



The Opposite of Change

Statement of *Pagbabago!* People's Movement for Change
on Mrs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's 9th State of the Nation Address
July 27, 2009

Ordinary Filipinos and the nation as a whole will find it extremely difficult to accept, much less appreciate, the achievements to be shamelessly claimed by Mrs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address (SONA). Simply put, ordinary Filipinos - 70% of whom are anti-GMA - will find her SONA a lot of hogwash.

Why? Because the last eight years under Mrs. Arroyo is the complete opposite of the change aspired for by our people.

While Filipinos nurture the promise of a better life, today there is only grinding poverty. While the people hope for freedom, democracy and social justice, today there is only repression and injustice. While the nation dreams of leadership guided by a sense of decency and moral ascendancy, today there is only unbridled corruption and bad governance.

Mrs. Arroyo's rule is characterized by lies, machinations and the complete absence of integrity. This is currently exemplified by her insistence on clinging to power by illegally amending the Philippine Constitution through "Cha-cha", engineering a palace-sponsored *coup d'état* disguised as "emergency rule" and "transition government" and other nefarious schemes.

Propelled by greed and lust for power rather than the people's interest, Mrs. Arroyo has systematically undermined the most basic requisites for a decent life: food, shelter, clothing, health and education.

Malnutrition and hunger are more widespread than ever. Chronic but preventable diseases like tuberculosis have become a permanent fixture while epidemics afflict a populace made more vulnerable by their destitution. Health and other social services have been reduced to token measures and myopic programs.

Thanks to Mrs. Arroyo, we now live in a society where principled men and women are abducted, tortured, and summarily executed with impunity, where honest and upright people are persecuted and jailed while plunderers and murderers are commended and rewarded with public office.

She has auctioned off our working men and women as cheap labor here and abroad, bartered away our patrimony and surrendered our national sovereignty to foreign interests

Shall we allow these to continue?

Our own history shows that the moving force for social change is the people themselves, collectively exercising their political will. Vigilance and accountability are necessary requisites for democracy to flourish. No right or freedom will ever be truly enjoyed unless those who have betrayed the people's trust and aspirations are brought to justice.

We cannot allow the sacrifices of those who came before us to be diminished and sullied by the utter mendacity of those who lead us today. If we want change, then the rule of Mrs. Arroyo must end. If we seek a life of dignity, then Mrs. Arroyo must go.

The true State of the Nation is our continuing struggle: the struggle against tyrants, the struggle against exploitation and oppression, the struggle for genuine freedom and democracy.

CHANGE. We enjoin the Filipino people to complete this unfinished task.

**JOIN THE MOTORCADE FROM MANILA TO THE
PEOPLE'S SONA in Commonwealth Avenue on
JULY 27
11:00 AM to 12:00 NN Assembly at the**