

**Keynote Message of  
Secretary Angelo T. Reyes  
Department of Energy**

**Launch of the SWITCH Movement  
Philippine International Convention Center  
16 July 2008**

Madame President, fellow stakeholders in the energy sector, comrades in arms in the battle against climate change, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

I speak to you today not so much as the Secretary of Energy or as the Chairman of the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change but as a fellow warrior in the important movement that we are about to launch today. And that movement, as you well know by now, has been aptly dubbed SWITCH.

As explained in the short video presentation, the SWITCH Movement is an offshoot of the 2008 Philippine Energy Summit held last January.

Since the Summit, a lot has been happening behind the scenes—from the rationalization of lifeline power rates and the institutionalization of a regular Power Stakeholders Meeting to the development of an alternative fuel and technology road map and a one-stop-shop for renewable energy resource development. Even as we awaited passage of the RE Bill and sorted out legal and operational issues with respect to proposed initiatives like open access and time-of-use pricing, we sought to cushion the impact of the high oil price regime on our vulnerable sectors and to help bring down the cost of power for local industries.

But through all these, one grim reality has remained constant: there is really little that we, like most other countries, can do about oil prices. And, in the same spirit of opportunity that we convened earlier this year, we must strengthen our resolve to end our dependence on imported fossil fuels and, together, carve our own path toward energy self-reliance and sustainable development. It is time to start taking control of our own destiny in the energy sector.

In this context, we can all readily appreciate the significance of SWITCH, which we have defined as a “movement that seeks to demonstrate how ordinary Filipinos and specific sectors of Philippine society can contribute substantively—through fundamental changes in lifestyle, behavior or standard practices—to the massive effort needed to address the dire consequences of skyrocketing oil prices and climate change.”

The SWITCH Movement’s initial areas of focus reflect the priorities set during the Summit:

- promoting efficient energy practices
- developing alternative fuels and cleaner technologies in the transport sector
- tapping renewable energy for power generation, where feasible, and for off-grid rural electrification; and
- participatory energy planning at the local level which, in essence, is the ultimate form of stakeholder mobilization for energy concerns.

What we will launch today to kick-start the SWITCH Movement is the fast-tracking of the *Palit-Ilaw* campaign which calls for a switch from incandescent bulbs and inefficient lighting technologies to compact fluorescent lamps (CFL) to efficient lighting systems.

This is just the first step in our long journey toward making efficient energy practices a way of life for all of us.

The SWITCH Movement's *Palit-Ilaw* initiative dovetails with the National Energy Efficiency Program that aims to provide direct economic benefits to the country by reducing energy peak demand and the need for imported oil for power generation. By using energy efficient lighting systems, we would realize not just significant savings but considerable reduction in our greenhouse gas emissions as well.

This program—which is supported by the Asian Development Bank with counterpart government funding from proceeds of the value-added tax—will feature, among others, the replacement of nine million incandescent bulbs with CFLs. Along with the other components of the program, this will result in savings of about 90 million US dollars per annum from avoided fuel cost. More significantly, this means that our country can defer 1.3 billion US dollars in investments in power generation and associated network capacity of 320 megawatts, which represents about two percent of the Philippines' total generation capacity.

In addition, the program is projected to earn for the Philippines about 4.5 million US dollars annually in terms of carbon credits. This is equivalent to an emission reduction of 250,000 tons of carbon dioxide per year.

By taking on the vital social mobilization component of the National Energy Efficiency Program, the SWITCH Movement will play a crucial role in achieving these far-reaching objectives.

And, going by the overwhelming success of the Energy Summit as a social mobilization initiative, we in the Department of Energy are extremely confident that this opening salvo of the SWITCH Movement will be an outstanding success.

Like the Energy Summit, SWITCH is fueled by the commitment and passion of civil society, the resources and experience of the private sector and the international donor community, and the authority and infrastructure of government.

On that note, I wish to acknowledge the tireless efforts of our steadfast partners—in particular, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Winrock International, the Green Army, the Renewable Energy Coalition, the Philippine Green Building Council (PGBC), and the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF), ADB, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Environment Facility, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

I wish to extend my personal gratitude to the Honorable Mayors of Caloocan, Las Piñas, Makati, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig, Pateros, Quezon City, San Juan, Taguig, and Valenzuela for lending their active support to this first initiative of the SWITCH Movement. The participation of all these local governments show proof that securing our energy future and responding to the challenge of climate change constitute common cause that transcends partisan and parochial interests.

For this *Palit-Ilaw* initiative, it is encouraging to note the involvement of new players, such as the Manila Jaycees which is working with the Manila City Government on this project, and volunteer students from the University of Santo Tomas who have helped in the conduct of energy audits in public schools and hospitals. May this signal a broader involvement of civic and professional organizations and the academe in this worthy endeavor.

Special thanks go to the Philippine Lighting Industry Association (PLIA). Its members—particularly GE Lighting and Philips Lighting—have been instrumental in getting *Palit-Ilaw* off to a flying start by donating “seed” energy-efficient lighting equipment to the Metro Manila cities and municipalities. The local governments will match these company's generous donations to complete the lighting switch in their respective localities.

Finally, I would like to express my deep appreciation to our partners and sectoral representatives who have joined us this morning -- Mr. Meneleo Carlos of the Federation of Philippine Industries;

Ms. Odette Alcantara of Mother Earth Philippines; UP President Emerlinda Roman; Mr. Vigor Mendoza of the United Transport Koalisyon; Mr. Frank Lester Chiu Cruz of the World Youth Alliance; Fr. Jonil Lalap of the Salesians of Don Bosco; and Mr. Neeraj Jain, Philippine country director of the ADB. With their inspiration and guidance, and those of our other partners, the SWITCH Movement is destined to set new milestones in best energy practices in our country.

On their behalf, I would like to thank all of you for taking part in today's launch ceremony. On your able shoulders—not ours—lies the success of this Movement. For this is not a time for speeches but a time for action.

It is time to turn on the SWITCH.

Thank you and more energy and power to us all.