

**BUILDING PEACE AND SECURITY
THROUGH DEMOCRACY
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I BRING THE GREETINGS AND WARMEST WISHES of the Filipino people—who share with the Czech people the legacy of freedom and democracy.

And I am honored to *salute*—to *celebrate*—the heritage of freedom and democracy we share with the *nation* of Thomas Masaryk, Vaclav Havel, Jan Masaryk, and other great fighters for freedom.

This noon, Foreign Minister Schwarzenberg brought me to the room from where Jan Masaryk was pushed out of the window. On the marker below is the date March 10, 1948—60 years ago—when the Czech patriot fell.

Our two countries are founding members of the International Conference of *New and Restored Democracies*. To mark its 20th anniversary, the UN recently resolved to celebrate September 15 of every year to reaffirm that “while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any country or any region”.

Indeed, democracy’s long march does *not* begin in any one place or at any one time. Freedom—being a universal aspiration—springs from many sources.

For Europe, democracy and freedom sprung more than two millennia ago—from the epic War between the Greeks and the Persians.

The Greek victories at Salamis and at Plataea set the stage for Athenian democracy and the Golden Age of Pericles. – from whence European democracy began.



As the historian Will Durant wrote, the Greco-Persian Wars made Europe possible.

And in moments of despair—as when Czechoslovakia and Europe lay prostrate at the feet of totalitarian powers—this defining moment in the history of the West gave Europe and the world the hope—and the strength—to keep fighting for their most precious birthright.

Security as a function of democracy

Democracy is *not* the *privilege* of the *strong*: *security* is not the *luxury* of the rich.

Democracy and security are the birthright of all peoples; the entitlement of every nation

One without the other is untenable. Security *cannot* be maintained by force alone. Democracy *flourishes best* where its safety is assured.

To believe this is *not* to subscribe to some *utopian* ideal. It is hard-nosed pragmatism—taught by the bitter lessons of history.

The Philippine national experience

For the Filipino nation, democracy has always been the guide and the inspiration.

More than a century ago, our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, wrote that “freedom is not won at the point of the sword... we must win our freedom by deserving it, by improving the mind and enhancing the dignity of the individual, loving what is just, what is good, what is great, to the point of dying for it.”

Rizal was a progeny of the European Enlightenment. He became a friend of the distinguished Czech scholar Ferdinand Blumentritt, with whom he shared a resolve to advance the cause of freedom in the world.

Until now, more than a century later, the Knights of Rizal is active in the Czech Republic—and they continue to honor his memory and his libertarian ideals. Among its distinguished members is no less than the Deputy Prime Minister Alexandr Vondra.



This is proof—if proof be needed—that democracy and freedom are universal values that transcend national interests and move peoples—toward shared goals.

The Philippines founded Asia's first constitutional Republic in 1898—after securing our freedom through a nationalist revolution.

From the beginning, democratic government, human rights, and the rule of law have been the attributes of our country.

Equality, freedom of conscience, the separation of church and state, the Bill of Rights, and social justice—all these are woven into our national life.

Even 14 years of authoritarian rule in the 70's could *not* extinguish Philippine democracy. In 1986, we regained our freedom through a bloodless and peaceful "People Power" Revolution that inspired *peoples* everywhere.

The Philippine democratic example

President Corazon Aquino—the courageous woman who led our country back to democracy—would say of our *People Power*, "The world wondered as [it] witnessed...a people lift themselves from the depths of humiliation to the peak of greatest pride."

In 1986, democratic winds generated in the Philippines swept throughout the globe:

—Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League of Democracy stood up for democracy in Burma's 1988 elections and won overwhelmingly—and until today she remains unbowed in the face of brutal military repression.

—The following year, in 1989, millions of viewers around the world witnessed the democracy movement led by students gathered at Tiananmen Square.



—Democratic forces rallied in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania.

—The *Solidarity* Movement liberated Poland.

—In East Germany, ordinary people themselves tore down the Berlin Wall.

—And in Wenceslas Square, the “Velvet Revolution” returned democracy to Czechoslovakia

Spreading from Central and Eastern Europe to the Caucasus, democracy lifted the iron curtain and it ultimately swept away the Soviet Union.

Democracy remains the imperative

Not the balance of nuclear terror *but* democracy *and* people power ended the Cold War.

Yet democracy we know is *not* an end-state. Democracy is a commitment—a process—a political ideal.

