



**The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge  
of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines**

**PLARIDEL MASONIC TEMPLE**

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**MW ROLEN C. PAULINO**  
Grand Master

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Grand Secretary

**GRAND MASTER'S OFFICIAL STATEMENT**

Indeed the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected the lives, businesses and welfare of every individual globally. Our Ancient Institution was not spared. For a time, our regular Masonic activities and functions came to a halt to prevent the spread of the dreaded virus among the brethren and our respective families.

We had to suspend Masonic activities to help our government in its effort to lessen, if not eradicate the spread of COVID-19. And when the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) relaxed certain protocols on travel and mass gatherings, we issued Circulars allowing to a limited extent, the conduct of stated meetings and Masonic activities. Yet we never wavered in the observance of government regulations to keep everyone safe.

The tenureship of your Grand Master in the Grand Oriental Chair was not spared. Health protocols and safety regulations have prevented us from putting into action what I intended and planned to undertake for the current Masonic year. We remained undaunted by the presence of the pandemic. The Grand Lodge of the Philippines continued to function despite the difficulties brought about by this global pandemic. The brethren made concerted efforts to help not only our fellow brethren but also those outside our fraternity to lessen the physical, emotional and economic impact of this pandemic in our own little ways. While we may have been in more ways than one limited in our actions for this Masonic year, we cannot complain. Among the Masonic symbols highlighted by the pandemic is the Checkered Pavement, which is emblematic of human life. There were instances when we felt truly destitute and helpless; yet there were also occasions when we witnessed, time and again, how the mystic and fraternal tie of the Craft uplifted our brothers and their families through the most challenging of times. We functioned as we could, despite our present limitations. We could not complain as nobody was prepared for this. We will move on for the betterment of our institution.

*Clear Vision of Masonic Harmony.*

I bring to your attention the present matter brought for your consideration. The Office of the Grand Master received a letter from our Deputy Grand Master, RW Johnny T. Pimentel, proposing the extension of my term in the Grand Oriental Chair. We referred the letter to the Board for General Purposes for guidance on the matter as I believe that out of propriety and decency, I am not to rule on it as it concerns me staying longer in my present position. This was done so lest I be perceived clinging on to the position more than I should. I have no intention in doing so. That is why we referred the proposal to the brethren, thru their representatives, to voice out their comment and decision over the same as they are the repository of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial powers during either in a Special Communication or Annual Communication.

This present concern is seemingly creating a disharmony among us. Each of us is entitled to his own comment and interpretation of the applicable provision of our Masonic Law Book and Ancient Landmarks. This is acceptable as we are supposed to be all freethinkers.

The proposal to extend my term as Grand Master has brought to the fore differences of opinions and perceptions. Differences which have challenged the prevailing Unity and Harmony among us. This we must all endeavour to preserve by all means. If we allow discord to govern or disturb the peace we all enjoy, we are staring at the beginning of our end.

In fact, the consultations undertaken regarding the proposal brought out one core realization: that we are indeed freethinkers. But amid our differences of opinion, we should never forget that we are all brothers.

When I assumed the Grand Oriental Chair upon my election as your Grand Master, I have chosen the theme: "Clear Vision of Masonic Harmony". I always believed that as all other institutions, "Harmony" is the strength of every society especially of ours. I believe that a harmonious institution like ours should always remain united as ever and always to weather all trials and attempts to disrupt our disinterested friendship and fellowship. In no certain terms will I allow that small fissure disturb the Unity and Harmony among us. We should never forget that the Purple of the Fraternity that rests upon our shoulders is a symbol of trust and leadership and not of superiority or ambition. No eminence of station should make us forget that we are all on the level.

Believing that the governance of our Craft is about fraternal stewardship, I would like to inform my beloved brethren that I do not wish to stay a minute longer in the Grand Oriental Chair as dictated and required by our Masonic Law Book and Ancient Landmarks.

The scheduled Special Communication on January 14, 2022 to tackle the proposal is now cancelled. We will be having our Annual Communication on April 28, 2022. I now categorically state that there will be no extension of my term of office as your Grand Master.

I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who has shown their support in all my undertakings as your Grand Master.

It is now time for all of us to move forward and give the same support and commitment to our incoming Grand Master for Masonic year 2022 – 2023.

God Bless us all and God Bless Freemasonry!



**MW ROLÉN C. PAULINO**  
Grand Master