

AGENDA FOR NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

We, being legitimate people's organizations of the sovereign Filipino people and a national newspaper, imploring the aid of Divine Providence, in order to establish a government that shall embody our ideals, promote the general welfare, conserve and develop the patrimony of our Nation, and secure for ourselves and posterity the blessings of democracy under a regime of justice, peace, liberty, and equality, do ordain and promulgate this Agenda for National Transformation.ⁱ

We declare as our common, unconditional and irrevocable bond the following principles and policies:

1. That civilian authority shall at all times be supreme over the militaryⁱⁱ;
2. That there shall be separation of church and stateⁱⁱⁱ;
3. That there shall be freedom of religion^{iv}.

We dedicate our capabilities and resources to undertake the following reforms:

Economic Reforms:

1. Give highest priority to *job creation* and *consumer price reduction*, to attain full employment for the millions of unemployed and underemployed workers, and uplift the welfare of the entire consumer population; promote the massive establishment and expansion of enterprises by utilizing ALL available capital from BOTH local and foreign sources, and *lift* for this purpose the numerous *restrictions on foreign investments* that unduly protect the local monopolies and cartels; regulate rather than restrict foreign investments through the institution of a foreign investment council, with due regard for the protection of the basic securities of the state.

(The economic reform measure seeks to benefit the middle class and the *masa* class, through the liberalization of foreign direct investments and the lifting of the various nationality requirements. The measure aims to create jobs (through the establishment of new business enterprises or expansion of existing business enterprises), reduce consumer prices (through the increase in supply of goods and services), transfer technologies, expand access to foreign markets, promote economic growth, strengthen free competition and enhance efficiency, by eliminating artificial legal barriers against foreign business competitors. Notably, these barriers benefit only the few elite monopolists and oligopolists, at the expense of the majority of the people particularly the workers and consumers who are unfairly deprived of job opportunities and cheaper goods and services. Thus, we have a substantial portion of our population working or seeking to work for foreign employers overseas, obviously because of the lack of job opportunities in the country. The measure also seeks to support the campaign against corruption through systemic change (by facilitating the entry of independent business competitors *vis-a-vis* the existing cartels of government suppliers). Nonetheless, the measure acknowledges the possible threats that may be posed by foreign investors to the basic securities of the state, and seeks to address these threats by establishing a review mechanism under a Foreign Investment Council that will be vested with authority to prohibit, suspend or impose conditions on covered foreign investment transactions^v.)

Social Reforms:

1. End impunity in human rights violations by state and non-state actors through the criminal prosecution of all responsible persons, starting with the most brazen crimes left untouched by the justice system, including those by government and/or para-military forces (i.e. *Hacienda Luisita massacre*^{vi}), by rebel communist forces (i.e. *Digos massacre*^{vii}) and by rebel separatist forces (i.e. *Al-Barka massacre*^{viii}; *Mamasapano massacre*^{ix}).

2. End institutionalized plunder under the “pork barrel system” through the criminal prosecution of all responsible persons regardless of party affiliation, starting with the most notorious *Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP)* and the *Priority Development Acceleration Fund (PDAF)* respectively held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in *Araullo v. Aquino*^x and *Belgica v. Executive Secretary*^{xi}.

3. Correct historical distortions that blinded and misled the people towards unceasing infighting, by creating a *Truth Commission* to revisit the critical events that changed the fate of the nation, particularly the reported *Jabidah massacre*^{xii} (that sparked the separatist insurgency), the *Plaza Miranda bombing*^{xiii} (that revived the communist insurgency) and the *Ninoy Aquino assassination*^{xiv} (that divided the nation).

4. Seek genuine and lasting peace by pursuing the peace process with the separatist and communist rebels, based on the applied strategy of *disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)*, and subject always to the recognized rights of indigenous peoples as provided by the *Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act*^{xv}.

5. Strengthen the social institution and revive the cultural heritage of the *Southern Sultanates of Sulu, Maguindanao and Lanao*, by amending the constitution to mandate congress to recognize by law the *titles of royalty* of the southern sultanates, subject to the sovereignty of the people, the powers of the government, the establishment of the State, the patrimony of the nation, and the integrity of the national territory.

6. Institutionalize the protection of labor by ensuring that only those with appropriate qualifications AND actually come from the ranks of the workers, farmers and fishermen, are selected to head or manage the department of labor, or to serve as party-list representatives of the labor, peasant and fisherfolk sectors in congress.

7. Manage the population, with due respect to the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception^{xvi}, as well as to the family as the basic social institution^{xvii}, by implementing the *Reproductive Health Act* as modified and approved by the Supreme Court in *Imbong v. Ochoa*^{xviii}, and by promoting natural family planning as provided in the *Guiding Principles of the CBCP on Population Control*^{xix}.

