

BATINGAW; BELL; HERALD; The New Voice of Filipino Migrants in Australia



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ISSUE **17** April - June '09



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# May Day 2009 -Workers' Liberating Role in a Time of Imperialist Crisis

The world as we know it has once again radically changed. We are no longer talking about September 11 but the woes brought about by the global economic crisis leading to massive unemployment, economic recession and more wars. Every day we hear about whole economies collapsing, hundreds of thousands of mass layoffs, capital drains as companies large and small suffer unprecedented losses. Without any doubt, the biggest casualty, are the millions of workers all over the world.

As we enter an uncharted terrain with this conjuncture of profound crises - the fallout from the financial crisis will everywhere be severe. People are being thrown into a deep sense of insecurity; misery and hardship will increase for many poorer people everywhere.

Australia is not immune from the current global economic crisis and the battering of the working class and small owners and producers are taking a heavy toll.

Unemployment is spreading like wildfire. Key industries such as manufacturing, textile, mining, building construction, tourism and hospitality, and service sectors are all laying off workers.

With less money in people's pockets, many shops and small businesses are now struggling to make ends meet and are quickly sliding downhill. Credit for small business is hard to come by these days, cash is drying up and business confidence is at an all time low. After years of relative stability and seemingly secure jobs, many working people are anxious of their future and are looking for answers.

## Economic downturn also weighs on Filipino migrant workers all around the world

As the global financial crisis bites, Filipino migrant workers face the prospect of losing their jobs, returning home unemployed and often in deep debt.

The Philippines which has one of the highest unemployment rates in Southeast Asia and one of the highest poverty rates and heavily reliant on remittances from Overseas Filipino workers, face the prospect of OFWs returning en masse after losing jobs in recession-hit economies abroad. They face a bleak future with the Philippine economy struggling to provide enough jobs at home.

Last year, Filipino migrant workers sent home a record \$16.4 billion in remittances, a major pillar of the consumer spending in its domestic economy. This year Migrante International predicts that 100,000 migrant workers may

lose their jobs. Forty thousand were already laid off in the past few months.

Mass unemployment and social problems that often accompany large-scale joblessness could also take a toll on what is expected to be a tight presidential election next year to replace the unpopular president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Poverty is also a concern. More than 30 percent of the Philippine population live below the poverty line of \$3 a day per family of five, and the number will likely worsen as more Filipinos are added to the list of unemployed.

## The challenge and the opportunity

It is no doubt that people's confidence in global and monopoly capitalism has been badly shaken.

No capitalist propaganda sweeteners will ease the widespread pain inflicted by their greed and the liberal attitudes of the governing states.

As we celebrate May Day --- the one day in the year when the toiling people of the world should be recognised for their immense contribution to global wealth --- we are reminded that when economic times are good they benefit the least and when the going gets tough, it is always the workers who suffer first and longest.

The worker's daily challenge is not only to feed their family, send the children to school and provide comfortable shelter but also to continue to fight against the vulnerability of their positions in their workplaces and their place in society to ensure that in times like this when economic crises plague the world, that they the workers don't become the scapegoats of economic demise. The workers continue to fight and demand that the company CEO's and the bigger shareholders who amassed wealth should share the bigger chunks of cut-off's and maintain the share of the workers on employment, wages and entitlements. After all, the workers never get a fair share in the profit.

Workers, now more than ever, have to assume their historic role of liberating humankind and, ultimately, themselves, from all the exploitative shackles preventing them from leading in the restructuring for a humane and egalitarian society.

Now, when imperialism's or monopoly capitalism's fundamental weaknesses are being exposed, is the time to join and lead these growing and powerful people's movements against neo-liberalism #

# SALAMAT [THANK YOU]

Photographic Exhibition & Documentary:  
A visual journey into indigenous communities of the Philippines by RMIT Global Studies students



Photos will be auctioned on the night (cash only). All proceeds from the evening will go towards Miriam College scholarship programmes for indigenous children in the Philippines.

