

## STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR ALBERT DEL ROSARIO ON THE 58<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESCISSION ACT

For the past 58 years, the Filipino nation has been aspiring for the rectification of an injustice done to Filipino veterans. Since the Philippines was then under US sovereignty, they fought under the US Command during the Second World War. However, once Allied victory has been attained, these valiant soldiers were stripped of their veterans' benefits with the US Congress' passage of the Rescission Act in 1946.

Today marks the 58<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rescission Act. It is a stark reminder that the struggle for full veterans' equity has been long, arduous and formidable. However, with tenacity and perseverance, some strides have been made specifically for the welfare of around 8,000 Filipino veterans based in the United States. No matter how relatively modest compared to our ultimate objective to attain full veterans' equity, these are steps forward which pave the way for future gains.

Let us remain mindful of the plight of the majority of surviving veterans in the Philippines who number some 21,000 and who are now in their twilight years. They have yet to attain the justice and equity which they richly deserve. On this day, let us rededicate ourselves to the cause of full veterans' equity.

It is heartening to note that members of the Filipino-American community from the East Coast to the West Coast are coming together to commemorate this day. This initiative is truly commendable. Unity is the key to our ultimate victory. Together, let us lock arms and soldier on as our veterans did in defense of liberty. With the same moral courage which they had demonstrated, we must relentlessly pursue the struggle for full veterans' equity.

Let us not rest until our mission is accomplished.

ALBERT DEL ROSARIO  
Ambassador

18 February 2004  
Washington, D.C.