

Statement on President Noynoy's Inauguration and his first days in Malacañang

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THERE IS A REASON to celebrate the inauguration of President Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino — we have finally dumped the most corrupt and most hated regime since the fall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. GMA didn't deserve the President's farewell granted her. She should have been ousted years ago. Nevertheless, Aquino's victory rightfully belongs to the Filipino people who voted against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her minions.

But there is also reason to be concerned. A day before the inauguration, President Noynoy selected his Cabinet team. Most of those tasked to run the economic affairs of the country are former Cabinet members who have been known to implement neo-liberal policies proven detrimental to our people, such as Cesar Purisima of Department of Finance, who donated P10 million to Noynoy's campaign. Other appointees came from the camps of Senator Mar Roxas, the Hyatt 10, and Noynoy's close friends and political allies. Not a single one comes from the people's organizations and the progressive movement, although a number of them supported him; this is unlike the Cory's administration which brought in progressives into the government in her initial period of presidency.

While Noynoy's ascension to presidency may not be as euphoric as Cory's, the people have raised expectations of the new government. It is now time for Noynoy to carry through his promises in the election — the eradication of graft and corruption in government and the alleviation of poverty of the masses. To eradicate graft and corruption includes going after GMA and her gang and jailing them. To alleviate poverty means responding to the demands of the masses for better working and living condition.

We challenge President Noynoy to hold true to his promises. We do not believe that his government will be able to solve all the festering problems in the country, especially the problems rooted in the elite's control of economic resources and political power. But we challenge him to prioritize the main demands that the people's organizations and the social movements have been campaigning for a number of years now:

1. Stop contractualization and repeal all anti-worker laws and executive orders.
2. Repeal the oil deregulation law.
3. Moratorium on demolition of urban poor communities.
4. Repeal of debt appropriation law; moratorium on debt repayment.
5. Free all political prisoners, including the 'Morong 43', and all prisoners of conscience (the jailed military rebels).

Addressing these demands will be the first major steps necessary to solve the problems of poverty plaguing our people. We challenge President Noynoy to take the strongest possible measures to

tackle these demands in the first 100 days of his administration.

SONNY MELENCIO

Chairperson, Partido Lakas ng Masa (PLM)

25 Calderon St., Project 4, QC

sonnymel yahoo.com
