

## **ILOILO INVESTMENT FORUM: REIMAGINING ILOILO'S NEXT ECONOMY**

9-10 December 2020

### **OPENING AND WELCOME ADDRESS**

To our keynote speaker, Senator Franklin Drilon  
Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas  
Iloilo Province Governor Arthur Defensor Jr.  
Iloilo Investment Board Vice Chair Dr. Tirador  
And everyone in attendance here in marriott and via zoom, Good Morning.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Iloilo Economic Development Foundation, Inc., I would like to welcome all of you to Iloilo's First Blended Investment Forum. This is our way of stepping up to the times by going digital and innovating on our investment promotion strategies as we comply with the COVID 19 health protocols.

When ILED Foundation was organized in 2007, Mayor Jerry Trenas had only one request and that is to promote Iloilo as a major investment hub in the Philippines. Comparing Iloilo's situation then against major cities in the country, ILED had every reason to be discouraged because we did not have what it takes to be a preferred investment destination. Thus, we started improving the investment climate by upgrading our basic infrastructure such as utilities, roads and ports; facilities such as hotels, property development and other investor related services.

After 13 years, our work continues amidst the COVID 19 Pandemic. The only advantage we have now is that we are re-calibrating from a position of strength, and we have seasoned leaderships. Iloilo's institutional foundation is already strong, and our efforts are amplified by strategic public-private partnerships. Our local economy may have suffered with the rest of the world these past months, but we are using this time to evaluate our assets, identify opportunities and prepare for future threats. We have mobilized the community since last year to innovate and now more than ever, Iloilo is ready for investments.

I invite everyone to take advantage of this two (2) day event and re-imagine Iloilo's next economy with us. We have our priority sectors on agri-fishery, tourism, manufacturing, ICT-BPO and education but we are open for investments in the areas of pharmaceutical, medical services, research and digital technologies. We have the manpower you need,

the best quality of life in the country and a sustainable future for our constituents.

We at the Iloilo Economic Development Foundation, is happy to collaborate with the province and city government and with the national government agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Tourism and Interior and Local Government through its Local Governance Regional Resource Center in Region VI.

While no one can predict with any certainty the economic, political and cultural changes this crisis will have on Iloilo and the rest of the world, we know these changes will be significant. The high level of collaboration among governments, businesses and civil society managing this changes should give us Ilonggos with confidence in collectively dealing with the long-lasting changes this pandemic will bring.

Welcome everyone both here in Iloilo City and the rest who are joining us via Zoom. Good day.

Thank you to our event partners, speakers, guests and participants for making this event another important milestone for Iloilo.

Please stay safe, obey all health protocols and let us work to keep Iloilo Covid Free!

Madamo gid nga salamat!