Political Reforms:

1. Secure the sanctity of the vote^{xx} by adopting manual voting, automated counting (i.e. Optical Mark Reader system) and automated transmission and canvassing, with ALL the major security features (i.e. source code review, ballot verification, vote verification and digital signatures), PLUS voter’s receipt and FULL manual audit of the counting (i.e. voter’s receipt) and canvassing (i.e. election returns), to protect against massive electronic election fraud in the counting and/or canvassing;

2. Harness collective wisdom in the leadership of the national government, ensure broad

political support for government programs, and check graft and corruption through joint responsibility and accountability; institutionalize “collective rule” over “one-man rule”, through the adoption of a “unicameral parliamentary system” in place of the “bicameral presidential system”; the parliamentary system merges into one the political branches of the executive and the legislature, but leaves separate and independent the non-political branch of the judiciary.

(The new system seeks to weaken the control or influence of the oligarchs over the national government, by dispersing the ultimate power of control from one individual to a group of representatives. Paradoxically, it also seeks to strengthen the political branch of government vis-à-vis the oligarchs, by merging the executive and legislative branches into one. The system further seeks to diminish the natural advantage of “rich and famous” candidates over worthy candidates but with no celebrity stature, by replacing one large national constituency with several small local constituencies. Notably, in smaller constituencies, the manipulative mass media is less effective, and the voter has greater chances of knowing the competence and integrity of the candidate. Finally, it seeks to make the chief executive more accountable by facilitating his removal through a mere vote of “loss of confidence” in the assembly of representatives, instead of through a tedious impeachment trial.)

3. Harness collective wisdom in the leadership of the local government, ensure broad political support for government programs, and check graft and corruption through joint responsibility and accountability; institutionalize “collective rule” over “one-man rule”, through the adoption of a “council type system” in place of the “mayor type system”; the council system merges into one the local legislative council and the office of the local chief executive.

(The new system seeks to weaken the control or influence of family dynasties over the local government by dispersing the ultimate power of control from one individual to a group of representatives. Paradoxically, it also seeks to strengthen the local government vis-à-vis the local family dynasties, by merging into one the office of the local chief executive and the local legislative council. The system further seeks to diminish the natural advantage of “rich and famous” candidates over worthy candidates but with no celebrity stature, by replacing one large local constituency with several small local constituencies. Notably, in smaller constituencies, the manipulative mass media is less effective, and the voter has greater chances of knowing the competence and integrity of the candidate. Finally, it seeks to make the local chief executive more accountable by facilitating his removal through a mere vote of “loss of confidence” in the council, instead of through tedious administrative proceedings or criminal prosecution.)

4. Bring the government closer to the people through the gradual adoption of the semi-federal or federal system throughout the Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao archipelago. The semi-federal system involves the creation of a regional authority or an autonomous region, while the federal system involves the establishment of a sub-state. The evolutionary process shall be guided by the following twin principles: that the decision-makers are readily accessible to the people, and that local resources benefit the local people.

(The regional authority is a national government agency, the autonomous region a local government unit and the sub-state a component state of a federal republic. The gradual process may start with an executive order, progress to a congressional statute, and end with a constitutional amendment. The creation of a regional authority does not require a plebiscite, but the establishment of an autonomous region or a sub-state requires a plebiscite.)

The Manila Times

Makati City, Philippines. 18 January 2016

ⁱSee 1973 Constitution, Preamble. See 1987 Constitution, Preamble.

ⁱⁱ1973 Constitution, Article II, Section 8. 1987 Constitution, Article II, Section 3.

ⁱⁱⁱ1973 Constitution, Article XV, Section 15. 1987 Constitution, Article II, Section 6.

^{iv}1973 Constitution, Article IV, Section 8. 1987 Constitution, Article III, Section 5.

^v See US Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended by FINSIA, Section 721 (50 U.S.C. App. 2170). Executive Order No. 11858 (as amended by Executive Order No. 13456), re Foreign Investment in the United States.

^{vi}<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ab1ux2DiHw>

^{vii}<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-P1dp95xlC4>

^{viii}<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/-depth/10/19/11/al-barka-how-villagers-killed-marines-special-forces-troops>

^{ix}<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/453777/news/nation/pnoy-ultimately-responsible-for-mamasapano-massacre-senate-panel>

^xG.R. No. 209287, 01 July 2014.

^{xi}G.R. No. 208566, 19 November 2013.

^{xii}18 March 1968.

^{xiii}21 August 1971.

^{xiv}21 August 1983.

^{xv} Rep. Act No. 8371, The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997.

^{xvi}1987 Constitution, Article II, Section 12.

^{xvii}Id.

^{xviii} G.R. No. 204819, 08 April 2014.

^{xix} <http://cbcponline.net/v2/?p=317>

^{xx}1973 Constitution, Article VI, Section 1. 1987 Constitution, Article V, Section 2.