

SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE 67TH BIRTHDAY OF THE PHILIPPINE MARINE CORPS

[Delivered at Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City | 07 November 2017]

Kindly sit down. Thank you for the courtesy.

I've been with government for --- going 40 years at this is my first time to see a ritual of a component of the Armed Forces na ma --- so ritualistic.

Isip-isip ko kung pulis ito sa Crame, sa labas pa lang naubos na 'yung cake ninyo. *[laughter and applause]*

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana; members of the Cabinet; AFP Chief-of-Staff Lieutenant General Rey Leonardo Guerrero; Flag Officer-in-Command, Vice Admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado and other major service commanders; officers, staff, enlisted personnel of the Philippine Marine Corps; 2017 awardees of the 67th anniversary of the Philippine Marine Corps; mga kasama ko sa gobyerno; mga kababayan ko.

You know, as always, Malacañan prepares a very short speech. Eh dalawang pages lang po and considering the solemnity of the moment, actually, to honor the soldiers --- medyo --- basahin ko na lang 'yung last paragraph mamaya, but let me just air out my sentiments.

First of all, I would like to thank the entire Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police for a job well done in Marawi City.

Ayaw man natin, *[applause]* sabi ko nga, ang lolo ko po --- ang lola ko, rather, Maranao. Kaya sina --- sakit man sa loob ko, I had to do it because I have to do it.

And if you remember, in the previous two weeks or so, I kept on reminding everybody, actually, it was just a warning, subliminal, sinasabi ko do not force me to declare martial law in Mindanao kasi ayaw ko.

But pinilit ninyo ako, well, I have to do my duty for the country. As early as a month before, pati 'yung mga relatives ko nagsasabi na sa amin that there was a buildup of warm bodies. But 'yung armas was not really clear to us na the ammunition and ordnance was that aplenty.

So we had to fight a long war and this is something which is really a new kind of fighting. Eh kung sana lang in the open field, where our soldiers are better trained to deal with.

Kasi the rebellion has always been with us for so many years and we never thought that we'd fight an urban, city, the cover is 'yung semento pati bakal.

And even in other places in the Middle East, Mosul, Aleppo, and all, Raqqa, took them several years to really conquer, with all the might of the allied forces.

Dito sa atin, we did it on our own. But of course, we'd like to thank the countries that really helped us. I don't know if they'd want them remembered or named here, but let me just...

Well, out of gratitude, of course, the United States for rendering us the equipments. China, for giving us the arms, also the Soviet Union, si President Putin, also contributed and may --- Israel. And the others who lent us the equipments that needed really to win the war.

Ang ano ko po, masasabi ko lang is, I have taken steps to really, not reward, but do something substantial for our soldiers.

I have ordered the NHA to find a lot somewhere here and to build the houses for those who are wounded and those who are unfortunately, pardon the word, they say [inaudible] disabled.

I'll build something like a convalescent's village dito sa malapit sa urban cities, where the soldiers can have a better access to the hospitals, and of course, the training for the prosthetics.

I guarantee them that for those who are really wanting to stand again, the new science of --- itong the use of prosthetics and titanium.

Many. The best example would be the blade runner who killed his lover, but he was a very good runner, using titanium. And we can have it for the soldiers, that is good.

And that is why the other day, I told Defense Secretary Lorenzana that I'd be releasing 500 million for the wounded and disabled soldiers para lang sa kanila. *[applause]*

I hate to say this in public, but the bureaucratic greed has always been there with the monkey wrench.

And I want 'yung mabilisan na, sabi ko, "Ibigay ko na lang sa opisina 'yan ni Delfin and siya na ang bahala for the immediate release of the medicines and to shop around for the titaniums."

It's quite expensive but in the long run, it would have its benefits and make the soldiers happy again.

I want to emphasize to soldiers that I love... For as long as I'm there, I love my soldiers and I love my police. And you can be very sure that I am there when the moment needs me. Nandiyan ako sa tabi ninyo.

That is why lahat ng ginawa ko, first, was really to --- this is not the beg the... Anyway it's rightfully yours.

The first thing that I did when I was the President, was to talk to Benjamin Diokno, the Secretary of Budget. Sinabi ko, "I want the soldiers' pay doubled."

And he agreed with me, pero hindi pala talaga 'yung --- you pull up a --- a certain grade in parity. It has to be lesser, that's the law. And I said, "Well, okay. But I want it increased by leaps and bounds."

And so, January all of the soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, BJMP, 'yung mga bumbero will have an increase almost double their salaries. Inuna ko kayo. *[applause]*

And I decided on this. You know, a long time ago, Marawi was just a distant star but there was this warning.

And if you guys would kindly remember, not really your fault, but during the first command conference, we had a very serious discussion of the law and order situation in the country.

And we are almost done, we're about to --- you know, dismissal time, I --- sabi ko, "Maupo muna kayo sandali. Because I think we have forgotten the most important thing that we have to consider now."

