DRAFT MESSAGE OF QUEZON CITY MAYOR HERBERT M. BAUTISTA
ON THE LAUNCH OF "DESIGN AGAINST THE ELEMENTS," International design competition
December 9, 2010, at 9 am, at the 14th floor

For many people in Metro Manila, typhoon Ondoy or Ketsana, was a life-changing experience. Too many homes and lives are devastated each time our cities are wreaked by disasters. The poor are especially vulnerable. Meager incomes prevent them from getting the services of architects who can design for them sturdy homes. But is it right to make disaster-resiliency a luxury reserved only for the rich and well-to-do?

Safe homes and viable communities should be a privilege deserved by everyone. We, at Quezon City, are making sure that this privilege extends to the poorest of families.

Keeping families safe and secure is not only humane, it forms the core consideration of governance. We are responsible for our people. It is time to act decisively, to prevent more lives from being victims of disaster.

This is why we have partnered with the United Architects of the Philippines, MyShelter Foundation, the Climate Change Commission, San Miguel Properties, and the

Philippine White Helmets humanitarian organization, in this global architectural design competition to draw from the best and most innovative architects of the world, to motivate them to design disaster-resilient dwellings for our most vulnerable sector.

I firmly believe that socialized housing should be developed on a foundation of disaster-risk mitigation. Only when those two fundamentals are meshed, can a resettlement program effectively lead to a better quality of life for the poor and move them toward productive living. It is only when disaster-risk is effectively reduced, can we even talk of sustainable economic growth that can benefit all sectors.

It is my firm resolve to lead Quezon City towards becoming an eco-friendly city, actively lowering its carbon emissions and improving overall environmental quality. Our City Council must be credited for passing the Green Building Ordinance, a landmark local legislation that only we, at Quezon City, have. Its implementing rules are now being made ready for compliance.

We are adopting the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) criteria in the evaluation of green infrastructure, in a conscious effort to protect and conserve our environment and ecology.

We are pilot-testing metered-streetlights by replacing them with Light Emitting Diodes or LEDs, so we can see by how much we can reduce our electricity bills which run in the millions.

I have constituted what is now a very active Environment Policy Management Council here at City Hall, which is guiding our executive policies toward 'green' procurement, 'green' architecture, development of 'green' parks in more areas of the city, use of alternative energy sources, among various directions that will help us build a more environmentally viable city.

Now, I am very happy to have you here as our new partners, creating a bigger and stronger network of environment advocates, determined to create a safer, more disaster-resilient city for the poor and all of our other constituents.

Welcome, and let us continue to work together, through this design contest and more, especially when we begin transforming these designs into homes for our deserving indigent families!

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