believe has profound ramifications for the way we formulate public policy. Some of you will find the findings of the Report enlightening; others will find them provocative and challenging. That is only as it should be. Our only hope is that you come away from today's discussions convinced that the issues we raise and the proposals we make are vital for the country and deserve a thorough public discussion.

Finally, we thank our consistent partners in this endeavour, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), represented here today by Mr. Toshihara Tanaka. The UNDP has consistently supported the Human Development Network in both moral and financial terms ever since the HDN was first formed more than two decades ago, in 1991. We appreciate their assistance and especially the fact that they have always respected the autonomy and intellectual independence of the scholars and development practitioners who form the membership of the Network.

Thank you, good morning, and I hope you find the presentations and discussions useful and enlightening.