

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY

TUNGTUNGAN TI AMIANAN

Cordillera Administrative Region
51 Plaza Natalia Building
Naguilian Road, Baguio City
03 October 2008

Good Afternoon. It seems to me that everyone here had a good time participating in the discussion on the importance of extending one of the biggest and high-impact poverty alleviation program of the government, which is the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program or CARP.

We are about to end today's event, but before we conclude this conference, I would like congratulate everyone for giving your time and expert opinion to make CARP a continuing program which, if extended, could better serve our Farmer-Beneficiaries not only here in the Cordillera Administrative Region but all over the country as well.

I was informed that this has been a successful and enlightening conference. And I would like to the convenors specifically thank from the Northern Luzon Catholic Bishops, the major stakeholders from regions CAR, I, and II, who also constitute the so called Northern Bloc.

We at the DAR are exhausting all the possible ways, available under the law to push for the continuation of the Agrarian Reform Program.

As we said time and again, over a million hectares of agricultural lands are yet to be distributed, which could free thousands of Farmer-Beneficiaries from the clutches of dearth and poverty.

We know that landownership leads to the empowerment of the farmers. Farmers owning the land they till could benefit from the social and economical transformation, which only Agrarian Reform could provide.

Landownership and provision of support services are the principal factors that help our rural communities achieve better income opportunities. CARP provides these benefits and we know that our growing number of actual and potential beneficiaries couldn't allow a program like CARP to just end just like that.

The positive feed back we got is that all over the country, support for CARP continues to grow. No less than the president and the Speaker of the House, have announced their intention to give due Importance on the passage of the bill for this purpose.

I believe that if other CARP stakeholders will emulate what you have done today, our solid endeavor would surely be within our reach.

Together, let us show our legislators what the CARP has done for our communities, how it has helped the poor and how it continues to serve their needs in every way possible: from livelihood, farm production, infrastructure facilities, education and even health programs that it has provided nationwide.

Through all these, we know that CARP is still the key to address poverty alleviation and ensure food security.

I also would like to inform you that our fund for next year has been approved at the committee level in congress.

I take this as a welcome development. The task of justifying the program's budget has moved on and we hope we can soon concentrate on improving the program's features.

With your suggestions and inputs, we will closely consider them in our ongoing review of the program.

I would like to believe that we will have the next five years to continue on distributing lands to our landless farmers as well as to sustain the delivery of support services to those who have already received land titles from DAR.

Asahan po ninyo na ang pagpapahalagang ipinakita Ninyo sa CARP ay itinuturing naming isang malaking pagmamalasakit sa pagpapaunlad sa ating bayan.

Maraming salamat po at Mabuhay tayong lahat.