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## Centrist Democratic Local Governance Conference

DINNER RECEPTION

*Spoken word counts!*

Dr. Gerhard Wahlers, Deputy Secretary General of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and his wife Mrs. Annette Wahlers,

Dr. Peter Köppinger, Resident Representative of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Manila Office

Former Senator, Nene Pimentel, most distinguished Professor of the Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. Center for Good Governance of the University of Makati

Mayors and Governors from all over the country and guests.

Good evening.

I would like to congratulate the organizers of the "Centrist Democratic Local Government Conference" namely Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Local Government Development Foundation, the Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. Center for Good Governance of the University of the University of Makati and the Centrist Democratic Movements Federation of the Philippines for successfully organizing this momentous gathering.

It is extremely crucial for Centrist Democrats to converge and discuss the need to strengthen democracy in our country. Mayors and Governors play an important role in this endeavour not only because they link the people with government, as they are the frontliners in their respective jurisdictions. They also are in the best position to facilitate the empowerment of the people. It

is in this regard that I support and applaud the efforts of the organizers in bringing together Centrist Democrat local government executives.

I also support the efforts of the young professionals of the Centrist Democratic Movements Federation. I was able to sit down with them last November during their leadership training seminar and saw for myself the optimism and enthusiasm of these young leaders. Because of the political movement that they have launched, others are provided with an opportunity to actively participate in the political life of the country. It gives me much hope that the push for reforms and the promotion of democracy is now being articulated and communicated by young democrats of the CDM Federation.

Again, my congratulations to you all.

*Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*