

**Message of**  
**Arch. Armando N. ALLÍ**, *fuap, hfpia, aaif*  
**PRBoA Chairman**  
Guest Speaker at the  
**United Architects of the Philippines (UAP)**  
34<sup>th</sup> National Convention Honor Dinner  
starting 7:00 pm on Friday, 25 April 2008  
at the SMX Convention Center, Pasay City

Warm greetings to you all!

Thank You so much to the **UAP-IAPOA** and the APEC Monitoring Committee for the signal honor bestowed upon me this evening.

I and the two (2) Members of the Professional Regulatory Board of Architecture (**PRBoA**), namely Architects **Angeline T. Chua Chiaco**, *fuap* and **Marietta B. Segovia**, congratulate the **United Architects of the Philippines, the Integrated and Accredited Professional Organization of Architects (UAP-IAPOA)**, for the successful staging of the thirty-fourth (34<sup>th</sup>) edition of the National Convention, with the theme "**Furtherance of Professionalism Beyond Distinctions**".

The **PRBoA** also thanks the **UAP-IAPOA** corps of Directors and Officers for this wonderful opportunity to speak before the **UAP-IAPOA** general membership and before friends and supporters of Filipino architects.

The theme of **furthering professionalism** is timely because it happens at a time of **very visible resurgence** in the **advocacy** of Filipino architects nationwide. Almost four (4) years have passed since **Republic Act No. 9266** (The **Architecture Act of 2004**) became law and to date, we still have to attain our shared primary goal of the **full implementation and enforcement** of said law, its implementing rules and regulations (**IRR**) and its derivative regulations issued by both the past Boards of Architecture (**BoAs**) and by the Professional Regulation Commission (**PRC**) since the 1970s.

Sad to say, begging the indulgence of my boss, the Honorable Leonor T. Rosero, Chairperson of the PRC, of the Honorable Catherine Castañeda, CHED Director, and all other colleagues in government service, and we have to say this, the apparent **single biggest violator** of our law appears to be **our government** (at both its national and local levels) and we as the affected parties must continue to exert all efforts at making the government realize, recognize and address this peculiar situation.

Many Filipino architects have already left the comfort of their abodes mainly because of the **official** indifference to the plight of the architects, now almost sixty (60) years running. Our architects have since gone on to other nations and have become such huge assets to those places.

We ask ourselves why? It is probably because those Filipino architects are **given** or **afforded** the creative opportunities and importance they richly deserve. After such accolades from their host countries, many of these colleagues will probably never return to help the country nor the future aspirants to the profession.

In the meantime, our steadily **diminishing** enrollees are also compounding the exodus of many aspirants, who are plucked out of school to meet the insatiable demand for skilled Filipino architectural support workers abroad. Sadly, once they too leave, these aspirants to the profession may remain just that, for the rest of their lives.

These situations have one possible root cause – the **low** value assigned to (and little recognition afforded the) Filipino architect in his home country. While we are **recognized internationally** as capable of delivering world-class outputs, here at home, many of us are still forced to play **second fiddle** to foreign architects, only to assume their professional responsibilities and civil liabilities, and all these for break-even or even starvation-level fees. Worse, Filipino architects are now forced to compete against **other** regulated professionals and even against illegal practitioners, both of whom have little or no preparation nor training in the practice of architecture.

To our minds, this may **not** just be mere colonial mentality or economics at work, it could be that there is also actual **failure in governance** (chiefly in the area of the **collective**, if not shared task of implementing/enforcing laws properly, lending credence to the notion that the Philippines is a **soft** state, where laws are bent to suit whomsoever dominates). It could also be that the unbridled greed and opportunism by external/ non-architect entities have been allowed or even encouraged to fester and permeate and eat away at the architect's self respect and social standing.

We **must** arrest this trend for in about a decade, we may be left only with architects in their very senior years, with unwilling, indecisive or half-hearted architects and an insufficient number of would-be architects in our schools. That is the result of **abdication** and that will ensure the demise of architects in the country and the takeover by those pretending to be architects.

All of us need to work **together** with the **PRBoA** and the **UAP-IAPOA** to address this diaspora and the underlying official indifference to our plight.

Many concerned architects initially thought that changing the old architecture law could help us protect the profession faster and more effectively. It turns out that we still need to **do more**, much more, particularly in the area of implementation and enforcement. After years of information dissemination and active resistance by certain sectors, architects now still have to go to court to implement and to enforce the law.

