



18TH QUEZON CITY COUNCIL
ULAT SA BAYAN
OCTOBER 8, 2012

**SPEECH OF THE
HONORABLE MA. JOSEFINA G. BELMONTE
PRESIDING OFFICER / VICE MAYOR**

ULAT SA BAYAN NG SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD
SA PAMUMUNO NG KAGALANG-GALANG NA PANGALAWANG PUNONG LUNGSOD
MA. JOSEFINA G. BELMONTE
IKA-8 NG OKTUBRE 2012 – CARLOS ALBERT HALL
LUNGSOD, QUEZON

Today I deliver the third and final report of the 18th City Council. Two years ago, fresh from a victory that gave us an overwhelming mandate to serve the people, and inspired by a President that urged us to follow the *matuwid na daan*, we made a promise to the men and women who entrusted us with their confidence and faith. Ipinangako natin sa ating Inaugural Address na:

Tayo ang magiging bagong mukha ng pamumunong may pananagutan. Tayo ang magiging tagapagtatag ng bagong sukatan ng epektibong pangangasiwa.

Tayo ang magsisilbing batayan ng kahusayan sa paglilingkod-bayan.

We have tried our best to make good with our promise. The Council Leadership headed by Majority Floor Leader Jesus Manuel Suntay have worked hard to ensure that the Council embraces a work ethic consistent with the call of the times – one that favors efficiency and professionalism, one that is collaborative and consultative, one that puts a premium on excellence over political expediency, one that espouses transparency and accountability.

Our efforts have not gone unnoticed, the DILG Local Governance Performance report gave our Council a high rating in

the area of legislation; having observed how meticulously measures are researched and how exhaustive is the nature of public consultations.

Dahil sa aming masusing pagsunod sa proseso, nakatitiyak ako na mabisa, nararapat at naitataguyod ang mga batas na ating isinulong sa nakaraang taon. Bunga ang mga ito ng akmang pananaliksik, pagsasaalang-alang sa mga pananaw ng mga pangunahing sektor, napapanahon, at tumutugon sa ating kasalukuyang mga pangangailangan. Higit sa lahat, ang mga ito ay naaayon sa pangkalahatang direksyon ng ating lungsod na nakapaloob sa mga planong nanggaling mismo sa ating mga mamamayan katulad ng City Development Plan, Annual Investment Plan, Comprehensive Land Use Plan Socio-Economic Action Plan at pati na rin ang Tourism Development Plan.

One example we are truly proud of is Councilor Dorothy Delarmente's Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance. This has been highly praised by environmentalists, the media and the business sector alike for its pragmatism and fairness, in comparison to those crafted by other LGUs. Drafted in 2008, this measure went through five public hearings and several amendatory phases led by a

multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group before being unanimously adopted by the City Council last April.

Designed to encourage citizens to change their behavior to favor recyclable bags over plastic without mandating a complete prohibition, it is predicted that the volume of garbage collected daily will drop by as much as forty truckloads once the measure is fully implemented.

Councilor Gian Sotto brought this advocacy close to our hearts by sponsoring legislation to strictly ban plastic and Styrofoam in all Quezon City Government buildings. Sa lahat ng batas na ating isinulong, tila ito ang pinakaramdam nating lahat. It is a clear example of us walking the talk to truly care for our environment.

The Quezon City Children's Code of 2012 introduced by Councilors Alexis Herrera and Allyson Medalla is another measure that has been highly commended by many NGOs and government agencies, including the DILG.

With more than forty per cent of our population below 20 years of age, we needed a rights-based measure to enshrine our collective commitment towards caring for, supporting and protecting our children. The draft Code is the outcome of a process that started in 2010 dubbed The Child-Friendly QC Movement, which comprised of 106 community consultations and one Children's Summit meant to assess the local status of children. After the

measure was filed, five public hearings with a total of 600 participants were conducted, many of whom were children themselves.

I am also proud to inform you that the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the PAT Ordinance institutionalizing the Quezon City People's Council have been completed and confirmed by the Sangguniang Panlungsod through the efforts of Councilors Jimmy Borres and Allan Reyes.

Ibig sabihin nito, lalakas, mas magiging matimbang at higit na magkakaroon ng bisa sa pamamahala ang mga tinig ng ating pangkaraniwang mga mamamayan, na siyang tunay nating mga boss.

