



Republic of the Philippines  
**Office of the Vice President**



**MESSAGE**

It is my pleasure to greet all of you, my fellow Filipinos, a glorious celebration of the 108<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our much-cherished independence. Indeed, it has been more than a century ago since our forefathers gallantly fought for our then nascent nation to gain its freedom. It is only fitting that we honor them today by remembering their heroic deeds and, more importantly, by ensuring that the flame of freedom fueled by their blood and sweat is burning stronger than ever today.

While there may no longer be any foreign colonizers yearning to take away our collective freedom and sovereignty as a nation, the challenge still remains for us to be vigilant in protecting the free enjoyment of our individual civil, political and human liberties. The strength of a nation's freedom is best measured by the freedom enjoyed by its citizens.

We likewise cannot deny that, at present, our nation is still in a struggle to break free from the bondage of poverty and of ignorance. It is my fervent hope that we will be illumined by the same spirit with which our heroes, generations before us, have fought to gain the freedom we are now enjoying. We should persevere harder to free our people from the burden of poverty and of ignorance. I believe that we will do our forefathers' proud if we successfully break the chains that have kept our fellowmen from enjoying the full benefits of economic prosperity and educational development.

*Huwag nating sayangin ang kalayaang ipinaglaban ng ating mga ninuno. Ipagpatuloy natin ang ating pakikipaglaban upang makamtan ng ating mga kababayan at susunod na salinlahi ang ganap na kalayaan mula sa kahirapan at kamangmangan.*

*Maligayang pagdiriwang sa inyong lahat.*

**NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO**

Manila, 09 June 2006