And I said that, in the --- "I see the darkening clouds of terrorism coming our way." And on the dot, talagang pumasok.

Mabuti't na lang, we had a fair warning and we're able to, as a matter of fact, prepare for this. Intelligent of wo --- intelligence community was doing its work, but overtime we just ignored the lawlessness in Marawi.

Parang the local officials, sad to say, really, were not doing their duty. And some of them, again, which makes me sad, is that most of them were into the shabu business.

And that is why I know that part of the terrorism there were funded by arms because of the earnings that huge and they were able to buy almost everything.

But I hope this will not happen again and I'm sure that we will not allow it.

I hate to kill a human person especially a Filipino. Masakit 'yan sa akin. But we'll just have to pray. Pray that everything will --- you know --- will have a smooth sailing --- there will never be the storms that would put the ship of state in danger again.

But may I say to you that we have to prepare for the next. It's gonna come somewhere, somehow. And we have to be prepared for this.

In my time, I told the Defense department that I will not buy any secondhand equipment or whatever weapons that we need.

Either we buy it or we don't. 'Yung bago talaga na mga baril. There was this order by us in America. Magbili sana tayo ng 23,000 M4s. Totoo 'yung 5.56 but nabara sa US Congress.

Let me state it publicly here and now, wala akong problema sa America. But you know in America, it is no --- it cannot be trusted with this kind of things.

Because the President, despite his enormous powers, just like the Philippine Constitution, Congress almost seems to have a parity in the powers.

And they can derail kagaya nung ginawa natin, we were expecting it, si General Dela Rosa was hoping that it would come kasi sabi ko 'yung warning.

But you know when these members of Congress talked about it and started to make a ruckus out of, you know, importation here because of the human rights conditions, it got stalled.

So I was compelled to shop around, and China was really very kind and to a fault sa atin, and gave us the additional firearms and the sniping rifles.

Dumating 'yung kay President Putin. So nagpapasalamat tayo sa kanila. So that the next round of orders would really be either Israel or sa Russia.

And we have the new ones and we --- we even have the new trucks. And I know durable because at one time, the City of Davao when I was mayor --- I was mayor for 22 years --- nagbili kami nung Russian-made na jeep. And it really lasted --- the money's worth. Talagang matibay. Those made in Russia. Sabi ko kung mahirapan tayo dito...

I'm not saying this with contempt. We remain to be the best of friends with America. Most of you, pagkatapos niyan or some of you went to schooling in America, and I do not blame you if your sentiments are really remain with the power who helped us for the longest time.

But the change of the situation now and even the geography --- the geography of the world is really changing.

I just hope that Korea would have the --- the sense --- and to avoid it. Because you know, whether we like it or not, we remain to be friends, courteous.

If I were to insist on our arbitral claim as demanded by some of the justices, I would run afoul with everything else because China is not only the power that is claiming a part of the China Sea.

Taiwan has a claim and it overlaps the northern part of the country, 'yung ating economic zones. And Vietnam has another idea of what is his or her, and Malaysia; and they will start really to pile up.

Instead of just facing one, I'd be facing many. Kaya kung magka-concessions given or conceded, the other countries who are also claimants with the same area, will start to assert.

'Yan ang problema ko. It's really the changing geopolitics. And the islands there are being developed with batteries and almost...

Ngayon, ang sinabi ko lang naman kay Mr. Xi Jinping, "Do not do... We will not give up our claims sa Pag-asa pati 'yung the nearby islands that we have occupied already. Small islands."

Sabi niya na, "We will not." And with this assurance he gave to the Foreign Secretary na hindi niya galawin. He will not build something on the Scarborough Shoal.

I just hope that you would honor it because it will change the entire geography of the world. And if --- war starts. I don't know what would be the next geographical division of Asia. 'Yan ang mahirap sa... The.. Just like in the Middle East.

Geopolitics changed the entire --- Persian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. At dito, I really don't know what will happen but it is the politics and power that would change the entire landscape of the political situation of the world.

It is really geopolitics thing and we'll just have to consider ourselves now not in a defensive position but to insist na ito muna ang atin at huwag tayong... Kasi kung we assert and go there, the other countries, ang Malaysia, I'm sure, and Indonesia, would also begin to push for what they think is their territory.

I hope you understand that because I cannot afford to go to war. I --- you know, I know that it would end up in a massacre. I cannot start a --- we do not --- nuclear arms and everything. As a matter of fact, we are just bystanders.

But what I can do really is to strengthen my own --- in the meantime that we are waiting for... I am tempted to tell you something of my theory but, you know, I'm going to APEC tomorrow and we'll have the bilaterals. But I'm sure, I think some of the military men will go there.

It would be at that time that I'd be frank with China also. I know where she's going, the direction and... Laro ito ng geopolitics. Sabi ko, it would change the entire landscape of Southeast Asia if something goes wrong.

But you will have to trust me na pupunta ako doon. But I will assert something and that is --- or we will try to one day really put a stake to what we think is ours.

