

Tokyo, August 31, 2001

Summer Solidarity Concert for Lola Masing

Opening Remarks

By

Yuichi Yokota

Good evening, in Filipino, Magandang Gabi Po! Thank you all very much for coming today, and I would also like to thank deeply the organizers and supporters of this meeting.

We truly miss Lola Masing here today as she could not come because of her illness. But her hearts are with us through the letter she wrote especially for us.

As you know, Lola Masing chose to take back the sense of justice rather than accepting the so called Asian Women's Fund. I think, in short, that it means that Lola Masing has shown her trust in us here in Japan. Now, it is our turn to show our trust in Lola Masing. Today's concert is one.

Personally, it has been almost nine years since I first met Lola Masing in November, 1992. In the meantime, I learned from Lola that the ultimate goal of our lives is to build bonds between people based on trust, that a sure way to achieve it is to build them with someone next to you, and that they will grow around you.

Today we have a solidarity concert. Since the age old, music has this special effects of getting people together. The most famous ancient Chinese thinker who placed sincerity at the heart of his thought also praised music.

I expect that today's concert makes another start of growing our trust around. I greatly appreciate the significance of this cultural event.

And I, taking this opportunity, wrote a poem titled Lola Masing in an attempt to beautify the beauty of Lola, while someone pointed that I have nothing to do with beauty...

Please allow me to introduce a part of it.

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Lola keeps demanding
With intensity that is held only by those
Who were entirely trampled on to take back dignity and justice

The ultimate humiliation and anger question the world
About the truth of sexism and invasion
It's time to throw back the contempt
Against those who deny women's dignity and prepare for another war

Here, Solidaridad is born!

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Malaming, malaming salamat po.

Thank you very much.