**Date:** Wednesday, May 13th 2009

**Venue:** Loop, 23 Meyers Place, Melbourne (top end of Bourke Street)

**Time:** 7.00pm - 10.00pm

**Entry price:** \$15.00 (first drink free); tickets available at the door

**Music by:** DJ Sean Parker and DJ Zaibatsu (RRR Music Director); aka The Pintara

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### About Batingaw

Batingaw is a bi-monthly newsletter expressing views, news and analysis from Migrante Melbourne. An important aspect of developing this newsletter is an intimate knowledge of and close involvement in all aspects of the Philippine and Australian struggles for justice, democracy and fair-go.

### Contributing to Batingaw:

Articles, photographs, cartoons, clippings, comments or a few lines are all very welcome. All material should be sent electronically to: [melbourne@migrante.org.au](mailto:melbourne@migrante.org.au). Readers are encouraged to contribute whatever they can by sending donations to the above address.

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# MAY DAY

by Stephanie Rabusa

**M**ay Day or Labour day, as it is also known, is considered as a modern working class commemoration. It is celebrated all over the world that resulted from the Labour Union Movement.

The current celebration traces its beginnings to the events in Chicago in 1886 where workers demanded the institution of an eight hour working day following the Civil War. The concerted efforts of the union solidarities formed the May 1st strike of 1886 where six protesters were killed by police attacks.

A demonstration against the brutal attacks followed on the 4th May 1886 in Haymarket where a bomb exploded in the middle of a police crowd. Eight anarchist trade unionists were arrested for allegedly throwing the bomb. These workers were tried, found guilty and executed. These men, guilty or not, have died fighting for their rights as workers. In honor of the martyrs of Haymarket the International Working Men's Association of Paris, in 1889, declared May 1st as an international working class holiday.

## May Day in Australia

Since the 1850s, Australian workers have fought for the same eight hour days that the rest of the world asked for. One of the earliest demonstrations for the eight hour day came in the form of a march on 21st April 1856 where workers march from the Old Quadrangle Building of the University of Melbourne to the city. The stonemasons working on the building downed their tools, left their worksite and staged a protest to demand an eight hour work day. This march is considered a pivotal moment in the achievement of an eight hour working day in Australia.

The eight hour march has been staged every year since then to honour and commemorate the workers' right to organise to achieve their rights. Having said this however, women's work rights at this time are still not equal to men's. Women still had to endure longer working hours and lower pay.

One of the first Mayday marches in the Australia took place during the strike on 1 May 1891 in Barcaldine,

Queensland. Under the Eureka flag, more than 1300 shearers marched to protest against poor working conditions and low wages. Melbourne held its first public May Day celebration on the 1st of May 1892. The celebration on the Yarra Bank was preceded by a march which began at the Burke and Wills monument.

May Day celebrations in Australia are practiced to this day and every year the number of participants grow.

## May Day in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the first labour day was celebrated on May 1, 1903 by a demonstration of 100,000 workers led by the Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas (UODF or Democratic Labour Union of the Philippines). The demonstration was held in front of Malacanang Palace. This demonstration worried the American government and they arrested the UODF then president Dominador Gomez and charged him with sedition.

Despite the continued harassments and threats, the labour movement in the Philippines continued its fight. On the 1st of May 1913, the Congreso Obrero de Filipinas was created and fought for issues like eight hour working day, eradication of child labour and equal working standards for women, among others.

The labour movement in the Philippines continues to flourish to this day. Almost every industry has a representation of a union which are allied with national solidarities. The main objectives of these unions are to demand fair labour laws and provision of benefits and workers rights. The national organisation Kilusang Mayo Uno is a leading movement in defending not only workers rights but also human rights of the Filipino people. In May Day rallies in the Philippines, not only worker's issues are highlighted but also other issues that continue to oppress the Filipino masses.

The May Day movement is a very important platform in which workers are able to demonstrate their solidarity. May Day shows that workers have the power to organise and demand for their rights.



