

HELPING TO BRING FILIPINOS TOGETHER

■ On October 31, 1989, Mr Murray Oppertshauser, Charge d'Afaires of the Canadian Embassy, and Mr Rainerio Reyes, Secretary of Transport and Communications, inaugurated a new telecommunications system in Batangas Province. The ceremony was highlighted by a phone call from Secretary Reyes to President Corazon C. Aquino marking the connection of the system to the main network of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT).

The Batangas telecommunications project was initiated in 1988 with the financial support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The system caters for 17 communities which have had no previous telephone facilities.

The interconnection enables rural residents to place telephone calls not only within the immediate region, but also to all areas of the Philippines served by PLDT and to the rest of the world. Canada has established a strong telecommunications technology base in order to link rural communities over a large land area of some 5,000km from coast to coast.

The new system for Batangas was designed and manufactured by SR Telecom of Montreal Canada, a leader in the field of point to multipoint microwave subscriber radio telecommunications systems. Over 600 SR Telecom systems have been installed in over 50 countries worldwide.

CIDA has been particularly active in supporting Philippine investment initiatives in telecommunications and will continue to have an active role in this area. As Mr Oppertshauser emphasized, "We are confident the SR Telecom system will demonstrate the relevance of Canadian technology to the future rural telecommunications development of the Philippines."

Secretary Reyes inaugurating the Canada-funded addition to the Batangas province telephone network with a call to President Aquino



Senator Shahani and Ambassador Simard officially launching Women in Development week in Manila

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT WEEK IN THE PHILIPPINES

■ Canadian Ambassador Andre S. Simard and Senator Leticia R. Shahani led the celebration of Women in Development Week in the Philippines which formally opened at the Philippines Business for Social Progress (PBSP). The Women in Development Week, with the theme "Filipino Women as Active Partners in Third World Development", also marked the creation of a Women in Development Desk at PBSP.

With support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), PBSP will now have for the first time in its history of development work, a section devoted exclusively to women's affairs. CIDA's participation reflects its long-standing and deep commitment to projects which maximize the participation of women in developmental activities.

The new Women in Development Desk will focus on projects that provide educational programs and those that implement concrete and viable socio-economic projects for women. CIDA and PBSP are confident it will also serve to identify and mobilize funds for other women's projects.

Specifically, the WID desk will facilitate regional consultations with proponents, information exchange and the presentation of projects to donor agencies. It will also organize regional workshops in order to identify development priorities. In addition, the desk will conduct capacity-building workshops for NGOs and people's organizations. Networking capabilities with other resource agencies will also be developed.