Your own hero—the humanist and human-rights activist Vaclav Havel—whom we Filipinos much admire—likens democracy in the fullest sense to a *horizon* that the traveller may approach, but never fully attain.

Democracy calls for enduring faith, constant labour, and never-ending advancement.

On the frontline's of democracy's struggles

THE PHILIPPINES WAS ONE OF THE DRAFTERS and founding signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. We adhere to all core United Nations human rights instruments.

These landmark agreements—together with the mandates of our democracy—*call us always* to action on the front-lines of democracy's struggles.



In this spirit, we Filipinos continue to expand the boundaries of our freedom. Our laws and policies on human rights now embrace gender, the unborn child, children, the poor, the indigenous peoples, the disabled and historically disadvantaged groups.

Seventy-one years ago in 1937, the Philippines granted the vote to women.

When she assumed office in 2001, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo declared a moratorium on executions. Last year, we joined the nations of the European Union in abolishing the death-penalty altogether.

Our democratic political system is open to all ideologies. One of the first acts of then President Ramos in 1992 was to legalize the Communist Party of the Philippines banned since the colonial period.

A party-list system empowers representatives of minority groups and once-marginalized social sectors to sit in our Legislature.

Our free and unfettered press and vibrant civil society give full meaning and substance to Philippine democracy.

Even in managing violent secessionist and ideologically-radical rebels in our midst, our preferred way is the peace process through consultation and dialogue.

The Achievements of the Asia-Pacific and the European Regions

In both Western Europe and East Asia, the inexorable march toward freedom has improved lives and secured peace.

Europe created humankind's first successful experiment in regionalism—the European Union. The EU is providing democratic stability for growth and development in *one expanding European home*.

Our own continent's rise has been no less spectacular. East Asia's economic miracle has turned our home-region from a global *backwater* into a global *powerhouse*.



East Asia has lifted *more* people out of poverty—and *within* a shorter span of time—than any other region.

Today, millions of East Asians enjoy standards of education, jobs, social mobility, global exchanges, and personal freedoms that their parents could *not even* imagine.

And people whose lives are getting better do *not* want instability and conflict.

East Asia's people are investing heavily in regional stability—so that they can continue to reap dividends in economic growth, political democracy, and individual prosperity.

Developing under democracy as well as under authoritarianism

Economic development in Asia is taking place in democracies as well as in authoritarian systems.

India—a rising economic power second only to China—is the world's largest democracy.

Authoritarian regimes have no monopoly of development.

The Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea continue to enhance their democratic institutions even as they modernize their economies.

Now the Southeast Asian democracies are carrying this democratic momentum into ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The ASEAN Charter—finalized when the Philippines was ASEAN chair in 2007 — embodies our vision of a democratic, people-oriented Southeast Asian economic, social and political community by 2015.

As proposed by the Philippines, the ASEAN charter enshrines at its core our commitment to human rights.



In Burma, the Philippines has been consistent, firm and steadfast in promoting democratization and human rights. We have called on the Burmese Government to live up *fully* to its own roadmap to democracy—to begin with, by freeing and releasing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and including her National League for Democracy (NLD) in the democratization process.

No peace without democracy

THE DEMOCRACIES HAVE ‘WON’ THE COLD WAR. Now the democratic world is leading the world’s democratic transition.

As we are *uplifting* our peoples, we are *shoring up* the bastions of peace.

But our work to secure long-term peace is far from done.

We face the enormous challenges of terrorism—extremism—separatism—sectarian violence—transnational crime—and, above all, grinding poverty and human deprivation.

To preserve what we have achieved in peace and progress, we must continue to build on the foundation of democracy and freedom.

To quote Nathan Sharansky, there can be "no peace without democracy".

Our collective resolve to do so must overcome the will of those who reject democracy as they endanger us all.

Toward this end, we—the democracies of the world—must support democratic development at all levels of international cooperation—bilateral—regional—and global.

Bilateral action to support democratic development

Bilaterally, developing democracies should receive *priority support* from the international democratic community.



We in the Philippines have a long tradition of cooperation for human rights and democracy, both with foreign governments and with global civil society.

We have numerous cooperation projects that range from human-rights education to political-party development.

The Philippines can be a platform for *triangular cooperation* in human rights and democracy.

With European support, we can provide venues, grassroots networks and experts to train third-country people.

Regional action to promote democracy

In *regional action*, we commend Europe for steadfastly promoting democracy in its effort to build a single European home.

In Asia, democracy should expand with the same resolve.