Our commitment to good governance doesn't end here. In the face of allegations of irregularities within our offices, we have willingly submitted to all the processes required of us by the Commission on Audit and other departments of our local government. Aming ipinakita at pinatunayan na kaming mga gumagawa ng batas ay sumusunod sa batas at wala kaming tinatago.

Not only did we welcome the intervention of COA, but we likewise initiated numerous reforms that would ensure that the Council be sheltered from elements that could threaten its positive image. In addition to the creation of the Screening Committee and Personnel Database that is our weapon against so-called 'ghost

employees', we have also drafted a Citizen's Charter for our front-line services in collaboration with the Civil Service Commission.

Prior to this, we had already drawn-up guidelines to inform the public with regards the procedures, requirements, processing times and accountable offices in securing Special Use Permits, which are required from businesses of a sensitive nature, or applications for Certificates of Exception, which are needed when developments deviate from the zoning ordinance. This we did despite the fact that the legislature is exempt from the mandates of the Anti-Red Tape Act.

In aid of policymaking and in pursuit of public interest, the Blue Ribbon Committee headed by Councilor Joseph Juico shall be convened within the next few weeks to look into reports of alleged irregularities committed by our civil servants. Layunin nating maiwasto ang mga sistemang bulok na nakakasira sa pagsulong ng magagandang hangarin para sa ating lungsod.

Beyond ensuring transparency, accountability and good governance in the legislature, we are grateful to our beloved Mayor, Herbert M. Bautista, for the Shared Leadership he instituted in this City. This innovative governance mechanism has allowed both branches of government to work more closely together towards making speedy, significant and sustainable improvements in the lives of our citizens.

We are especially fortunate to have been given the opportunity to render the needed policy support for the socio-economic welfare services provided by the Executive Branch to our constituents, especially those needed for shelter, improved healthcare, better employment opportunities, and enhanced access to quality education. We are confident that the City Council contributed greatly towards providing the enabling environment needed for the administration's sustainable urban development agenda to flourish through the 156 Ordinances and 634 Resolutions we have passed in the last year.

Huwag kayong mag-alala; hindi ko na iisa-isahin pa ang mga Ordinansa at mga Resolusyon na ito. Maaari naman ninyong mabasa ang mga nilalaman nito sa ating website quezoncitycouncil.ph. But please allow me to speak about several ordinances we worked hard on in the past year, which we believe will help translate into reality our Mayor's priority agenda of developing a strong economic environment that will ensure sustained growth.

First, the Central Business District Ordinance is critical in attracting sustainable investments to the City that will lead to the generation of revenue and more employment opportunities for our citizens. We can thank Councilors Julian Coseteng and Precious Hipolito-Castelo for making this happen by leading the adoption of the Quezon City CBD Master Plan.

Tourism is an identified economic driver for the City and as such, needs to be supported. Through the efforts of Councilors Jesus Suntay and Rhoderick Paulate, the Quezon City Tourism Department was recently created and the Tourism Development Plan adopted to guide the growth of the sector. The Plan lays down strategies to make our City a premier urban destination and a showcase of sustainable, community-based tourism enterprise development.

To implement this plan initially, we are currently working with some of the most noted urban designers, landscape architects and marketing professionals to help transform us into a potent force in the domestic and even global marketplace. Expect to witness the transformation of our cityscape in the coming months.

In the meantime, our Quezon City Museum is nearly finished and we have recently forged an agreement with the National Historical Institute to modernize the Quezon Memorial Museum and restore the pylon to its former glory. These will all be a treat for our visitors come 2014, our 75th Foundation Anniversary.

Security has become a critical issue for investors and Councilors Joseph Juico and Don de Leon recognized this, leading the passage of an Ordinance requiring all business establishments to install closed circuit television systems or CCTVs. This is not only a mechanism to deter crimes but also helps the police solve crimes.

Road safety and discipline is likewise an issue that affects investor confidence. Through the efforts of Councilors Raquel Malangen and Onyx Crisologo, speed limits, speed bumps, traffic signs and penalties for driving under the influence of liquor were imposed through various Ordinances.

