

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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Regional Director Wilson L. Trajeco Sir, Division Chiefs and Sections Chiefs, to the newly promoted and newly hired employees regardless of what is the status of your appointment either permanent or temporary, fellow *lingkod bayani*, good morning! On behalf of the Civil Service Commission, let me congratulate you for holding this oath taking ceremony.

Good governance is almost always a contentious topic. The way public institutions manage public affairs and public resources is something that draws controversy and criticism.

Historically, the CSC was created to uphold a merit-based recruitment system. We should take this in the context of reversing the growing culture of corruption in the colonial government, where positions could be bought and officials could be bribed. This means only the best and the brightest should be in the government service. The rationale behind this is that excellent human resource equals excellent public service. The CSC has assumed many roles in the broad range of HR functions, all in a bid to rid the bureaucracy of corrupt and mediocre practices. As provided under the 1987 Constitution, we are mandated to “established a career service. Adopt measures to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, and courtesy in the civil service, strengthen the merit and rewards system, integrate all human resource development programs for all levels and ranks, and institutionalize a management climate conducive to public accountability. ”We are always in the thick of fighting corruption. It is an uphill climb, as proven by what we see and hear in the media, in our offices, on the streets. It seems curbing corruption is a mammoth task that cannot be neatly resolved like one would a simple mathematical equation.

The web of corruption has different layers, many tentacles, and may spread like a virus if not contained. If we all do our little part, however, create opportunities to nip corrupt practices in the bud. People say it is a hopeless case, but I say it is a work in progress. Let us not disheartened by criticism. Instead, let us take our jobs seriously, and be responsible and accountable in fighting corruption.

In the context of Philippines government, the highest standards of ethics are embodied in Republic Act No. 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees. It also bears the eight (8) norms of conduct – commitment to public interest, professionalism, justness and sincerity, political neutrality, responsiveness to the public, nationalism and patriotism, commitment to democracy, and simple living. These norms of conduct govern the principle of ethics for the government employee who works in an environment where corruption thrives. The same norms promote the idea that even in the smallest of matters, a government employee should be able to withstand temptation, reject mediocrity, and protect his or her integrity. A public servant who does not spend all paid hours in the official work is already stealing from the Filipino people. Someone who does not report an anomalous transaction may have just allowed something worse to happen. Today, we seem to be more and more lax on what we consider as unethical.

It is alright to overlook things sometimes, or to let things pass. We tend to say, *OK lang na kay tanan man pud nagbuhat ana*. But as they say, we become what we repeatedly do. Habits soon become lifestyles. By not being vigilant enough, we become participants in maintaining an unethical culture. In government, it is important to care enough so as to stop or stem unethical practices before they become ingrained or systematic. The more we “ let things pass”, the more ethical standards get lowered.

Integrity, also known as moral uprightness and strong adherence to honesty and fairness, is closely linked to ethics. Integrity also refers to wholeness and completeness. When a person commits something unethical, in a sense he or she also loses his or her wholeness. There is damage already done to a person’s character.

As much as possible, we would want to maintain our integrity. We cannot afford to do something that would damage it. Some people may think that they maintain their integrity by keeping their wrongdoings a secret. Exposed or not, however, they have already damaged their integrity. After all, integrity involves doing the right thing even if nobody sees you.

As public officials and employees, we have the duty of protecting not only our integrity but also that of the government . We owe it to the Filipino people Filipino people to have integrity. It means we cannot be bribed, bought, swayed, coerced, or made to do something that does not adhere to the highest moral standards.

As the saying goes, "people may doubt what you say but they will always believe what you do." Follow through on what you say you're going to do. Your credibility can only be built over time, and it is built from the history of your words and actions".

Our government may be measured by the history of its words and actions. This is how our people gauge our integrity. I hope all of us here will be part of the best moments of our government's history – moments that champion integrity instead of destroy it. That is a challenge that I hope all of us will be eager to accept.

We always hear the phrase "public office is a public trust". Meaning we are responsible to the people. Everything we do, we spend, we render fulfillment is our responsibility to the people. According to the Panunumpa ng Lingkod Bayan: "Ang bawat sandali na gagawin kong kapaki-pakinabang. Lagi kong isasaalang-alang ang interes ng nakararami bago ang sarili kong kapakanan."

Working in government is different because we are not only looking out for ourselves or for our organization. Our focus is delivering services for the benefit of our main clientele – the Filipino people. We are primary here to serve, and not to be served.

When we talk about accountability in the context of public service, it will always focus to public funds. This is especially a touchy topic in a country like ours where the majority lives below the poverty line and higher taxes and prices of commodities.

The issue of corruption is keenly felt by ordinary Filipinos in his pocket. So it is vital to be accountable for the management of the fund provided to us. It comes from the people, and it must be restored to them in the form of public service excellence.

Needless to say, we will always be answerable to our own actions. When that time comes, I hope we will be able to account for what we have done truthfully and straightforwardly.

Frontline transactions are the very basic touchpoint of government and its citizens, we consider this a most important site to focus on. This is where the people's impression of government is cemented. Here is where the principles of ethics, accountability, and integrity are played out. More importantly, this is where we have the best opportunity to stop corruption.

I am indeed grateful for the opportunity you have given me to speak with you today and share with you CSC's experience in promoting ethics, integrity, and accountability for good governance. I look forward to hearing wonderful achievement of the EMB in the future, but most importantly, how it has committed to good governance

**Thank you and mabuhay ang EMB!**