

2016 NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY CONFERENCE
TUCP Vice President and Federation of Free Farmers President
Leonardo Q. Montemayor

Good morning!

Assistant Secretary Avila and my colleagues at the table...

TUCP President Ruben Torres extends his apologies for not being able to join us today. He's out of the country for an equally important endeavor.

The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines congratulates the National Wages and Productivity Commission, the Department of Labor and Employment, and the various Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Councils for a well-crafted National Productivity Conference and for your many other programs.

"Creating Value for Workers and Enterprises" is an appropriate theme for these days. We are encouraged to strive towards meeting "the exacting standards to be competitive both in domestic and global markets."

It is in continually meeting and surpassing these moving standards that we can ensure that the economy – workers and enterprises, together – flourishes and distribute gains to everyone.

That is the essence of the future of work, the future of decent work.

Six years back, TUCP, at your invitation, expressed our thoughts on NWPC's accomplishments and work plan.

The direction then was "towards a justly compensated workforce" – pretty much related to: "Creating value for workers and enterprises."

We said then "workers should be able to see, feel, and enjoy the fruits of productivity."

After six years, we are sad to note that little has changed for the workers – endo; long hours, some unpaid, harsh working conditions; minimum wages only indexed to poverty – even as the tripartite constituents labor mightily.

The true essence of creating value for workers and enterprises is not merely business viability in a cruel world. Created value, surely means more than workers' ATMs languishing in the hands of creditors.

Creating value means that workers enjoy the fruits of improved productivity; that workers, more than being able to cope with their family's daily basic needs, are able to have leisure once in a while, and are able to save for the future. In short, incomes that are close to "LIVING WAGES", or even NEDA's wages for comfortable living.

Creating value also means that workers' rights are fully respected and nurtured.

Creating value means that workers operate in safe and healthy working conditions, with social protection coverage that assures them of security at work and in retirement.

Creating value – and distributing value – should be what the NWPC and the RTWPBs and the DOLE should be all about. It is not enough that they, and we, try to be better every day and every year.

It should be that they, that we all, come out of our shells and our confining boxes, to pursue uncharted courses to make enterprise, work and life, better for all our constituents. Not for one, but for all, constituents. Productivity should raise all boats, and make things better for everyone.

And that means, bringing two-tiered wages program out of its package of mystery and confusion, educating everyone about it, its mechanics, and its advantages and contributions to created, shared value. And getting down to properly implementing the answer to wages rising across-the-board.

Minimum wages and productivity-linked incentives, working together, to fill workers' ATMs.

That means concentrating on the campaign for productivity-linked compensation and bringing the country's enormous resources to bear on the monster of indecent work and indecent wages. If that means extra judicial efforts to raise productivity and distribute gains – so be it!

TUCP expresses full support for this, and damn what the economists and the rest of the world say!

We have worked with NWPC and the RTWPBs in run-of-the-mill campaigns. But we would like to work with the tripartite sectors in more exciting, innovative, productivity-raising and gainsharing programs.

In closing, let me ask this pointed question which has bothered us for years, where is the real National Productivity Agenda? Where is the roadmap for our dream for workers, for the economy, and for the country? Nasaan ang pagbabago?

Gawin na natin yan! At gawin na natin agad!

Let NWPC, and its tripartite constituency, bring on the “change we want!”

The intrepid women, men and others of NWPC and RTWPBs and DOLE deserve a bigger challenge than they have now.

Muli, maganda umaga sa ating lahat!
Mabuhay ang NWPC! Mabuhay ang DOLE!
Mabuhay tayong lahat! Salamat po.