Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk

MEETING OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE WITH BARMM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND AFP & PNP AREA COMMANDERS

[Delivered at Camp BGen Gonzalo H. Siongco in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao | 11 May 2021]

Kindly sit down. Salamat po.

May prepared speech ako dito. As a matter of fact, it's about two pages. But I will not hold you more than what is necessary.

I know that it's a hot afternoon. The weather is all throughout mainit at hindi ko kayo paupuin diyan na magsalita ng mag-speech. I came here not to deliver a speech. Nagpunta ako dito to have a conversation with you.

I will be brief because I have just to say the urgent things that must happen. Not only that it would come, it must happen. Otherwise, we will go back to what was the situation in the past.

Alam mo ang gobyerno talagang ginawa nang lahat, the creation of BARMM and hindi tapos. We are also more than just to expand whatever is necessary for an effective governance of your Mindanao. Eh ako taga-Mindanao rin. Talagang raised and nurtured to manhood in Mindanao. Alam ko gaano kasakit ang nangyayari sa ating bayan and here in Mindanao.

You know I have relatives both sides na coming from the Muslim areas. Masakit sa akin na magtingin. Kami ni Dabs Mama-o minsan mag-usap kami, I am moved to tears to see what is really happening now.

It's pure carnage and the ultimate beneficiaries of the violence created here are the civilians. Tayong nasa position, tayong may pera, tayong may armas we do not have nary a care because we can do what we want with arms.

The violence is very much present. Nakikiusap ako because you know government cannot wage a war against his own people. Hindi talaga puwede 'yan. Kaya nga ako nagpunta dito just to remind you that whatever happens Mindanao would still be a part of the Philippines. That is the reality. Aplenty in the past of 'yong gustong ibahin, i-reconfigure, fine. If it is the will of the people, go ahead. We can always change the boundaries or whatever is best suited.

Walang limit ang pasensiya namin. But the problem is ganito, the BIFF pati 'yong allied terrorists dito at iba-iba 'yan are waging a war against each other, against the local government, at against the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Nirerendahan ko ang mga sundalo. Hanggang diyan lang. 'Pag may, you know, trouble go there and do something. And if there has to be a fight, fight. But this cannot go on. Hindi talaga puwede. Well, if it will not stop during my time,

it will transcend to the other --- by the grace of Allah, if this country is still existing --- this conflict will cost lives and it will cost innocent lives.

Hindi na tayo dito ‘yong Army preparadong mamatay. Iyong mga warriors diyan or ‘yong mga terorista kaya din nilang mamatay. But the problem is anong mangyari sa mga tao na ayaw pang mamatay at may mga anak at pamilya? Hindi puwede talaga ‘to.

So ang aking tinatakutan is ganito, there are petty quarrels and ambuscades here, ambuscades there, and yet, nirerendahan ko ang Armed Forces. We cannot wage a war against our people. Mahirap ‘yan eh.

But then again, hindi puwede itong basta mag-atake na lang with arms and invariably matawag ang pulis, matawag ang military, diyan na magkagulo. I am avoiding the situation where things will go out of control and --- kasi ‘pag ito ang military would also, upon my orders, press for a fight in order to impose peace.

Ngayon, kung hindi ninyo makumbinsi ‘yong mga tao… Alam ko ‘yong iba ayaw sa inyo, maybe kalaban rin ninyo. But you must do something because it will come to a fore na ‘pag marami na ang tama ang military pati pulis magsabi na sila sa akin, sir, ganito na lang ba, we react to situations and we continue to die? It’s life that is involved here.

So pagka ganoon kung hindi ko mapigilan and there will be an all-out offensive, iyan na ang problema. And if I give the order, I will no longer withdraw it. I will wait for the next president to do what he wants with Mindanao. Kasi gusto ko talagang tapusin itong mga masasama. Tutal we are ready to listen, we want to reconfigure Mindanao, tayo, we will do it, we just talk. You can begin it now na nandito pa ako na makikinig sa inyo and try… Hindi lang ninyo alam kung gaano ko inikot lahat ‘yan just to convince them to give the BARMM dito sa Central Mindanao. You just don’t know the endless meetings, mga ilang kape ‘yan, ilang tasang kape ‘yang maubos ko noon just to talk and convince to support BARMM so that hopefully sana there will be peace.