*“We, in Australia remember Ka Bel (Crispin Beltran), a great man, defender of workers and a true proletarian who passed away on the 20th of May 2008.”*

## RP-Oz SOFA Violates Philippine Sovereignty, Endangers Filipino People

Part 1 *Compiled by Maria Elena Ang*

**R**ecent visitor and newly proclaimed Congressman Neri Colmenares expressed grave concerns on the RP-Australia Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (SOVFA or SOFA) impact on Philippine sovereignty, peace and people's rights.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer reported in 2007 that the SOFA signed between the then Howard government and the Macapagal-Arroyo administration allows the armed forces of both countries to conduct joint counter-terrorism exercises. This closely followed one forged with the United States of America.

SOFAs generally have to be ratified like treaties by the Senate bodies of both countries. In the case of the RP-Australia SOVFA, only the Australian Senate had passed the SOFA. It remains an executive agreement which probably explains why it is not listed in the Australian Defence Force website.

Which brings us to Congressman Colmenares' and Bayan Muna's (the partylist group to which he belongs) argument.

Bayan Muna contends the SOFA violates the Philippine Constitution and the entry of Australian troops to the Philippines as unconstitutional. Pres. Arroyo has never submitted it to the Senate for concurrence.

Long after the US relinquished its direct colonial hold of the Philippines it maintains colonising practices to maintain its various military and economic interests in the country. To do this, it has to continue its chokehold of Philippine politics and government. Successive Philippine governments support the exploitative and oppressive system imposed by the US, making them

inherently repressive. Any military support or training of the repressive armed forces, such as the RP-Australia SOVFA, supports a system which perpetrates the national oppression of the Filipino people.

The Philippine Constitution expressly prohibits the entry of nuclear weapons in the country. Any Australian aircraft or vessel entering through SOFA does not guarantee the non-entry of nuclear weapons into Philippine territory.

Long before SOFA, former Australian Defence Minister Brendan Nelson has admitted the deployment of Australian security forces in Mindanao. This constitutes violation of Philippine sovereignty and any effort to enhance the capacity of the repressive Philippine Armed Forces encourages further violation of human rights in the Philippines. (State security forces are presumed to be the mastermind in the extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearances of over 1,100 Filipinos.)

SOFA also raises issues of criminal jurisdiction in cases of individual Australian troop transgression against civilians, e.g. rape of Filipinas by foreign soldiers as in the recent case of US Cpl Smith in the rape of 'Nicole'.

The most frightening implication of SOFA is that the disposition of Australian troops could ignite a shooting war between these troops and various rebel forces in the country. Thus, Australia, the US' closest ally in the region and also in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, could be caught in an unpopular war in the Philippines and contribute to derailing the peace process in the Philippines.#

Reference: Philippine Congressman Neri Colmenares



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# Recent changes to the Subclass 457 visa program: what they mean for temporary migrant Filipino workers

By Reyvi Mariñas

The recent changes to the Subclass 457 visa program are likely to have a tremendous impact on current and future temporary visa migrant workers and applicants.

The changes were announced by the Australian government in the wake of the current global financial crisis and the slowdown of the Australian economy.

Following the Government's announcement of its long-term commitment to implement essential reforms to the 457 visa program in 2009, the measures were developed to "improve both its integrity and ability to deliver the skills needed in the economy".

These measures were introduced on 24 February and also on 14 April that include responses to recommendations from the Deegan Review into the integrity of the 457 program and a more targeted skills needed in the economy.

As a result, the Australian government introduced two major changes: first is an employer related requirement – the so-called 'Benefit to Australia' requirement; and the second one is an employee related measure - English language requirement.

## Benefit to Australia

Previously, the 'Benefit to Australia' requirement under Subclause 457.111(2) of the Migration Regulations (1994) was only assessed at the Sponsorship application stage, and this clause was widely interpreted by decision makers. The 'Benefit to Australia' is divided into four elements (only one element needs to be satisfied). These are:

1. The creation or maintenance of employment for Australian citizens or Australian permanent residents;
2. Expansion of Australian trade in goods or services;
3. The improvement of Australian business links with international markets; and
4. Competitiveness within sectors of the Australian economy.

