

DECLARING STRONG STATE SUPPORT TO THE UNITED NATIONS LITERACY DECADE (2003-2012)

PROCLAMATION NO. 614, April 21, 2004

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WHEREAS, literacy is a fundamental right of all which is not enjoyed by around 2.4 Filipinos, aged 10 and above who are basically illiterate, around 7.8 million who are functionally illiterate and 3 million out-of-school youth who run the risk of reverting to illiteracy if not accorded immediate attention;

WHEREAS, the UNESCO Call for Action during the United Nations Literacy Decade Launch in Bangkok, Thailand in September 2003, notes that 600 million out of the 860 million, or nearly 70% of the world's non-literate population, live in Asia;

WHEREAS, the United Nations (UN) has launched the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) to challenge nations to sustain efforts over ten years as they work towards the goal of increasing global literacy levels by 50% 2015;

WHEREAS, the UN Literacy Decade (UNLD) is meant to serve as an impetus for achieving the goals of the Dakar Framework for Action drawn up during the World Education Forum held in Senegal in April 2000 which the Philippines is committed to pursue, namely:

- Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs.
- Achieve a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education.
- Eliminate gender bias in primary and secondary education by 2015.

WHEREAS, the link between literacy rates and socio-economic development makes it imperative for the country to eradicate illiteracy and raise the levels of literacy of its citizens as an important step towards building a Strong Republic;

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the State to support the eradication of illiteracy and the improvement of the levels of literacy of its citizens in terms of policy, resources and programs geared to literacy developments;

WHEREAS, the Literacy Coordinating Council (LCC), created in response to the Jomtien Declaration of Education for All, and composed of the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Philippine Information Agency

(PIA), Philippine Normal University (PNU), Senate, House of Representative and Non-Government Organization (NGO) and the agencies involved in the promotion of literacy from the private and government sectors, provides overall coordination in policy formulation and program implementation of all inter-agency activities to the goals of the UNLD; and

WHEREAS, the DepEd is the principal agency responsible for the promotion of the basic education as stipulated in Article XIV of the Constitution

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby declare strong state support to the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012). Further, I hereby direct the Secretary of Education, with the LCC as his technical arm, to provide leadership to achieve the UNLD goals.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Republic of the Philippines to be affixed. Done in the City of Manila, this 21st day of April, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Four.

(Sgd.) GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

By order of the President:

(Sgd.) ALBERTO G. ROMULO

Executive Secretary

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