



**PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL**  
**P R E S S R E L E A S E**

PR-CBR- -2008

9 April 2008

**STATEMENT OF H.E. WILLY C. GAA**  
**AMBASSADOR OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**ARAW NG KAGITINGAN (DAY OF VALOR), 9 APRIL 2008**

The fall of the Bataan Peninsula in World War II is remembered in the Philippines as the “Araw ng Kagitingan” or “Day of Valor.”

What we recall on this day is not the success of the overwhelming forces of the enemy but the gallantry and courage of the Filipino and American defenders.

For long months, Filipino soldiers valiantly and tenaciously stood their ground and fought with uncommon valor, side by side with American soldiers in fending off the foreign invaders; fighting for their homeland; and fighting for the cause of liberty, justice and democracy. Outnumbered, running out of supplies and ammunition, and with no reinforcements coming to their relief, they fought on.

Today we once again pay tribute to the courage and loyalty of these of our World War II veterans and those who have gone before them, whose gallant stand on Bataan serves to remind us of the value of freedom and democracy.

Their gallant stand echoes through the decades and reminds us that sacrifices must sometimes be made to defend and protect these principles. As we face various threats to our democratic way of life, this reminder and lesson from the past is as timely today as it was during the dark days of World War II.

In like manner, the services and sacrifices of these veterans are as relevant as the services and sacrifices of younger generations of veterans fighting and defending the cause of freedom and democracy today.

The Filipino World War II veteran must be accorded due recognition for the risks and sacrifices he has made in the cause of defending freedom and democracy.

And as we pay tribute and give honor to these brave veterans and remember their fallen comrades, let us also reiterate to them our commitment and assure them of our determination to help them achieve that what is long overdue to them – recognition and benefits for their sacrifices and services.