This recent change would suggest that a sponsor needs to demonstrate for each 457 application that there is a 'Benefit to Australia' (as opposed to the business) in line with the current economic conditions and employment necessities, both globally and locally.

This is not a new requirement. But it appears that the government is simply tightening its interpretation in response to the widespread concern about certain abuses and exploitation of overseas workers.

This also ensures that wages of overseas workers keep pace with local wages and to oversee that employers have a strong record of, or demonstrated commitment to, training local labour.

## English language requirement

The government has also recently introduced a tougher measure to the English language requirement as a result of the current economic situation and stakeholders call for the integrity of the 457 visa to restore public confidence in the program.

Since 1 July 2007, 457 visa applicants have been required to have competence in English equivalent to an average band score of 4.5 across the four test components of listening, reading, writing and speaking in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test.

But on 14 April, the new law increased the minimum English language requirement from IELTS 4.5 to IELTS 5.0 for all Subclass 457 visa applicants in the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) Major Groups 4 to 7 occupations including Chefs and Head Chefs (ASCO 3322-11 and ASCO 3322-01).

Traditionally, Chefs and Head Chefs are exempted to undertake an IELTS test as they fall under Major Group 3 (Associate Professionals); but the introduction of this new measure will definitely affect these occupations, more so those occupations that fall under Major Group 4 (Tradespersons) such as Cooks, Hairdressers, Welders, Motor Mechanics, Electricians, etc.

The government claimed that the upgraded language requirement was needed "to address concerns about the exploitation of workers from non-English speaking countries and align the 457 visa English language standard with the permanent sponsored visa for trades' occupations".

It was also the first measure of a package designed to provide needed skills "while not undermining local training and employment opportunities".

## Recent changes to the Subclass 457 (continued...)

### Potential impact to Filipino 457 visa workers

There is no doubt that these measures will have a significant impact on current Filipino 457 visa holders who want to extend their 457 visa and to those Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who want to come and work in Australia.

First, as a result of the worsening economic conditions in Australia, the tightening of sponsorship requirements are not particularly encouraging for potential employers and current business sponsors to hire extra employees through 457 visa scheme.

More so, employers may be reluctant to extend the 457 visa of temporary migrant worker because of the extra work and documentations to satisfy the 'Benefit to Australia' requirement.

The employer's decision not to extend the 457 visa of the migrant worker would put him/her in vulnerable position to look for another employer, or worst, he/she would have no choice but to go home and leave Australia.

Second, most OFWs are able to speak and understand English. But many OFWs may have difficulties in sitting for an IELTS test as the general basis to prove their English language ability post-14 April, especially those OFWs that falls under Major Group 4 (Tradespersons).

Not many tradespersons are able to obtain a score of 5.0 across the 4 test components of the IELTS test. This would also mean extra costs for OFWs for a repeat IELTS test or to undertake basic English language classes in preparation for IELTS test.

### Conclusion

It will only be a matter of time until further changes to the Subclass 457 visa program are implemented in light of the Deegan Report. This is also inevitable given that Australia's economic condition is continuously deteriorating in the brink of world-wide recession.

The 457 visa is uncapped and is entirely driven by employer demand for skills that (supposedly) are not available locally. But under the current economic climate, it is realistic to anticipate a flat demand for temporary skilled migrants by Australian businesses.

The government has recently announced that there has been a decrease in the 457 visa applications in the first three months of 2009, where the average number of primary 457 visa applications lodged was 430 a week compared to an average of 700 primary 457 visa applications lodged each week during the last six months to December 2008.

These are the realities that OFWs have to live with. It is a harsh reality, but one has to remain vigilant and responsive to the changing economic circumstances of our times.

## Get Involved!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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- be updated with information from Migrante Melbourne
- donate to Migrante Melbourne



Migrante Melbourne is a voluntary community organisation of Filipino and Filipino-Australian migrants and workers promoting and upholding their welfare, human rights and workers' rights. It also deepens members' awareness of the root reasons of the Filipino hegira to over 180 countries and settlement issues in their adopted homelands.