We must match Asia's material improvements with equivalent improvements in democratic empowerment.

It is best when democracy and development go hand in hand.

Democracies must stand together for security

As we work to contain and control regional security problems, it is equally essential for democratic nations to stand together in the search for peace.

In East Asia, diplomacy in the Korean Peninsula and other potential flashpoints of disputes—including the South China Sea—have deeply involved regional democracies.

Europe faces its own challenges in Eastern Europe, in the Balkans in the Middle East and, now, in the Caucasus.

In many of these regional problems, democracy and development provide the best long-term answers—especially for *failing states* that could destabilize surrounding regions.



Nowhere is such cooperation among democracies more important than in our common struggle to defeat extremism and terrorism as well as to banish nuclear threats.

The international democratic community must confront this scourge resolutely. Together, we can overcome poverty, marginalization, discrimination and nuclear proliferation.

Inter-regional action through the Asia-Europe Meetings

Many of these themes should be taken up inter-regionally in the context of ASEM and other bodies. In this regard, I am pleased to note that the Philippines will host next year the ASEM counter-terrorism workshop.

In October next month the ASEM Summit meeting will take place in Beijing.

A strong capacity- and institution-building component in ASEM to enhance good governance and the management of globalization, therefore, would be important for spreading and deepening democracy in Asia.

Global action to assist developing democracies

In global action, we—the democracies of the world—should aim to expand democracy, promote development and encourage world understanding.

Millions of our poor people are exposed to global crises—among them rising energy and food prices, and the even-greater threat of climate change.

Hunger, disease, mass refugee flows and deepened instability *remain* ever-present dangers.

In many countries, hard-won gains from development are at risk—and with them the prospects of building democratic institutions that will *endure*.



The international democratic community must respond. Global action must assist developing nations, especially *transitional* democracies, in meeting the challenges of global warming and of food and energy security.

In world trade, we must renew the Doha Development Round. Let us not give up on our effort to expand world trade and investment equitably.

A reduction in developed-market agricultural subsidies would give more help to the poor than any conceivable increase in foreign aid.

Equitable global commerce will spread development—and development, in turn, will encourage the emergence and enhancement of democracy worldwide.

The emerging issue of migration

Migration is another key issue for both Asia and Europe. Migration contributes to development, yet migrants face exploitation and human rights violation.

We call on Europe to do its utmost to protect migrants, who are a shared blessing for the whole world.

Protecting the rights, welfare and opportunities of our migrants is an aspect of global democracy we must *not* ignore.

In 2007, Brussels was the host of the “First Global Forum on Migration and Development.”

Next month, it is the turn of Asia and the Philippines to host in Manila the “Second Global Forum on Migration and Development.” We invite your presence and participation.

Deepening interfaith dialogue

THE PHILIPPINES ALSO BELIEVES in the urgency of international interfaith dialogue, which must be part of a healthy global democracy.

Last January, the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum was held in Madrid.



In May 2009, the Philippines will host in Manila the “Special Non-Aligned Movement’s Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Cooperation and Dialogue”.

This Meeting complements Europe's own “Alliance of Civilizations” program, and will reinforce mutual understanding and democratic interaction around the world.

Interfaith cooperation and dialogue is an important instrument of our Mindanao peace process.

And we thank our European friends once again for supporting peace, development and democracy in Mindanao. Our cooperation there is a demonstration of international democratic solidarity at its best.

An agenda for democratic action

Finally, to move our global agenda forward, the countries of Europe and the European Union should prioritize support for developing democratic states.

Such a focus for European foreign policy will send a strong message that Europe stands by the democracies of the developing world.

The Czech Republic, which assumes the EU Presidency in 2009, could have a decisive role in this endeavor.

For their part, the Philippines and the other developing democracies in Asia will strengthen respect for human rights at home and in our region.

Focal points for our cooperation to enhance democracy and development will be the ASEAN, APEC, ASEM and the United Nations.

Friends:

This is Europe’s challenge and moment for global leadership.

European countries must continue to lead and show—from their own experience—that democracy is what builds strong, secure and prosperous communities, nations and regions.



The Philippines will be honored to be your partner—your natural partner—in this noble endeavor for peace through democracy.

Let us resolve to advance the frontiers of freedom—*not* for our own sake alone, but for the good of all humankind.

By doing so, we will prove ourselves true stewards of freedom, as we pass on our democratic heritage to those who will come after us. *Na Zdravi!*

