



ROBERTO ROMULO, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF EQUITABLE CARD NETWORK, INC., TO ADDRESS PBEC CONFERENCE IN TOKYO

Honolulu, March 19, 2001 - Roberto Romulo, Chairman of the Board of Equitable Card Network, Incorporated, Philippines, will be addressing delegates at the 34th International General Meeting (IGM) of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC), which will take place April 8th - 10th in Tokyo, Japan. The annual conference brings together leading business executives, heads of government, and government ministers from throughout Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas.

Roberto Romulo will be speaking in a plenary session entitled "Electronic Commerce: A Second Industrial Revolution?" Information technology, including the Internet and E-commerce, has revolutionized the way we do business and the way we live. E-commerce has accelerated globalization and transformed the Asia Pacific into an information society. Does this E-transformation in effect represent a second industrial revolution? How can we bridge the so called "Digital Divide"? How can we ensure the security of electronic signatures, payments and other logistical issues, and Internet privacy? Other speakers confirmed for this session include: **Mr. Zeng Qiang**, Chief Executive Officer, Sparkice E-Commerce Group (China) and **Mr. Keiji Tachikawa**, President and Chief Executive Officer, NTT Docomo, Inc. (Japan).

Speakers confirmed for other sessions at the IGM include: **Dato' Seri Rafidah Aziz**, International Trade and Industry Minister (Malaysia), **Sir John Bond**, Group Chairman, HSBC Holdings (United Kingdom), **His Excellency Fidel Ramos**, Former President and Special Envoy (Philippines), and **Mr. Eisuke Sakakibara**, Former Vice Minister of Finance for International Affairs (Japan).

Mr. Roberto Romulo started his professional career at the IBM Corporation in New York City in 1965. During his 25 years of service at IBM he has held various management positions in the NY corporate headquarters, in the Philippines and Thailand, including: General Manager of IBM Thailand Co. Ltd. and President and General Manager of IBM Philippines, Inc. In 1989, he was appointed by President Corazon Aquino as Philippine Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Community. In 1992, President Fidel Ramos appointed Mr. Romulo as the Philippines' Secretary of Foreign Affairs. In 1995, Roberto Romulo resigned from the government and rejoined the private sector. From 1995 to 1998, he was Chairman of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. Currently Mr. Romulo is the Chairman of the Board of Equitable Card Network, Inc. This year President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo appointed Mr. Romulo as the Senior Adviser on International Competitiveness.

PBEC's IGM is an opportunity for the region's foremost corporate executives to gather with other international leaders to discuss, in a frank and intimate setting, the key issues in the regional economy, and to publicly issue policy recommendations and statements. The IGM typically includes major addresses given by heads of government, governmental ministers, leaders of prominent international organizations, and senior executives of some of the largest corporations in the region.

The theme of this year's conference is "Regional Vitality in the 21st Century." A full listing of confirmed speakers, agenda, and registration materials may be obtained through the web site or contact information listed below.

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About PBEC:

- PBEC is an international association of senior business leaders representing more than 1,100 major corporations in 20 economies around the Pacific, which account for more than US \$4 trillion in global sales and employ more than 10 million people.
- PBEC is a forum through which business leaders create new business relationships, exchange views with government officials, and produce recommendations on key business issues.
- The unprecedented scope of PBEC's membership constitutes a broad and balanced reservoir of international business knowledge, unmatched in credibility and expertise. PBEC is the independent voice of business in the Pacific.