Sa puntong ito, pahintulutan ninyo akong talakayin ang ilan sa mga adbokasiyang malapit sa aking puso, at kilalanin ang mga konsehal na naging kabalikat natin sa pagbibigay halaga sa mga ito.

First is the heart-breaking issue of violence against and abuse of women and children. The 2008 data from NSO revealed that twenty percent of women aged 15-49 has experienced physical violence since age 15. Laws are in place to address this issue but in reality, victims are discouraged by the inconvenience of having to undergo the tedious process in different agencies just to seek justice.

In response, our office established a one-stop-shop Protection Center for Women, Children and LGBTs at the QC General Hospital so that all the services they need from medical and police assistance to medico-legal examinations, to legal and psychological services, are now available under one roof. Since opening in December of 2011, we have assisted more than a hundred clients, the youngest of which was a victim of incest aged 2 years old. This program is now institutionalized through an ordinance of Councilor Candy Medina, making Quezon City one

of the few local government units with such a service.

The promotion of breastfeeding is another of our advocacies. Studies show that breastfed infants grow up healthier, smarter and more psychologically sound, whereas mothers who have breastfed are less prone to cancers of the breast and ovaries. Thus our office has established a DOH-accredited breastfeeding station for working and visiting mothers here in City Hall with a play area for young children.

I thank our lady councilors for taking up this and other child and maternal health concerns in their legislative agendas.

We are one with Councilor Jessica Daza in educating mothers on the value of breastfeeding and supporting their continued practice. We are thankful for Councilor Allyson Medalla's efforts to establish Human Milk Banks in Quezon City-owned hospitals to be supported by community-based breastfeeding advocates, so that infants particularly those born prematurely, and whose mothers have difficulty producing breast milk, are not deprived of this life-saving substance.

Councilor Daza also sponsored two related measures that we are confident will lessen maternal deaths. The first is a prohibition for home births, since it is in this situation that most maternal deaths occur. The second seeks to provide child-minding services in lying-in clinics to take care of young children when their mother delivers. This will

encourage mothers to go to these facilities rather than choose home birth.

Strict implementation of these measures will also ensure that every child will be registered at birth, thus ensuring that they will not be hampered from receiving an education and other vital services that they need to develop to their fullest potential.

Hindi rin natin nakaligtaan ang mga taong katuwang na magpapatupad ng mga adhikaing ito, ang ating mga community health workers. Tiniyak din n gating konseho na mabibigyan sila ng karagdagang benepisyo.

Earlier I mentioned the Quezon City Children's Code of 2012, which is a dream come true. Lubos ang suporta ng ating mga mamamayan para sa ordinansang ito at dapat maging gabay para sa pagsasakatuparan ng Local Plan of Action for Children at sa pagkilos ng Local at Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children. Ang lahat ng ito ay tungo sa ating pangarap na mahirang bilang isang Child-Friendly City na tunay na nagmamahal at kumakalinga sa tinaguriang pag-asa ng ating bayan – ang ating mga kabataan.

In relation to this, we commend Councilors Suntay, Godofredo Liban and Eufemio Lagumbay for sponsoring the Anti-Bullying Ordinance of Quezon City, which mandates every school to craft anti-bullying policies. This measure could not have come at a more opportune time given the alarming news reports over the last few weeks on how certain individuals have responded

to child-bullying in various public and private schools.

Ipinagmamalaki ko rin po ang maraming pagbabago na naisagawa natin sa ating laban sa ipinagbabawal na gamot. We made it easier for our citizens to report all incidents of using, pushing, and manufacturing of illegal drugs through an easy to recall number – 700-DFREE. All messages will be received, processed and acted-upon in partnership with the PDEA. I thank Councilor Ranulfo Ludovica for being our active partner in this endeavor.

In line with our advocacy, we have now established a children and adolescent treatment facility at our Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Center or TAHANAN following reports of increased substance abuse among the young. Recently accredited by the DOH, TAHANAN now also focuses on ensuring livelihood opportunities for its adult clients.

The Quezon City Heritage Council Ordinance introduced by Councilors Suntay and Gian Sotto is also a major achievement. It comes at a time when we are celebrating the Bicentennial Birth Anniversary of Tandang Sora and in the wake of reports that we are losing to development many of our City's local cultural treasures, which may include the home of our founder Manuel Luis Quezon. This measure will ensure that properties that have a bearing on our City's history and identity shall be preserved and safeguarded for future generations to appreciate and for possible adaptation into tourism

destinations without prejudice to their owners.

