

## MESSAGE

My warmest greetings to all Filipino workers throughout the world on this historic celebration.

I join every freedom-loving Filipino in our global observance of the 120th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

We celebrate the rich history of our nation replete with stories of struggles and successes that made our people's journey to freedom most treasured.

As we commemorate the past, we are reminded of the valor and heroism of our forebears. Having won for us our freedom with their sacrifices, we are therefore called today to become the torch-bearers of our people's fortitude for greatness and national progress.

Today, our Independence is characterized by a higher level of pride – pride in our globally-competitive people in most parts of the globe. While we have seen stories of hardships, while we have experienced sufferings, and while we have heard of stories of abuse, our compatriots and modern-day heroes are not daunted. The Filipinos no doubt remain to be among the most efficient, productive and sought-after partners in moving other nation's economies.

This special occasion serves as well to bring to the fore our unrelenting desire to further contribute immensely to our country's growth and march to national greatness.

Our celebratory theme, "Kalayaan 2018: Pagbabagong Ipinaglaban, Alay sa Masaganang Kinabukasan," reflects our continuing national journey leading to a just and inclusive society. A society that gives premium to the welfare of each Filipino worker everywhere in the world.

Together, let us continue with our struggle for global excellence and national pride with burning nationalism in every Filipino's heart.

Isang makabuluhang Araw ng Kalayaan sa ating lahat!

SILVESTRE H. BELLO III  
Secretary  
Independence Day, 2018