



### The President's Message

Greetings of peace and well-being!

I wish everybody is well amidst the health crisis that we are facing. As we go through this "new normal" let us refocus our time, talents, and resources to meet the challenges of the new reality. Hopefully, when we will be allowed to resume operations, we will still observe social distancing and take all the necessary precautionary measures. We will reestablish our contacts with our customers and suppliers in getting the necessary materials. We shall take care of our authors, editors, artists, and illustrators. We, too, shall provide alternative work arrangements of our constituents without sacrificing their physical capabilities and at the same time, maintaining the quality of output.

With the upcoming year, certain activities planned in PEPA like sports activities and other initiatives which will require mass gatherings will have to be shelved for the meantime. However, the Association shall still continue to work towards the attainment of its vision of uplifting the book publishing industry and fulfilling its commitment to its members and other external stakeholders. We will plan for the education program like giving seminars and trainings based on the "new reality." We've made representations with relevant government agencies to consider books, both in print or digital format, as essential items during these trying times and during the period of isolation, thereby ensuring that the book industry can bounce back once the pandemic is conquered.

Together, let us face this emergency with a spirit of sacrifice and responsibility.

**Forge on PEPA!**

Your President,

Jose Paolo M. Sibal

The new PEPA Board of Directors for 2020-2021:

<b>President</b>	-	Mr. Jose Paolo M. Sibal, Phoenix Publishing House, Inc.
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President</b>	-	Ms. Danda Buhain, Rex Book Store, Inc.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President</b>	-	Dr. Ma. Virginia M. Bautista, Vicarish Publications and Trading Inc.
<b>Secretary</b>	-	Anvil Publishing, Inc.
<b>Treasurer</b>	-	Ms. Edna P. Santos, SIBS Publishing House, Inc.
<b>Auditor</b>	-	Mr. Johann Paolo C. Garcia, Abiva Publishing House, Inc.
<b>Public Relations Officer</b>	-	Ms. Racel S. Bolo, Diwa Learning Systems Inc.
<b>Board Members</b>	-	Ms. Sonia A. Santiago, Rex Book Store, Inc. International Mr. Alfonso B. Saquilon, Jr., Aklat at Dunong Publishing House

**Board of Advisers:**

- Atty. Dominador D. Buhain – President Emeritus, Rex Book Store, Inc.
- Ms. Lina P. Enriquez, Bookman Incorporated
- Mr. Jerry Vicente S. Catabijan, St. Mary's Publishing Corporation
- Mr. Jose Maria T. Policarpio, JTP Learning Solutions

Likewise, the newly elected officers created and designated the different committees, the chairs, and the co-chairs.

#### Committee Chairs and Co-chairs 2020-2021

<b>ETHICS COMMITTEE</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>	-	Ms. Danda Buhain
		<b>Co-chair</b>	-	Atty. Andrea Flores
<b>MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>	-	Dr. Ma. Virginia Bautista
		<b>Co-chair</b>	-	Mr. Jose Paolo Sibal
<b>PR COMMITTEE</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>	-	Ms. Racel Bolo
		<b>Co-chair</b>	-	Mr. Alfonso Saquilon, Jr.
<b>SPORTS COMMITTEE</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>	-	Mr. Johann Paolo Garcia
<b>SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>	-	Ms. Racel Bolo
		<b>Co-chair</b>	-	Ms. Danda Buhain
<b>COPYRIGHT AND FREEDOM TO PUBLISH COMMITTEE</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>	-	Mr. Jerry Catabijan

### PEPA OFFICERS 2020-2021



JOSE PAOLO M. SIBAL  
 Phoenix Publishing House, Inc.  
 PRESIDENT



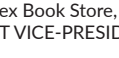
DANDA BUHAIN  
 Rex Book Store, Inc.  
 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT



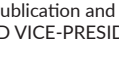
DR. MA. VIRGINIA M. BAUTISTA  
 Vicarish Publication and Trading Inc.  
 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT



SECRETARY



JOHANN PAOLO C. GARCIA  
 ABIVA Publishing House, Inc.  
 AUDITOR



EDNA P. SANTOS  
 SIBS Publishing House, Inc.  
 TREASURER



RACEL S. BOLO  
 Diwa Learning Systems Inc.  
 PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER



SONIA A. SANTIAGO  
 Rex Book Store, Inc. International  
 BOARD MEMBER



ALFONSO B. SAQUILON, JR.  
 Aklat at Dunong Publishing House  
 BOARD MEMBER

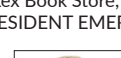
### BOARD OF ADVISERS



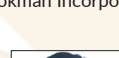
ATTY. DOMINADOR D. BUHAIN  
 Rex Book Store, Inc.  
 PRESIDENT EMERITUS



LINA P. ENRIQUEZ  
 Bookman Incorporated



JERRY VICENTE S. CATABIJAN  
 St. Mary's Publishing Corporation



JOSE MARIA T. POLICARPIO  
 JTP Learning Solutions

### SECRETARIAT



VIRGIE ANTONIO  
 Phoenix Publishing House, Inc.



CRISTINA BALAGTAS  
 Central Books



ROSARIO DE LEON  
 Phoenix Publishing House, Inc.

