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Fellow stakeholders,

The year 2003 was marked by attempts to destabilize our country and set back the political and socioeconomic gains we have all worked hard for these past years. We also had to deal with natural calamities, environmental disasters, and the specter of various public health threats.

Throughout those turbulent times, we at Ayala Foundation held on to our mission with steadfast commitment and an even greater zeal to carry on our projects and activities.

We stepped up our environmental and outreach projects, from solid waste management in Makati City to the reforestation of Kang-Irag in Cebu. We focused a lot of our resources on projects involving the youth, such as the Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education, Youth Tech, the Ayala Young Leaders Congress, the Ayala-Intel Computer Clubhouse, and text2teach. This year, as we exercise once more our right to vote, let us remember that the new leaders of our government will be those to whom we commit our youth's welfare. We need to elect those who are worthy in terms of intellect and capability and who are honest, hardworking, selfless, and truly committed to improving the lives of our countrymen. Let us work together to safeguard

the integrity of the electoral process and may this exercise recharge our spirits with optimism and hope for our nation's future.

On another note, we will be witnessing this year the zenith of our endeavors in the arts and culture with the inauguration of the new Ayala Museum. Last year, the museum's projects were particularly successful and far-reaching despite the difficult times. It continued its participation in the highly successful *Zero In* collaborative project, which was started in 2002, with its exhibit *Palitada: Skin of the Church*. Our museum also entered into important partnerships with various individuals, corporations, and peers toward the goal of enhancing its collection of artworks and artifacts.

Meanwhile, the Filipinas Heritage Library continued to garner numerous awards and citations for their projects. Its LibraryLink Web site won in the Philippine Web Awards and its books were recognized by award-giving bodies in the publishing industry. Also, *Ayala Now*—the official publication of the Ayala group of companies that is now under the editorial and production management of the library—won an Anvil award of excellence from the Public Relations Society of the Philippines. With its increasing involvement in helping the Ayala group with its information

needs, the library is slowly broadening the scope of its projects to include services in written communication, publications, and multimedia.

During periods of difficulty in the country, these awards we receive should be viewed as an affirmation of the truly important role of nurturing the soul of creativity in the Filipino. More importantly, apart from being validated that we are satisfactorily serving our audiences, these acknowledgments prove that we have earned the respect of our colleagues and peers. May we be inspired to continue sharing our strengths and resources with others such that the task of improving society may be an easier one, and that we may reach success together as a whole nation and as a united people.



Jaime Zobel de Ayala
Chairman

Message of the President

For us at Ayala Foundation, it could be said that 2003 was a banner year for partnerships. In spite of the challenging financial situation in the country, our partners were and are still ready to champion our causes. With the numerous agreements we entered into, we have been able to widen the scope and reach of our projects. We have been able to step up the mobilization of our resources and to consolidate our efforts to effect more immediate change.

The growth of Ayala Foundation USA last year is a prime example of how we have been able to significantly increase our financial resources in a relatively short period of time. At such an early stage of this project's development, the support we have received from Filipinos overseas has been truly inspiring and has sustained the momentum of our enthusiasm, if not increased it even more. Our partnerships with various media outfits contributed immensely to this success by spreading information about our cause worldwide.

On the homefront, we were able to enjoin even more individual and corporate donors to champion the Children's Hour campaign. In fact, last year saw the birth of Children's Hour as an independent, incorporated nongovernmental organization—proof that it has already built such a solid foundation of support from its benefactors that it can now exist on its own and serve with even greater efficiency. It has definitely come a long way from its beginnings as a new concept of contributing to youth causes, spearheaded by the Children and Youth Foundation and Ayala Foundation in 1999. We are proud that we

continue to be a strong partner and proponent of the Children's Hour campaign.

In some of these partnerships, we worked with other companies, organizations, and individuals to pool our respective resources and expertise toward a common goal. For the pilot implementation of *Bridgett's* text2teach program in the country, for instance, we were able to participate in bringing digital technology into public school classrooms and help in implementing science education in the country.

In the area of arts and culture, the Ayala Museum teamed up with its peers in presenting more groundbreaking exhibits and lectures in the *Zero In* series, tearing down the barriers of elitism and intellectualism in the perception of ordinary Filipinos. Furthermore, with the inauguration of the museum's new home this year—integrated seamlessly into the new lifestyle center that is the redeveloped Greenbelt—we are aiming to bring art within the reach of even the most unsuspecting passersby. Projects of the Filipinas Heritage Library, such as LibraryLink, bring together Filipinos as well, but this time in the realm of cyberspace. Their online network of libraries has grown and the sharing of information has helped many in the field of research and the academe.

Collaborations, partnerships, and networking efforts such as these prove that in order to make significant changes in society, the most important element is the spirit of cooperation. This could be gleaned from and is primordial rooted in the Filipino concept of *bayanihan*.

When obstacles are lifted and carried on the shoulders of many, the load becomes lighter and the way forward cleared. The problem becomes a challenge; shared labor translates into a sense of brotherhood. Unlike food or money, pride in ourselves, our fellowmen, and in our country cannot be diminished or taken away, and these are what we need to achieve a lasting impact.

It is my prayer, too, that the spirit of cooperation we have nurtured so well within our organization be an inspiration to others. May we view each act of kindness, a heartfelt prayer, or even an honest ballot we cast in the elections as potent tools to change society for the better. There is never a contribution too insignificant to acknowledge. These are the things that will fortify the foundation we have been laying for the future of our country and our children.



Victoria Garchitorea
President

