



**Contribution to a Good Governance Agenda
for Consideration by the Aquino Administration**

Proposed by FSGO
June 2010

1. We, former senior government officials, having organized ourselves to resist corruption and abuse of power in our government now recognize that good governance occupies a central place in the mandate of the incoming Aquino administration. We forged a consensus that good governance could provide a *unifying framework* for the many concrete, specific action programs and necessary initiatives that the next Administration could pursue in the next six years. We recommend, therefore, that a good governance agenda for 2010-2016 be considered for adoption by the Aquino administration. This is our modest contribution toward such an agenda.

Foundations of Good Governance: Democracy and National Unity

2. A strong democracy is a critical foundation for good governance. Our people accomplished a milestone in the last May 2010 elections: through citizen involvement, “People Power” once again asserted our deep commitment to democracy, a commitment sustained through many struggles and challenges since President Cory Aquino led us to re-establish our democratic institutions in 1986. Our people’s victory and relief that was the May 2010 elections came with a lot of luck and abundant blessings from higher powers to complement the heroic sacrifices of so many citizen volunteers and dedicated civil servants all across our land. A major task essential to the continued vigor of our democracy however remains incomplete. We should strengthen and complete the work of turning our elections into a truly honest, peaceful and credible mechanism for democratic decision-making by our people. We should complete the automation of elections. We should eliminate the corrupting influence of vote buying and voter intimidation that continue even with automation. And we should deepen voter education so that popular choices will more consistently be also wise choices.

3. By its natural dynamic, elections divide our people. Yet honest, credible and peaceful elections yield outcomes that provide our people a reason and an opportunity to unite. A new legitimately elected administration enables our people to direct our efforts towards realizing the vision of becoming one nation--- under only one flag, with a shared mission as articulated in the preamble of our current Constitution, and with a commitment to shared core values---made up of responsible citizens, who effectively show love for our motherland every day in everything we do. One nation of Filipinos who are proud of being Filipinos and of remaining Filipinos! One nation that provides equal opportunity to all! One nation, made up of Muslims, indigenous peoples, and Christians, at peace with each other because we all work together for the development and progress of all! As one people---as Filipinos---in deep solidarity with each other, we work towards bringing every family in our land across the poverty line through freeing our government from corruption and making our governance fair, transparent, accountable, and socially responsible. “Kung walang corrupt, walang mahirap”!

4. Strengthening our democracy and realizing our national unity will remain works in progress requiring the effort of generations. Yet even with outstanding deficits in our democracy and unity, we can still take enormous strides and make considerable progress in the next six years if we all work together towards making our government free of corruption and a practitioner of good governance. This progress through good governance is the purpose of this agenda for 2010-2016.

Three Catalytic Acts to Mobilize the Nation for Good Governance

5. Good governance demands sacrifice and dedication from every citizen. Governance is not only a duty of government; it is as much a duty of ordinary citizens. It is as much a task for public officials as it is for the ordinary people; as much a responsibility for the governors as it is for the governed. It is this belief we showed through our sacrifices and concrete actions that made us deliver---with God’s blessing and extraordinary Providence---the elections of May 2010. This same belief we now bring into our governance in the next 6 years. Governance demands that we---public

officials and ordinary citizens alike, together, are bound by a social contract with each other. Beyond just delivering honest, orderly and peaceful elections, we must now get into the arena of actually making our government deliver the fruits of development and the concrete blessings of democracy to all communities in our land, with preferential option to the marginalized sectors, particularly our Muslim compatriots, our indigenous peoples, and the many others in our heartland who have suffered from neglect, abuse, and lack of access to opportunity for advancement.

6. In such a social contract, we all have to step forward and be counted. We all have to participate. We have to get involved. And our newly elected president should catalyze our people's mobilization and involvement. This is thus the first catalytic act of good governance of a President: for him to call all citizens and join him in a national movement for responsible citizenship. He should not only call for it; he should head it and lead it. Through citizens' volunteer groups, starting with those most actively involved in securing the integrity of our elections and in promoting the different political campaigns, we should all unite and band together for our "Inang Bayan". This citizens' movement should inculcate the proper values of responsible citizenship, stressing both duties and rights, and moving all Filipinos to do the "12 little things that every Filipino can do each day for our country" (Ref. Alex Lacson). The "12 little things" should start in the first year with obeying traffic rules and with respecting and supporting our uniformed services, both the police and our armed forces. The next year the focus shall shift to the next two "things" such that in 6 years we shall have gotten all "12 little things" deeply embedded in our way of life as Filipinos. Let us not forget that a governance culture starts with compliance with the law and with the rules, and therefore with due enforcement of the law, starting with all traffic laws in 2010.
7. The second catalytic act of a good governance President is to call upon all national government agencies---extending to all GOCCs and GFIs---and all LGUs to formulate and execute a good governance program. Under such a program, they shall:
 - a) Set forth their vision of what they should become by 2016 as they contribute to the realization of our common national aspiration for the

