



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines



**JOINT STATEMENT
OF OMBUDSWOMAN CONCHITA CARPIO MORALES AND
COA CHAIRPERSON MA. GRACIA PULIDO TAN**

**On the Inauguration of COA-OMB Joint Investigations
18 April 2012
SAADO Auditorium, Commission on Audit
Quezon City**

Today is a propitious day, as we inaugurate a strategic partnership between the Commission on Audit and the Office of the Ombudsman in the fight against graft and corruption.

When we came to office about a year ago, we were confronted with an alarmingly huge inventory of case files involving allegations of bribery and wanton misuse of public money. Many more complaints of the same tenor have since deluged our offices, and the inflow of information and investigation and audit requests – mostly from citizens – continues to increase.

While we lost no time in working on these cases within our respective organizations, we soon came to realize that for a more speedy and effective resolution of these cases, we needed to institutionally partner with one another in a structured, targeted and coordinated manner, in a spirit of utmost mutual assistance and cooperation, and be bound by the highest purpose of holding each public servant – including ourselves – fully accountable to the people.

We are deeply mindful of the “culture of impunity” so often spoken of and written about, as one of the most impelling factors in the incidence of graft and corruption in the country. How so often bewailed that graft pays, because only the “small fish,” if at all, get punished, and the big fish get away to yet another adventure, emboldening the next-in-ranks to help themselves in adventures of their own until they, too, become big fish, and the cycle goes on.

This culture of impunity must go if we are to restore public office as truly a public trust. Complaints involving high officials of the land, plunderous misuse of public funds, and other cases highly impacting the drive against graft and corruption, must be attended to with dispatch and investigated with the highest degree of integrity, independence and competence.

Drawing from our respective constitutional mandates, and our statutory authorities to engage each other’s assistance in carrying out our solemn responsibilities to country and people, we have thus joined forces to dedicate a team that will primarily handle and attend to these cases. We will do our best to obtain for the members of this joint investigation team continuous training to upgrade their capabilities in forensic auditing, evidence gathering and documentation, case strategies and presentation; deepen their commitment to civic

responsibility; equip them with modern technological tools; and grant commensurate incentives as may be allowed by law.

And this is why we are here today, in this room at the Commission on Audit where the COA-OMB Joint Investigation Team will take residence in our quest to restore the confidence of the people in their institutions and servants.

In this quest, we humbly request everyone's support and prayers. The success of the COA-OMB Joint Investigation Team will surely be the success of the Filipino people.

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