

**Office of the President
of the Philippines
Malacañang**

April 17, 2002

MR. BENJAMIN C. AKOL
President, Philippine Chamber of Arrastre
and Stevedoring Operators
Ground Floor, OPASCOR Building
Don Bernardo Benedicto Street
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

Dear Mr. Akol:

Thank you for your letter we got today, which gives us the opportunity to clarify what Security Luis P. Lorenzo, Jr. said.

During the recent Mindanao Food Congress in Cagayan de Oro, Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo directed Secretaries Pantaleon D. Alvarez of DOTC and Leonardo Q. Montemayor of DA with a May 1 deadline to review and come up with a program that would reduce the total cost of logistics for products being shipped from Visayas and Mindanao.


It was the impression of Secretary Lorenzo that there was a 20% increase since December 2000 and that there was insufficient consultation on this increase as told to him by participants of aforementioned congress. Secretary Lorenzo was also made to understand that the RO-RO service continues to be charged stevedoring and arrastre fees inspite of minimal need if any at all for this service.

This reduction and possible removal of the RO-RO charges was likewise an adopted resolution at the National Economic Summit of the President held in November 2000.

We hope this answers your question and if you have further questions or issues that need to be resolved, the proper parties to consult with are the producers, the DA and the DOTC, even as the newspapers made reference to him.

Again, thanks and best regards.

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CREATING ONE MILLION JOBS:**


LOURDES I. ILUSTRE
Chief of Staff
Office for the Creation of
One Million Jobs