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# Women's expressions by May Kotsakis

**G**ABRIELA Australia celebrated its 13th year founding anniversary on the 8th of March this year. GABRIELA's founding coincides with International Women's Day which is also celebrated by its members on anniversary day.

This year, the theme of the celebration was 'Women's Expressions'. Each member and participant shared how they expressed themselves as a woman, how they see themselves as a woman and how they feel as a woman. This was the highlight of the celebration - an activity expressing women's feelings on the various roles women take in their journey through life.

The activity started with self introduction by all participants. Malou Logan, chairperson of GABRIELA Australia asked everyone to describe themselves with one word beginning with the same letter as the first letter of their name. This exercise made everyone relax and fired up an enjoyable day.

Christie Rivera, the secretary of GABRIELA, facilitated the sharing. She brought various objects for each participant to choose from - the object chosen acting as a symbol to express themselves as a woman.



Some members of Gabriela Australia at its 13th year founding anniversary - Melbourne

Malou chose a pen. She said that a pen signifies her struggle for the recognition of her contribution as a woman journalist. Too often women in the media industry are discriminated against and sexually harassed. The pen is a tool for her to expose and oppose State violence on people as well as write about the strengths and joys of women as they battle and win over injustices they face.

Angie as she held the stone she picked said that a rock signifies the strength that she discovered she has. As a union organiser in the Philippines, Angie was subjected to intimidation, harassment and human rights violation. She was among the target of the military for liquidation, her name being included in the order of battle and tagged as an enemy of the state. Angie said, as a woman, she was able to bear the difficulties she was in and was able to continue her work.

Illeth chose a candle saying that a mother brings light to the family. She said that she endeavored to shed light to her children by taking care of them and teaching them all the knowledge she has, a learning experience she said she never had with her mother.

For Elsa a rock is who she could be like every now and then, signifies that a mother as a woman, sometimes need to make hard decisions. She said that children should not be offended if at times they do not get what they want. A mother will always love her children and will always do what is best for them to the best of her ability.

Cris picked the ribbon explaining how she loved being dotted on by her mother when she was young. Being an only child, she thought that it would have been better for her mother if she had a son instead of a daughter. She realised later that not only can she do what a son can, she is also able to take good care of her mother especially now that her mom is not in very good health.

Tess swaying the torch in her hand said that a woman just like the battery of a torch needs recharging. A woman is always expected to do more at home. A woman even with paid work like her partner always does more housework than her male partner.

May chose an elastic band. While stretching the elastic, said that she feels like this band. Being a wife, a full time

*Women's expressions (continued...)*

working woman and a mother, she still finds time and effort to do community work. Sometimes, she also added, whether we like it or not, we are entrusted with many concerns that we need to address all at the same time. And as a woman we have the capacity to multi-task because we are flexible and adaptable.

Resy selected a book which she said gives inspiration to the reader. She remarked that the book represents the record of her life's journey from when she was child to now as an adult with her own family. It kept all her sadness and joys, her failures and successes and her frustrations and enjoyment.

Jenny flicking a lighter shared that the GABRIELA network has steadfastly fought for women's rights. She also said that we women should be thankful that there is an organisation like GABRIELA that maintains the fire lit for women's struggle against all forms of oppression.

Lorna selected a pen. Being shy she used the pen to describe her repressed feelings. She said that ever since she was a young girl, she was always hesitant to speak and express what she felt. She used to write them on paper instead.

Kay chose a book and a newspaper. She said that in her 17 years as a girl there was one change she noticed and this is the increased number of women authors. She said that in the early days, only men wrote books or journals because only men were allowed to study while women are left to tend the home. Kay feels encouraged and empowered.

Annie chose a teddy bear. The youngest among the participants at only 15, she did not pick the teddy bear just to cuddle it. She said that kids cuddle a teddy bear to feel secure and safe. Annie said that her friends feel that their secrets are safe when they share their secrets with her.