But the monkeywrench of the whole situation now is the BIFF and they continue to inflict hindi lang maliliit. They continue to burn, ambush, detonate bombs, talagang a full-blown terrorism.

Ngayon, nagmamakaawa ako sa inyo tulungan ninyo ako because otherwise, I said, if I give the order for an all-out offensive, it will be bloody and it will be sad.

Iyon ang ayaw ko kaya ako pumunta dito. Iyan lang ang gusto ko. I will not detain you here more than --- hold your knees more than necessary. Alam ko mainit. Ako basang-basa na ako sa loob. Pawisin ako na tao. Iyan lang ang pumunta ako dito magmamakaawa sa tulong ninyo. Ayaw kong pumatay ng Muslim, ayaw kong pumatay ng Kristiyanos, gusto kong manahimik ang buhay natin sa mundong ito. You know, we live only once.

Okay, if you die, you go to Allah, fine. But in the meantime dito sa buhay ka, magtiis tayo na ganito? There is heaven with Allah. But in the meantime, do we have to create hell dito sa lupa?

Ilang taon tayo mabubuhay? Ilang taon tayo abutin? Ako, sa awa umabot ako ng 76 but I have seen the strife, how it would have prevented the development of Mindanao. Ang ayaw ko diyan ‘yong civilian tinatakot, ginagawang hostage. Anong --- anong klase? So ‘pag ganoon ang gobyerno ko, mag-resign na lang ako, sa totoo lang.

Hindi ako atat na atat talagang maging presidente. But if I cannot at least the barest minimum of a peaceful place, then I have no reason to stay. It would be a failure. Tama, talagang failure. Wala akong magawa. Eh I must be, you know, frank enough and be humble and say that you know, sorry, sinubukan ko lahat eh wala talaga akong magawa. Hindi umubra. And then when the peaceful environment disappears, there is war and people will suffer. And there will be more deaths and horror of the war. Who will stop it? I don’t know.

Ngayon nga ang problema, kung ngayon ang pag-usapan --- in the future wala na akong pakialam --- pero ngayon, who will stop it? Tayo, kung kaya pa rin natin. I’m not imposing any obligation on you. I know that you are for peace. Kaya nga nandiyan kayo sa gobyerno because we want to govern Mindanao peacefully so that progress can…

Kaya hindi makapasok eh nandiyan ‘yong NPA, isa pa rin ‘yan. Iyang NPA my orders is really to destroy them. Basta makita mo na NPA magdala ng armas, sabi ko patayin mo. Wala nang istorya-istorya because patayin ka rin talaga niyan eh.

So it has been there for a long time. Hindi ko na masikmura ‘yang ganoon. At itong dito sa nangyayari sa Central Mindanao, it is becoming a flashpoint dito BARMM between BARMM and BIFF, iyong mga alitan dito, including ‘yong mga galit nila sa mga local executives.

Kung sino ang bumibigay diyan o sino ‘yong wants to placate them, okay ‘yan sa akin because that is really for peace. But sabihin ko sa inyo if they continue, if they continue to kill civilians, and if they continue to kill a hostage of a town, and if they continue to kill my soldiers, I will be forced to do what is necessary.

Hindi ako nagwa-warning, hindi ako nata --- nananakot. I have no business giving you an intimidating talk. Nagmamakaawa nga ako eh. Tulungan lang ninyo ako. At least sa panahon ko kung makausap --- if there is still a chance for you to cross the line and talk to them and sabihin lang ninyo huwag na muna ngayon.

You know, do not commit atrocities that could no longer be stomached by the government. Kaya noong nakita ko ‘yong away, putukan sabi ko --- ‘yong na-hostage ‘yong ano, just imagine the horror of the people there, running back and forth. Is that the kind of government that I can give to the people?

