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**The Hon. DANILO LIM, Chair**  
**The Hon. Jojo Garcia, General Manager**  
**The Hon. Roberto Almadin, AGM for Operations**  
Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)  
Orense cor. EDSA, Guadalupe, Makati City, The Philippines  
May 25, 2020

**Re: Congratulations and Commendation**

**Dear Messrs. Lim, Garcia and Almadin:**

Greetings from the Normandy Chair for Peace! We will have peace on Earth when we have peace with the Earth.

We write to congratulate and commend you for your initiative to put up safe non-motorized lanes on the main highway of Metro Manila – the Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA). We thank you for your support of the May 24, 2020 EDSA Evolution launch by Filipino non-motorized advocates (NMAs). It is a most significant moment not only in the history of the Philippines.

**EDSA Evolution**

The term ‘EDSA Evolution’ is quite clever. Some 34 years ago, EDSA was the site of the first peaceful people power revolution in the world. Since then, and before



Bicycle lanes miraculously appeared on EDSA last May 24, 2020. A product of the cooperation between citizen-cyclists and concerned government offices. The Sandwich Theory of social change in action.



Small text at the bottom of the newspaper clipping, including 'Repatriated OFWs' and 'COVID-19 TALLY OF PHILIPINES'.

this lockdown, EDSA became a symbol of the motorized madness and terrible traffic that pervades the world over.

The move by Filipino Non-Motorized advocates (NMAs), with the support of the MMDA, to begin putting up the road separators during this lockdown period is most remarkable. Because of this ongoing crisis, the need for non-motorized (and clean) transportation became possible, clear, and compelling. It is good that you see the opportunity in this crisis today -- a rare chance to move the world to a new normal. This new normal must not return to the abnormal heavy traffic congestion of the past. This vision of a new normal will change the world from today's car-crazy and fuel-foolish transport system. It will usher the people to a new and brave world that is gentler, cleaner, kinder, and more wonderful.

Your suggestion for elevated bike lanes is well-taken for the safety of the non-motorized commuters. As an interim measure, you may wish to consider that a small concrete separator 2" wide x 6" high along the margin of the bike lanes is quickly doable. We were advised that the NMAs are willing to support the initial construction of these separators. This is while you wait for the release of slow government funds for the bigger construction work. This offer by the citizens is a truly commendable example of the great Filipino spirit of *Bayanihan* – cooperative heroism.

## Societal Changes

It is said that societal change happens in three ways: 1. Top-down, 2. Bottom-up, and 3. Top meets the bottom.

Top-down is fast. But due to changes of people in power, it does not last. Bottom-up lasts, but it is not fast. Ordinary citizens, without the support of their government, can do too little and too slow.



The change that is fast and will last is when the top meets (and works) with the bottom. What the MMDA, the Department of Transportation (DoTr), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Senator Pia Cayetano and the citizen-NMAs is doing is an excellent example of the sandwich theory of social change. It is one change that will be fast and will last ... way beyond your times in office.

Once again, the Filipino people leads the world for something so enlightened and path-breaking. This time, the Filipinos are showing the world how roads can be transformed by a simple principle: *“Those who have less in wheels must have more in roads”.*(i)

This initiative by your good offices, while seemingly small and local, will have ripples of impact far beyond your borders. Your Government is showing how to care for the “rights of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of Nature.” (Phil. 1987 Constitution, Art. II, Sec. 16).

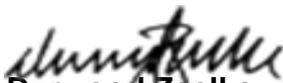
The EDSA Evolution implements on-the-ground multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among them are: to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being (#3); reduce inequality (#10); make cities and human settlements safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable (#11); climate action (#13); promote peaceful and inclusive societies (#16); and the strengthening of partnerships to make these goals happen (#17).

The story of your collective work -- and its good impacts on health, air quality, well-being, inequality, traffic congestion, societal stress -- will be heard around the world. An excellent story of people *making peace with the Earth*. Most of all, the change you are starting will be of great benefit to the present generation and generations yet unborn.

Again, congratulations for the work of the MMDA, DOTr, DPWH, Senator Pia Cayetano, and the Concerned Citizens of the Philippines. You are all shining exemplars worthy of global emulation.

On behalf of grateful Filipinos and of your friends around the world, *Merci Beaucoup. Maraming Salamat!*

Very truly yours,



**Durwood Zaelke**

President, Institute for Governance  
& Sustainable Development  
Washington DC and Paris



**Nicholas Robinson**  
Executive Governor, International  
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**EMILIE GAILLARD**  
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