



Message from the President and CEO

Today is the first day that lockdown rules are being relaxed nationwide. This is not an indication that the COVID-19 threat is behind us, but a bow to the need to provide people opportunities to start earning an honest living again, even while the threat remains.

Even as you enjoy a little more freedom in movement and the like, be conscious of the fact that the virus is still out there, that there remains no cure and that there remains no vaccine against COVID-19. Nothing has changed in the care we need to take to ensure that our homes and offices remain free of the virus. But because we may be encountering and interacting with more people these days, be prepared to be even more vigilant in your day to day activities.

Our four OPCOs and EPI continue to operate. CMC completed the first round of an assessment survey of all households as part of its social preparation of our host and neighboring communities for the simultaneous loading of four vessels beginning in June.

DMC donated medical equipment and PPEs to the municipal hospital and the rural health unit as part of its outreach.

HMC finished loading its 4th vessel for the year yesterday and is expecting the arrival of its fifth vessel today. HMC also received a copy of Resolution No. 150 of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Surigao del Norte thanking the mining industry in CARAGA for its support of the province's various anti-COVID efforts, and commending HMC, TMC and THPAL for their voluntary cessation of operations in the early days of the outbreak.

RTN recently turned over a cheque for P6.4M to the Governor of Palawan as our contribution to help ensure that there is no rice shortage throughout the province.

TMC has four vessels on site with the second almost fully loaded while preparation is ongoing to do simultaneous loading of the 3rd and 4th. TMC is filling up various open positions while recalling other employees from surrounding areas while at the same time continuing to provide assistance in the form of thermal scanners, alcohol, food packs, canned goods and the like to our neighboring communities as well as to the EMB and MGB offices in the region.

As we continue to do what we do best – operate as an example of responsible mining in the Philippines – I want you all to know that we have not taken our eyes off the most serious health crisis our country has faced in decades.


As many of you know, the key to finally overcoming the threat of COVID-19 is finding out who has the virus, both the symptomatic and the asymptomatic. To do this we need to be able to test a significant percentage of our population. But the number of people tested to date remains very low – less than 150,000 in a population of 108 million – or not even 0.15%, a far cry from even just 1% of the entire population of the Philippines, or even of Metro Manila where the hotspot is.

Part of the problem lies in the fact the Philippines does not have enough properly equipped molecular laboratories (MTL) to handle the processing of test samples: as of last week, we had 22 (while Vietnam which has almost the same population as ours has 112). The whole of CARAGA has none. Palawan has none. Many other regions have none – which means they rely on labs in Manila or Cebu for the processing. This explains the backlog in test results which can last for weeks. In effect many provinces are “blind” as they fight the pandemic.

We are now working with the Red Cross, the MGB and the Governors of Surigao del Norte and Palawan to open MTL labs for their respective provinces which will be a big step in this fight vs. COVID-19 and in equipping both provinces (and their regions) with the ability to fight any future contagions as well. I will update you on these two projects as we progress.

Let me reiterate: as we begin to enjoy enhanced freedom of movement and engage with more people on a daily basis, let us become even more vigilant in our day to day activities because the fight against COVID-19 is far from over.

Have a productive and safe workweek ahead.


Martin Antonio G. Zamora
President and CEO