

Surviving the challenges of 4IR

Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III

People Management Association of the Philippines

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President Louisa Echevarria, Director Rene Gener, former PMAP President Lucy Tarriela, fellow public servants, friends, guests, good afternoon.

It's always a pleasure to be with the country's talent professionals. One feels the sense of community, the shared vision, the professionalism.

In our midst is a sense of anticipation, not only in the context of what the new decade holds for us, or what it will mean for the country. It is the sense of anticipation of "The future of human resources in the country."

My two-cents worth: It is the future where the world of work is going — toward a world of technology and innovation.

It is a future that belongs to you —our people managers and the young. But, let me qualify.

Attaining that future will require the participation of all: Those in government and the private sector, the young and old, everyone. Especially, if we aim to succeed in what the future holds for our human capital.

This is because human capital will be shaped by the realities of the future of work, the evolving Fourth Industrial Revolution. This is the technological bridge that will allow mankind to digitally traverse to his tomorrow.

You and I know that the Fourth Industrial Revolution has already started. This is why I always emphasize that we have

to bring that future now to the young, and that this goal is a shared responsibility of everyone.

For this reason, we in government, like the governments all over the world, invest heavily in preparing our children and workers for the work of the future. We have no choice for those who fail to adapt to the coming technological age, they will be left behind in the dustbin of backwardness.

Agencies, such as the DepEd, CHED, DOST, and others have formulated programs and policy frameworks where education and learning have a bias for science and technology. For us, in the Department of Labor and Employment, we are tasked with the mandate to help improve the technological skills of our country's workforce.

We are not only tasked with ensuring workers' rights, industrial peace, or repatriating our OFWs in strife torn countries, we are also fully responsible to fully invest in creating the professional and technical composite of the Filipino human talent.

We help prepare our labor force for the new challenges offered by the work of the future, such as strengthening skills-based workers other than the traditional diploma-based professionals.

We do this through our programs which we accomplish with our partners such as TESDA, the various industries, the SUCs, and the LGUs. Our goal is to lessen skills or jobs mismatches and improve the technical talent of our workforce through up-skilling, re-skilling and retraining.

And there is a focus on those handling manual or routinary work, what experts call "codifiable jobs." These are jobs that are in danger of being supplanted by apps, artificial intelligence, robotics, the internet of things, and the other

iterations of digital algorithms in the coming technological wave.

To me, this is the broad brush of the future of the Filipino human talent. And where are we now? We are deep in its preparation. For the future may be full of challenges but it is not without hope and potential.

The development of our human capital is enshrined in the administration's short and long-term development goals. And we are tasked to carry out our mandate to attain these goals.

And to reiterate, the future starts now. This is why all of us have a shared responsibility in achieving it: Government and the private sector, our families and our schools, labor and industry, employees and human resource managers.

Yes, the sky over the horizon may seem gray and cloudcast. But, those clouds are ready to break and show a blue and red sunrise of hope and endless opportunity for our human capital.

This early, in the 2020 Global Talent Competitiveness Index of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the Philippines scored well in the categories of "skills level" and "talent impact." This placed us in the top 40 countries all over the world in terms of human talent.

An indication no less that if we work together, the Filipino talent will never be left behind. This is because time has proven that our people has the intelligence, adaptability, and the resilience to survive in the face of local and global challenges.

Thank you.