Fortunately for us, our law is as **strong** as a professional regulatory law could ever be. From its 2004 approval to date, there has been **no** TRO, **no** injunction and **no** constitutionality question on any provision of our law and its IRR. Proof of this is that **R.A. No. 9266** has never been directly challenged or questioned in court for the past four (4) years i.e. no case has ever been filed against **R.A. No. 9266**.

Why then is it **not** being fully implemented? Quite possibly, the answer is **undue restraint** and the apparent **need** for the government to be very sure that it was doing the right thing.

But that was **before** a Manila RTC judge ruled in late January 2008 that **architectural documents** were indeed only for registered and licensed architects (**RLAs**) to prepare, sign and seal. That decision supposedly cemented the support of the three (3) co-equal branches of government for the architects. Still, there are key **holdouts** in the government and these entities are clearly favoring non-architects, violating our law in the process.

This year, the architects, led by the **PRBoA**, must hold such entities accountable for their willful violations of **R.A. No. 9266**. Chief among the prospective respondents are high profile national and local government officials, who continually **refuse** to implement and enforce **R.A. No. 9266**, despite their statutory mandates.

The UAP chapters and members must also try to help in this regard, mainly by monitoring the activities of their LGU officials, particularly their mayors and building officials. *Pro-forma* complaints that may be filed against these officials can be found at the **PRBoA** website at [www.architectureboard.ph](http://www.architectureboard.ph), but a lawyer must be consulted before actual filing is initiated.

While the **PRBoA** and the **UAP-IAPOA** have very recently commenced to dialogue with the CEs after over 4 years of legal

struggle, we must remember that these are only interim efforts to find avenues to diffuse the tension and to possibly prevent the further escalation of conflict. All ongoing engagements in the legal arena must either be settled out-of-court or seen through their fateful conclusions.

More importantly however, the entities who have **wrongfully used** the Philippine legal system to achieve unjust ends e.g. the use of **manufactured** laws and the collective resort to forum shopping, must all be held fully **accountable** for their deliberate acts to get around the law.

The **PRBoA** looks to the **UAP-IAPOA**, the **PIA**, the **AAIF** and all other architectural organizations to blaze their own paths in helping and supporting ongoing and future **PRBoA** initiatives to fully implement and enforce **R.A. No. 9266**, its IRR and derivative regulations.

These include continuing lobby work with national and local government officials for them to carry out their **statutory mandates** under **R.A. No. 9266**, the mandatory registration of architectural firms, the mandatory issuance of special/temporary permits for foreign architects, support for future continuing education development (**CPD**) programs (that may leading to architectural specialization and **PRBoA** certification) and the like.

Yesterday, the **PRBoA**, with timely financial assistance from the **UAP-IAPOA**, particularly from Task Force RA 9266 chaired by **Past NP Robert Sac**, and upon advice from **NP Medeliano Roldan**, three (3) new **PRBoA** resolutions (all abridged editions for general public information) were published at the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Two (2) of these i.e. Resolution 05, series of 2007 covering **architectural firm registration** and Resolution 01, series of 2008 on rules governing **architectural work performed by students and graduates of architecture** have already been published at the Official Gazette and are already **in effect**.

The registration of architectural firms by the **PRC** shall go on until October 2008. Afterwards, an affiliate **UAP-IAPOA** organization of registered architectural firms i.e. composed entirely of juridical persons such as single proprietorships, partnerships, corporations and associations of architectural firms, and the like, must be established.

Resolution No. 03, series of 2008 governing **special/temporary permit issuance to foreign architects** shall be published by late April 2008 (and shall take effect mid-May 2008).

Altogether, these 3 Resolutions now allow the **PRC**, the **PRBoA** and the architectural organizations, together with the DoJ, SEC and the DTI, to fully address the perennial problem of high profile illegal practitioners.

Recently, the **PRBoA** and the **UAP-IAPOA** have collaborated on the publication of the accurate/official version of the 1977 National Building Code of the Philippines (**NBCP**) and its 2004 **Revised IRR** as published by the DPWH in April 2005 (with initial annotations), for ready reference by the architectural community.

Finally, it is the wish of the **PRBoA** that it will receive the full and continuing support of the **UAP-IAPOA** and other architectural organizations for the current and future **PRBoA** initiatives towards the attainment of our shared goals.

Again, the **PRBoA's** heartfelt congratulations and wishes of continuing success to the **UAP-IAPOA**, its incoming and outgoing directors/officers, its members and to all of you in attendance!

May the Lord bless us all and the resurgent architecture profession as well.

*Mabuhay kayong lahat!!!*

Nothing follows.