- government of the Philippines to be acknowledged for good governance by the Filipino people and the international community.
- b) Identify their own strategic priorities, highlighted after due consideration of the training and equipment they provide for their people, the level of effectiveness of their internal processes, the services they must render to their respective constituencies, and the financial resources they can generate.
 - c) Specify the key initiatives they need to undertake as they pursue their strategic priorities as well as the measures of performance they shall be using to monitor progress, and the targets they must meet by 2016 and all the preceding years leading up to 2016.
 - d) Report every semester, and therefore every year, through official channels and to the general public, on their actual performance relative to the targets they had set, and using the measures of progress they had adopted.
 - e) Evaluate the performance and contribution of each office unit and of each individual in those office units to the achievement of the over-all targets on the part of the national government agency, GOCC, GFI, or LGU to which they belong. A culture of transparency and accountability needs to be nurtured, promoted, and observed in all government offices through a system that rewards above-target performance and duly punishes under-performance.
8. The third catalytic act of a good governance President is to call for effective public-private sector partnership through the formalization and institutionalization of a multi-sector governance coalition in various spheres of our national life, involving national government agencies, GOCCs, GFIs, and LGUs as well as private sector organizations. Through such a partnership, public officials and ordinary citizens through their respective sectoral groups and associations work together such that:
- a) All sectoral groups commit to make their respective positive contributions towards the pursuit of the strategic priorities of the

- government agency concerned or the LGU in their respective communities;
- b) The multi-sector governance coalition effectively ensures transparency, integrity and compliance with the law in all government transactions, particularly in the procurement area.
 - c) Ordinary citizens through their respective associations assist in raising the standards of efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services, and in properly evaluating the performance of the government agency or LGU concerned.

Good Governance Mobilization: Strengthening of Grassroots Institutions

- 9. The partnerships we forge, the coalitions we put to work, and the governance structures we institutionalize should enable us to strengthen our basic institutions that have been weakened over the years.
 - a) Our families need to become more united and strong.
 - b) Our schools at all levels need their standards upgraded and put at par with global standards.
 - c) Our SMEs need to be multiplied, made viable and competitive.
 - d) Our social enterprises need to become more effective and organized in pursuing their social responsibility programs.
 - e) Our barangays need more support for them to become more potent instruments for social cohesion, economic development, ecological protection and improvement, and in particular the achievement of the millennium development goals. Since the barangays and the LGUs of which they are component parts are closest to the needs of our people, they should become the principal conduits of our welfare programs and other initiatives as well as resources aimed at countrywide development.

- 10. As we seek to strengthen our most basic and therefore the smallest institutions of civil society (the family and our schools), of business (SMEs

and social enterprises), and of government (our barangays), we should also be fully committed to setting high standards of performance and observance of ethical and professional standards in:

- a) All our professions and key sectors, which should require continuing education and training for professional advancement and excellence, in full adherence with global best practices.
- b) All our public governance units, from national government agencies down to the last LGU, whose internal processes for delivering public services should be in line with international certification standards.
- c) All our business and government corporations, which need to adhere to global standards of corporate governance, with due consideration for our local culture, which nonetheless should not dilute the essential requirements of a governance system that delivers breakthrough performance.

National Government Policies for Good Governance

- 11. Together with business and civil society, government must provide and secure an enabling environment, which enables us to:
 - a) Expand and modernize our physical infrastructure, facilitating connectivity between our communities and our hubs of commercial and economic enterprises with the rest of the world.
 - b) Reforest our denuded mountains and hills, and enable our seas, rivers and lakes to thrive with marine life.
 - c) Open all major sectors and industries of our economy to easy access, entry, and free competition under a simple regulatory framework that ensures market discipline and compliance with our laws.
 - d) Raise our export ratio, our savings and investment rate, our tax effort, our spending on infrastructure and education, and thereby lift the average real growth of our economy to 8% per year towards the end of this six-year period.

The Power of the Good Example

12. Calls are heard from everywhere for concrete and specific actions and initiatives that the President should propose and pursue. These calls, from the reform of our judiciary to the setting up of truth commissions and advisory groups for further strengthening our automated election system, etc. reflect the overwhelming challenges we face as we look at the realities on the ground and as we envision a future we commit to shaping and eventually delivering. A good governance President will undertake every day concrete and specific actions that aim at cutting into half the percentage of families that in 2016 would still need to get across the poverty line, and at raising our completion rate, up to an average of 90% for all of our barangays and LGUs in 2016, of our millennium development goals. In undertaking all these concrete actions, a good governance President shall abide by this code of conduct: “I will not steal; I will not lie; I will not cheat; and I will not tolerate anyone in government and in the private sector who does”. Moreover, he asks every one in every branch of government and in every sector of society to live by the same code of conduct: to have zero tolerance for corruption; and he further asks that not only the President should do something concrete and specific every day to strengthen transparency mechanisms, further decentralization, secure policy consistency and stability, streamline government processes. Every Filipino must do the same. All 90 million of us must be committed, get involved, participate, and act on something concrete and specific every day for the common good of the Philippines and for the dignity and pride of every Filipino. The power of one good example is its power to mobilize other examples.