The stakeholders of the book publishing industry initiated by the Philippine Book Publishing Development Foundation (PHILBOOK) and the Philippine Educational Publishers Association (PEPA) wrote a position paper to Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte last May 2, 2020. The letter was an appeal to consider books whether in printed form or digital as essential items on equal footing with food, medicines, health facilities. It sought the approval, the unhampered supply and delivery of these books, both print and digital forms through bookstores and other outlets or through online platforms to help alleviate the fear during these crucial times. The letter was signed by Atty Dominador Buhain of Philbook and PPTF, Mr Paolo Sibal of PEPA, Ms. Medelita Garces of NBSAP, Dr. Edgardo Paras of ALBOP, Ms. Jovita de Jesus of PBAI, Mr. James Chiu of PIBFI, Ms. Evelyn Millar of ABAP and Mr. Dennis Tan of APTP.

02 May 2020

**His Excellency RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**  
 President of the Philippines  
 Malacanang, Manila

Through : **Hon. SALVADOR C. MEDIALDEA**  
 Executive Secretary

### APPEAL TO CONSIDER BOOKS WHETHER IN PRINTED FORM OR DIGITAL AS ESSENTIAL ITEMS

Dear President Duterte:

We, the stakeholders of the book publishing industry, organized under various organizations with the common goal of pursuing the development of books and learning materials for the Filipino learners, do hereby request your good office to consider books—both in print and digital formats—as essential items during these times when we most need enlightenment.

We appreciate the immediate action you have taken to prevent the spread of the corona virus among our people. We laud your administration's efforts in keeping people safe while equipping various front liners with the tools to fight this pandemic. However, we would like to bring to your attention the importance of books during this time. All over the world, the role that books play to educate and inform, especially during this time, is recognized by various international organizations.

To dramatize the importance of books be in printed form or digital, some of the pertinent passages of the global book associations such as European and International Booksellers Federation (EIBF) through its Co-President Jean-Luc Treutenaere, International Authors Forum (IAF) through its Chair John Yngue Slettholm, International Publishers Association (IPA) through its President Hugo Setzer, and The International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers Association (STM) through its CEO Ian Moss during the celebration of the World Book Day on April 23, 2020 are hereby quoted:

*"In this time of social distancing, the importance of books has been re-emphasized. Staying at home and reading a book is a way of caring for others. Newspapers and blogs around the world have put together lists of books to read while you are in isolation, and that be to escape or to understand what is happening. Books are what people turn to in difficult times.*

*Parents in many countries have had to become educators. Teachers have needed to find new ways of bringing their lessons to pupils. Authors and publishers around the world have responded by licensing their content and digital services. Online book readings like the "Read the World" have exploded online, with publishers and authors quick to give parents support. The world is relying on research published in special journals to guide its health policies and develop a vaccine. Crucial publishers' investments in the verification of research and its wide communication are crucial here. And they have stepped up, voluntarily making research related to COVID-19 freely available and amenable to reuse.*

*Whether we are talking about books for a general audience, children's books, educational resources, or scientific research, authors, publishers, distributors, booksellers and collective management organizations have reacted quickly to adapt where necessary and play a responsible role in society.*

*The COVID-19 virus is having disastrous effect on people everywhere. Economies are shutting down and nobody knows for sure when we'll return to normal, or even if that's possible. The impact on the world's creative industries, including the book sector, has been devastating.*

*In many countries, our industry is already struggling for oxygen. We must find ways to ensure the future of authors, publishers, editors, designers, distributors, booksellers and those who work in collective management so that the book industry can bounce back once this pandemic is conquered.*

*A world without new books would be a sad and impoverished place. We are working hard to come through this crisis, but we need to survive. We need governments to help us get through it together."*

We join them in this effort to bring books to people in isolation and be placed on equal footing with food, medicines and health facilities as essential items. Feeding the mind is as important as feeding the body. Thus, their continued supply must not be curtailed or immobilized.

Furthermore, pursuant to Republic Act No. 8047 or The Book Publishing Development Act which was passed into a law on June 7, 1995, it was declared as part of its preamble that "the book publishing industry has a significant role in national development considering that books which are its products are instrumental in the citizenry's intellectual, technical and cultural development - the basic social foundation for the economic and social growth of the country. Books are the most effective and economic tools for achieving educational growth, for imparting information and for recording, preserving and disseminating the nation's cultural heritage."

To further enhance the proliferation of books, the above-cited law grants several privileges which include privatization of textbooks with the aforementioned that the government does not possess the monopoly of knowledge and various other concessions. The Philippines has reaffirmed and ensured its commitment to the UNESCO for the free flow of information and other related provisions as embodied in the Florence Agreement and other similar agreements.

We hope this request to consider books, both print and digital formats, as an essential product meets your approval, and their unhampered supply and delivery during this critical time, through bookstores and other outlets or through online platforms be considered a necessary contribution to help alleviate the fears and anxieties of the citizenry.

**Atty. Dominador D. Buhain**

President

Philippine Book Publishing Development Federation (Philbook)

**Jose Paolo Sibal**

President

Philippine Educational Publishers Association (PEPA)

**Medelita Garces**

President

National Book Suppliers and Publishers Association (NBSAP)

**Dr. Edgardo C. Paras**

President

Association of Lawbook Writers of the Philippines (ALBOP)

**Jovita de Jesus**

President

Philippine Booksellers Association, Inc. (PBAI)

**Atty. Dominador D. Buhain**

President

Philippine Printing Technical Foundation, Inc. (PPTF)

**James Chiu**

Chairman Emeritus

Printing Industry Board Foundation, Inc. (PIBFI)

**Evelyn Millar**

Academic Books Association of the Philippines (ABAP)

**Dennis Tan**

Vice-President

Association of Paper Traders of the Philippines (APTTP)