

Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) Statement of Support for Air Transport Policy Brief

By Mr Eduardo Yap, Governor in Charge, Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure Committee
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I represent both the Management Association of the Philippines and Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines. I won't make a presentation. I will state the position of both organizations with respect to this presentation. And certainly we support the general guidelines embodied in this study. But I'll have to qualify our support. Two years ago I organized a forum entitled the NAIA Conundrum, how to solve the problem that has been with us for decades, which is the congested and inadequacy of NAIA.

At that time, we were under the assumption that its going to be a two airport or dual airport system for Metro Manila and Central Luzon. But now, starting last year, it has evolved into a multi airport approach, including Sangley and Bulacan. And it is good, as Usec. Bobby Lim stated that this is an expression of interest in the private sector to invest, that's a good sign definitely, but then I just would like to say that hopefully these expressions of interests and even of unsolicited proposals will not prolong decision on this question of the gateway to greater Manila

As former secretary Bobby De Ocampo said, it has been 21 years. It has been that long and up to now we have not come to a decision. I noticed that the presentation for the new airport in Bulacan will take 6 years to complete. That is 6 years in addition to the 21 years. Can we wait that long? Every day, every additional day of delay is a struggle. I spoke to Usec Bobby a while ago. The situation in NAIA 2, for instance, that airport is not meant for international flights, it is not meant for wide body, two aisle aircraft. And yet up to now, wide bodies are being used at NAIA 2.

Then what happens? Like what happened to me. I arrived on a wide body, two aisles, at NAIA 2, we were made to disembark. That was a full flight with elderly people and as you know our travelers always have their carry of luggage. We were waiting to go down the stairs. After boarding the bus on the way to the terminal, on the way to the North bus entrance of NAIA 2, I counted a total of 5 air bridges that were vacant and not being used. Now, how would that make you feel? A passenger who was made to go down, disembark using the stairs and seeing all those air bridges not being utilized. I felt that something must be done about this. While we were waiting for the solution of the new airport where they could still improve, expand NAIA 2, or have a new airport, the existing facility has to be improved. Its as simple as that. We cannot wait 6 years. Whatever we have now should be improved. Let us not wait. So with that statement, I would like to say that, except for the new multi-airport, we **qualify** our support.