Christie chose a wrapping, a scarf. She stated that a scarf made of wool around her shoulders represents the warmth of friendship and bonding that she shares with the members of GABRIELA.

There are many ways women express themselves as there are many experiences, feelings and challenges women cross in their daily lives. ##



**DANCE FOR CHILDREN**  
GABRIELA'S DFC

**Protect the Rights of Children!**

Disco, ball room dancing, sharing... and more... to support the Children's Rehabilitation Centre in the Philippines.

When: Friday, May 22, 2009  
Venue: Resurrection Parish Hall  
51 Gum Road, St Albans  
Time: 7pm till Midnight  
Ticket : \$15.00 per person  
BYO food. Drinks for sale



**Gabriela Australia**  
P O Box 606, Laverton 3028  
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Resy 0412 795318  
Christie 0419 569656

## Kabataan, tayo ang pagbabago.

Message of Kabataan Party-list Rep. Raymond Palatino to the Filipino youth on the historical event of seating the first youth representative in Congress

**F**ive years in the making for the country's sole youth sectoral party-list, but better late than never and victory is still sweet for all Filipino youth.

Kabataan Party-list, the largest youth party in the country, represented the youth sector in the 2007 elections. It was



the second time for our organization to run in the party-list elections. In 2004, we ran under our previous name, Anak ng Bayan, and were among the top choices for party-list based on pre-election surveys. Anak ng Bayan, however, fell prey to massive cheating. A significant number of our votes



were anomalously counted in favor of another party-list group, thus our change of name in the 2007 party-list elections.

Despite not winning, we went on with our advocacies and continued to carry on with our principles and general program of action with the help of our founding organizations, such as the National Union of Students of the Philippines, College Editors Guild of the Philippines, League of Filipino Students and Anakbayan and other supporters nationwide and abroad.



Now, five years after our first electoral bid, Kabataan Party-list has finally secured a seat in the House of Representatives per SC GR No. 179271, promulgated April 29, 2009.

Now, we are happy to convey the message to all Filipino youth that the SC Resolution, in effect, has once again marked the youth's rightful place in history by granting the first ever youth sectoral representation in the House of Representatives.

This is truly a historical event and we share this resounding victory to all Filipino youth who voted for and supported Kabataan Party-list. We are overwhelmed but more than ready to take on the task and challenge of being the sole voice of the youth in Congress.

We are youth from different walks of life. We have long-ago advocated for the youth to devote its intellect, energy and courage to building a better society devoid of corruption, inequality and social injustice. We are youth that foster active participation in nation-building, good governance and change.

In this junction in history in light of our recent victory, we, the youth, are change. Kabataan, tayo ang pagbabago.

We will uphold, promote and defend the interests of the youth to be able to harness our potential as a vital, albeit marginalized, sector in society.

The Filipino youth have always played a pivotal role in ushering in significant changes in history. We have always been at the forefront of uprisings and revolutions every time the social, political and economic conditions in society became too intolerable for Filipinos to endure.

It was young men and women who prevailed in the leadership and membership of the revolutionary army and other patriotic forces against Spanish colonialism, against US colonization, against Japanese fascism and against the puppet regimes in the Philippines.

It was also the Filipino youth who were the biggest marchers and rallyists during the historical First Quarter Storm of 1970, the people

## *Kabataan, tayo ang pagbabago (continued...)*

power uprising that toppled the Marcos dictatorship in 1986 and once again in the similar uprising that ousted the Estrada regime in 2001.

We are more than willing to take up the cudgels our forebears left us. Right now, a rotten system of governance and a severe global economic crisis confront us but we rise to the challenge of our times.

In the past eight years of the Arroyo administration, the youth has also always been amongst the most vigilant and vocal against issues of electoral fraud, corruption and plunder, human rights violations, tyranny and social injustice causing poverty, hunger and indecent living conditions to the people.