Natutuwa ako na napakarami nating naisulong na makabuluhang mga batas sa loob ng nagdaang taon. Nitong nakaraang buwan, sa pangunguna ni Konsehal Godofredo Liban ng Committee on Appropriations ay masusing inaral ng buong konseho ang panukalang budget ng ating pamahalaang lokal. Hindi po inalinta ng ating mga konsehal ang mahabang panahong ginugol nila upang suriin ang mga bahagi nito.

Quezon City is one of the first local governments to pass the appropriation ordinance. And now to complement the efforts of our Council, I as the Presiding Officer will sign Proposed Ordinance 2012-95, approving the annual budget of the Quezon City Government for Calendar Year 2013 in the amount of P12,000,003,200 covering the various expenditures for the operation of the City Government.

As I come to the conclusion of my Report, I have to say that I am truly proud of and thankful to all the members of the 18th City Council for the hard work they have put in and the dedication they have shown to making a difference in the lives of our residents.

We have less than a year to continue on this path and I promise, on behalf of the Council, that we will exert all efforts to complete what we have set out to do, especially the priorities of this administration. These include:

The Local Investment Incentives Code that is before the Committee on Trade, Chaired by Councilor Allan Reyes and the Committee on Ways and Means, Chaired by Councilor Vincent Belmonte. The passage of this legislation will ensure a competitive business environment that will facilitate the entry of and engagement with investors. I am also keen on the provisions in the proposed ordinance suggested by Councilor Ivy Lagman on Corporate Social Responsibility, which will effectively link corporate money with social development and poverty alleviation.

The Zoning Ordinance that is before the Committee on Planning, Chaired by Councilor Ricardo Belmonte. Its passage will provide implementation support to the City's Land Use Plan and provide investors with a sense of security or investor confidence in pouring money into the City

Likewise the City Council shall strengthen its oversight function having observed that many ordinances have not been or are no longer implemented. These shall be updated or amended if necessary in close coordination with the implementing agencies to ensure they are timely, responsive and realistic.

Before I end, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of our fellow legislators who will no longer be with us in the same capacity this time next year, as well as those who have performed distinctly.

Pasalamatan natin si Konsehal Joseph Juico, na kahit sa gitna ng batikos ay sinulong ang Population and Reproductive Health Management Ordinance. Siya rin ang nagbigay daan sa pagbuo ng Sikap Buhay and Cooperative Center na lubos na nakakatulong sa pangangailangang pinansyal ng ating maliit na negosyante.

Gusto ko rin bigyang pugay si Konsehal Francisco Calalay, ang ama ng mga kasambahay sa ating lungsod.

I also thank Councilor Alfred Vargas who made possible the Persons with Disability Affairs Office, and I urge him to pursue the other advocacies he started, including those he filed as Chairman of the Urban Poor Committee.

To Councilors Eufemio Lagumbay and Godofredo Liban, thank you not only for your sound leadership, but especially for registering a perfect attendance, and for arriving punctually at 2 PM every session day. You have been a good example to our young legislators.

To Councilor Ranulfo Ludovica, thank you for always standing up for the barangays you represent. You have delivered the most number of privilege speeches in this august chamber.

To Councilor Racquel Malangen, thank you for having conducted the most number of Committee meetings for the transport sector.

Thank you to Councilor Precious Hipolito Castelo, for having sponsored the most

number of approved ordinances and resolutions.

To the Committee on Laws and its staff, who have religiously committed to all its duties and responsibilities, I commend you.

To the 4th District Councilors composed of Councilors Bong Suntay, Jessica Daza, Racquel Malangen, Vincent Belmonte, Marvin Rillo and Ivy Lagman, thank you

for consistently being the most well-attended District.

Again, to my colleagues in the 18th City Council, I express my sincere gratitude for your commitment to public service.

Patuloy tayong magsama-sama sa matuwid na daan at magkaisa sa wastong pamamahala. Sa QC lahat panalo!

MA JOSEFINA G. BELMONTE
OFFICER-IN-CHARGE