

**SECRETARY NASSER PANGANDAMAN'S SPEECH IN THE
OPENING CEREMONIES OF THE 7th AGRARYO TRADE FAIR**

June 04, 2008, 10:00 a.m.
Mega Trade Hall 2, 5th Level Building B
SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City

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Hon. Speaker Prospero Nograles of the House of Representatives, fellow government officials, Agraryo Trade Fair organizers, sponsors and exhibitors, other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 7<sup>th</sup> Agraryo Trade Fair. I am very glad to see many of our partners who have been with us since the first launching of the Agraryo Trade Fair in 2002. We still have your unwavering support until now and we sincerely thank you for this.

I am pleased to acknowledge the continued support of the Department of Agriculture (DA); DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research ; Department of Trade and Industry; Department of Tourism (DOT); Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP); DAR's Foreign-Assisted Projects Office; First Asia Realty Development Corporation; and the National Historical Institute (NHI) for officially adopting the ATF as part of the 110<sup>th</sup> Philippine Independence Day Celebration. Special mention also goes to

San Miguel Corporation and the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, our new partners in staging this trade exposition.

Annually, the month of June is a busy period in the calendar of the Department of Agrarian Reform. This is the time when we celebrate the passage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law as well as remember with fondness and pride, the accomplishments of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

The staging of this year's Agraryo Trade Fair ushers in a new beginning as the Department of Agrarian Reform braces itself for another Program extension to truly give life to its mandate of delivering social justice in the countryside, specifically in the arena of land distribution and support services provision. The theme of the 2008 CARP anniversary, "CARP at 20 Towards Food Security" and the 7<sup>th</sup> Agraryo Trade Fair's tag line, "Celebrating ARBs' Growth and Success" are a fitting description of DAR's intent to drumbeat the victories and advances in terms of ARB product promotion in the mainstream market while taking on the challenge to meet food security goals.

Through the years, the Agraryo Trade Fair boasts of the achievements which it continuously generates: wider

selections and improved ARB products, wider markets for these ARB products, and growing community based-enterprises in terms of size and scale. Collective undertakings in the areas of product development, promotion and marketing likewise contribute considerably to creating job opportunities and increasing the income of the agrarian reform beneficiaries as well as other members in the agrarian reform communities.

The growth and success of the 7<sup>th</sup> Agraryo Tade Fair is the result of the work of many hands, heads and hearts. The skillful hands that decorated the booths, and produced and packaged the products that are on display in this exhibition; the heads that conceptualized this event; and the caring and generous hearts that beat as one for the welfare of the agrarian reform beneficiaries. I would like to commend the men and women behind the success of the Agraryo Trade Fair. I would also like to acknowledge their efforts in bringing together the farmer sector, national agencies, business sector and civil society in pursuit of the common goal of uplifting the economic status of the ARBs through the establishment of business and livelihood enterprises in the agrarian reform areas.

Again, I encourage the public to patronize the ARB products displayed and sold in the 7<sup>th</sup> Agraryo Trade Fair. The purchase

of the products goes along with it, the support to develop the economy in the countryside.

Mabuhay ang Programa sa Repormang Agraryo! Mabuhay ang mga magsasakang Pilipino! Mabuhay ang bansang Pilipinas!

Magandang umaga sa inyong lahat.