It is not the time to do it because the world is aflame.

Korea is posturing. I don't know if it's really an honest to goodness intention to go to war if they are on the losing end or it is just, you know...

And while we were looking the other way around things that changed here, bigla nang pagtingin natin --- but we will --- they were taking a while and we were looking into the direction of one crisis.

But when we started to scan, we found out that something has changed. But the greatest asset that we have is that we have the only --- the only land based there facing China Sea is Palawan.

You cannot sink an island, can you? So 'yan ang ano natin. It's really Palawan. It's a huge battleship facing the entire... I'm not going to specify sino.

Russia might be kind to us, making friends. But I said you can never tell what would happen there.

'Yang mga battleships nila are just there. And you can sink them 'no --- the other countries can do it.

Pero dito ang ating Palawan which is really the --- parang... Well, I said they cannot sink that. And that is a land based asset which only we --- tayo lang ang pinaka-approximate talaga.

That is just my analysis of the things which I have to talk to --- to them about what I feel is developing there.

So 'yan po ang report ko sa inyo. But may I reiterate my support to --- you will have everything you will need.

Sabi ko, at no other time. Hindi ako nagyayabang, at no other time na ang Armed Forces makuha nila ang gusto nila. Armas and well, of course, lahat, the intelligence equipment, buy them.

Whatever I can get hands on --- that I think is... And the... Our soldiers who are there suffering will have the mitigations of treatment and everything.

I said it's gonna be a... Hindi ako papayag 'yang mga plastic-plastic na cast. I need good legs for them to walk again. The titaniums and whatever is available in the market.

I can assure you that you will have the best. I intend to --- not for my use. I don't need it. I'm just a passing official dito. Just like you but shorter 'yung amin, it's just years. Dumadaan lang kami sa opisina na 'yan.

But I hope to build a strong armed forces and a strong police. Well, I don't care about the violations o 'yung human rights kay hindi naman --- nakita mo sila hanggang ngayon nagde-demonstrate na wala naman ako, I have distanced myself.

I have not even talked to Director General Aquino for the longest time. Wala, ayaw ko na. Sabi ko, "Sige." Whether it succeeds or fails, well, the day of reckoning will come. It's undermanned and we have many expenses to meet, challenges to answer.

So kung tama na 'yan sa kanila, because that is what they want, well, okay. We can have the reckoning maybe years to come and sabihin ko, sinabi ko sa inyo. I am --- my.... When I was.... I'm about to end.

Let me just tell you. At lahat naman kayong mga Philippine Navy na-assign doon. As a matter of fact, the first guy I was... I wanted to be in the Cabinet was Willie Wong.

I know that he was not a jolly good fellow some time, but I believe in his integrity and I have called him twice dito. And every time I met him, talagang ayaw niya. Nagmamakaawa na 'yung mama.

'Yun ang... Dumadaan lang kami dito. It's very hard to look for an honest man. But I can assure you, since I made a few promises noong election, that I will take care of graft and corruption, then, I will finish the drug which is really punishing our country, and the law and order.

But I have to talk to the communists, but it seems that we cannot understand each other. Good friends kami noon. And I could travel the ideological lines to and fro. But the problem is I am no longer a mayor.

Ang sinasabi ko nga sa kanila, I am, you know, I'm tasked with the governing a nation. I cannot trade things with you na hindi akin. Sa tao 'to eh.

So diyan kami naga --- it has bogged down simply because I do not want to talk to them anymore. You just cannot ask for something overnight and...

I am not the despot ruler of the Philippines that sabihin ko, "Ibigay natin 'yan, ibigay." You have to contend with the people, Congress, and the rest of the nation.

So diyan napuputol 'yang law and order natin at 'yung... I continue to talk sa main line, MI, MNLF. I'm hanging on to it, hoping they would [inaudible] everything there once they have the federal setup.

Let me just be frank with you. I'm from Mindanao. I am not threatening you. I'm supposed to be the one encouraging you.

But itong sa Mindanao, something has got to give there. Otherwise, even if you ask 'yung mga native, General dela Rosa is from Mindanao, he knows na magkagulo talaga.

So we have to have somebody with us to fight terrorism. Because if they combine, we will have a hard time.

If the one that they --- the dream that they're asking cannot be realized, and they would call for a unified stand regarding Mindanao, mahihirapan na tayo.

So I said, something has got to give there. If you do not want a federal setup, fine with me. Wala akong problema. We can remain the unitary type which is not good, but you have to reconfigure Mindanao.

We have to do it because if we don't, I said, the drawback is there might be a serious trouble.

I am trying to you know... Ginagawa ko na ang lahat magawa ko to face these problems. Every night I ponder on how I would go about governing the country.

But you can be very sure that after most --- or almost all of my thoughts would be to protect the Republic of the Philippines.

My duty is to protect the people and preserve our country known as the Republic of the Philippines.

Maraming salamat po. *[applause]*

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