

Message of Mr. Paul G. Schäfer

Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation

Opening Ceremony

Human Rights Desk Officers Forum-Workshop

08 July 2010, PNP Training Service Bldg.

Camp Crame, Quezon City

Police Director Raul Bacalzo

Police Chief Superintendent Franklin Bucayu

Police Superintendent Gerardo Dia

Distinguished Human Rights Desk Officers of the PNP

Distinguished Members of the Training Team

Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express my warm greetings to all of you especially to Police Director Raul Bacalzo for gracing the Opening Ceremony of this important activity amid the multitude of activities currently going on at the Philippine National Police.

You may already be aware that the Hanns Seidel Foundation/Germany and your PNP through its Human Rights Affairs Office (HRAO) have forged a partnership starting in 2008 to help the PNP organization in the implementation of its Human Rights Development Program, otherwise known as LOI PAMANA.

In just over two years of our cooperation, we have achieved significant milestones that contributed to the transformation program of your PNP. The HRAO, with the approval and support of the Office of the Chief PNP, Police Director General Jesus Verzosa, has declared three program thrusts for this year, namely: 1) mainstreaming human rights within the PNP; 2) strengthening the Human Rights Desks nationwide; and 3) trust-building efforts with civil society.

Your presence here today in your capacity as Human Rights Desk Officers, who serve as frontline officers in the PNP's advocacy on human rights promotion and protection, is a good signal that we are on the right track. We share your vision to make the PNP a highly capable, effective and credible police service in the future, particularly in realizing one of your key result areas – that is, promotion of human rights. Towards this end, we have committed to support, among others, the strengthening of the Human Rights Desks to ensure that human rights promotion and protection can be institutionalized at all levels of your organization. We aim to assist in training and developing well-motivated and competent human rights officers, at the same time that your leaders in the PNP put in place the institutional policies and resources necessary to address your needs and concerns on the ground, to be able to do your assignment efficiently and effectively.

This forum-workshop is a good opportunity to share and discuss the different issues and concerns affecting your work as human rights officers, and to help in determining solutions in moving forward. I understand that one of your tasks in this forum-workshop is to review and validate the draft Human Rights Desk Operations Manual, which we are supporting, before it is finalized for printing. This Manual will help you in performing your functions as human rights officers and in strongly advocating human rights in and outside the PNP.

We look forward to continue working with you and the PNP towards strengthening your ranks as human rights officers and being positive role models in living up to your motto “to serve and protect” the people.

Finally, allow me to thank the PNP leadership as well as the officers and staff of the Human Rights Affairs Office for your support and cooperation in our joint undertakings.

Thank you for your kind attention and good morning.