While we recognize that one year is too short a time in the House of Representatives, we pledge to work tenfold to efficiently and effectively bring our new brand of politics to Philippine government. To be able to fully realize this, we appeal to all Filipino youth to work hand-in-hand with us. We reiterate the need for active youth participation in nation-building and continue to rely on the strength and unity of the youth movement to reinforce our sole youth voice in Congress.

We will immediately register our opposition against charter change and join moves by other progressive party-lists to disqualify human rights violator Ret. Gen. Jovito Palparan from assuming party-list representation.

We are also now consulting with youth from different sectors to aid in our plans to immediately submit for legislation bills concerning youth empowerment in governance, employment for the 900,000 new graduates, and tuition fee hike moratorium, among others.

Finally, we look forward to bigger things that lie ahead in the future. It is the Arroyo administration's last year in office and the youth are anticipating and working for significant changes come 2010. As early as now, we pledge to work for a transparent and clean 2010 elections that will realize the youth's clamor for good governance and change. We are set to embark on a nationwide youth voters' registration and education campaign in the aim to collectively mobilize the broadest number of young Filipinos to register, vote, and guard the 2010 ballot.

Change is bound to happen if and when the youth strives for it.

***Kabataan, maraming salamat!  
Kabataan, tayo ang pagbabago.***

## **Rep. Raymond Palatino, the first youth sectoral representative in Congress**



29-year-old Raymond "Mong" Palatino is considered as one of the most brilliant youth leaders in the country. He was chair of the University Student Council of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman in 2000 and president of the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP), the largest alliance of tertiary student councils nationwide

from 2001 to 2003. He is also one of the leading youth veterans of EDSA Dos.

An education graduate of UP, Palatino has been a prominent figure in various campaigns and issues concerning youth and students. He was convenor to several youth alliances such as the Education for All (e4all) Movement, Abolish ROTC, Tuition Refund, Youth Action Network against electoral fraud and violence, Youth Demanding Arroyo's Removal (Youth DARE), Youth against Charter Change and Tyranny (Y-CHAT), Youth for Accountability and Truth Now (Youth ACT Now), and TxtPower, a consumer rights advocacy group, among others.

In 2004, Palatino was recognized by the Quezon City government for exemplary youth leadership and was awarded by the United Nations Association of the Philippines as an Outstanding Youth Leader for Advocacy on National Concerns.

Palatino also writes for several online publications, aside from maintaining his own web blog. He is a web columnist for tinig.com, former news editor of yehey.com, a contributing editor for Global Voices Online, and one of the leading members of Bloggers' Kapihan, an online network of young bloggers. He has also been a regular resource speaker of both Houses of Congress on youth and education issues.

Palatino is also a proud father to his new son Neil Esmond, born a day after the issuance of the SC Resolution, and daughter Renee Elle, 4 years old.  
###

# Events Calendar - Mark your Diary

## 28 April 2009 - May Day Film Night

Films depicting peoples' struggles  
Democritus Workers league, 583 High Street, Northcote

## 30 April 2009 - Multicultural Event

Speeches and cultural items hosted by a number of Ethnic organisations  
followed by a multicultural smorgasbord  
7:00 pm at New Ballroom, Trades Hall

## 03 May 2009 - Mayday march, rally, family activities and concert

12:00 noon - Festivities begin at Lygon Street, between Victoria and Queensberry Streets

1:00 pm - March, assembly at the corner of Victoria and Russell Street opposite the Trades Hall, then moves through the city and back to Lygon Street for the speeches and concert

Concert and smorgasbord - following the march and speeches, a community singing and performances of working class songs by selected artists

## 13 May 2009 - Photographic Exhibition & Documentary

A visual journey into indigenous communities of the Philippines  
by RMIT Global Studies Students

7.00 pm at the Loop, 23 Meyers Place, Melbourne

## 22 May 2009 - Gabriela Australia "Dance for Children" disco night

Gabriela Australia's yearly fund raising activity for the Children's Rehabilitation Centre (CRC) in the Philippines.

7:00 pm at Resurrection Parish Hall, 51 Gum Road, St. Albans



To:

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Affix Stamp