Sabi ko kung hindi ko kaya, p***** i** mag --- magre-resign ako. Then you can demand my resignation and maybe I will consider it na hindi ko talaga kaya, palitan ka. Para sa akin, ang ano ko kasi my inclination sa governance is law and order kasi fiscal ako noon then na vice mayor ako.

Noong mayor ako, nakita ninyo ang Davao noon pinapaputok ng mga terorista. But you know, someday they have to answer to somebody for that. May mananagot talaga diyan. Alam mo, karma is --- umiikot talaga ang karma sa mundo. It comes from God. The eternal justice will meet you maybe what is necessary.

Iyon lang po ang pinunta ko talaga dito na tulungan po ninyo ako kasi ayaw kong mamatay. Ayaw kong pumatay ng Muslim. G*** ako? Lola ko Muslim, mga anak ko Muslim lahat kay Sangkola, ang apo ko puro Muslim. Makipag-giyera ako sa'yo?

How can I relate to my children in the future? Malalaki, malalaki na sila Omar. Tanungin nila, "Lo, bakit sige patayan, lo? Wala kang magawa niyan?" What will I answer to my grandchildren? Be, kayo daw, baliktarin natin. Kayo ang lolo na makinig ng ganoong salita. "Lo, bakit hindi man kami makapunta sa Sulu? Tua na man si papa (Papa went there)." Dito marami rin silang pinsan na Maguindanao.

They cannot just go to their, you know, the traditional places where the Muslims are. Gusto nila makahalubilo ng kapwa Muslim, mga lugar diyan. Eh sabihin hindi daw makapunta ng Jolo. Gusto talaga magpunta ng Jolo. Sabi ko talaga, I cannot guarantee you, may mga terorista eh.

So if you are a government, kasama tayo, walang problema 'yan. We are partners in spirit, fraternal brotherhood by blood, wala tayong problema if you are with government and you help us. But please do not --- I'm not giving a warning, I said I have no business giving warnings here, please do not give them the sanctuary. Mag-provide ka dito ng isang lugar mag-istambay sila. Either do not wait that I will call you to Malacañan if there are intelligence reports or papasukin talaga ng… [broadcast interrupted] Do something about this. It will be --- the necessary consequence is [broadcast interrupted]. Iyon lang ang my…

I am sorry if I spoiled your afternoon. I said, I will not hold you longer than what is necessary. Mainit na lugar maski 'yong eroplano mainit. Anak ng…

There's really a climate change. Nag-iba na talaga ang mundo. Overused na kasi. Ang mundo parang sasakyan, over --- na-overuse na sa lahat. Mina, mine --- logging, wala ng kahoy, lahat. Bomba, giyera. Halos palyado na ang mundo. Kung dagdagan pa natin and we do not give at least an ample space for everybody for a space to move around, aren't we truly… Hindi naman kung sabihin pinipilit kasi Pilipino, you do not accept --- some or plenty of you do not accept Filipino. Tama. Kaya sino ang nag-elevate kay Lapu-Lapu, be? 'Di ba sinabi ko noon nagpunta ako dito wala tayong national hero. Sino ang --- sabi ko 'pag napresidente ako, maggawa ako ng ating hero. And I raised Lapu-Lapu to the level and dignity of a true warrior, and he was Tausug, the settlement was Tausug.

Hindi nila alam, those who are debating, ang mga Bisaya kung makinig lang sila nang mabuti, they can make out of what a Tausug is talking about. Ang pinakamalapit sa vernacular ano, sa Mindanao is 'yong Cebuano pati --- and Cebuano is a tribe also there thriving with Lapu-Lapu.

Magtanong ka ng matatanda dito na matagal nang hindi umuwi, they call themselves Sugbuanon. Hindi nila sabihin Cebu, that is a Spanish creation. Magtanong ka ‘yong matatanda, “Saan ka galing?” “Sugbu.” “So what’s your tribe?” “Sugbuanon.” Kaya ‘yan ang…

Tapos itong mga pilosopo kung hindi ma --- testing Lapu-Lapu, sabi ko nandiyan na ‘yan. He killed the first invader of our country. I am very proud of him. Talagang napagyayabang ko, kaya may medal. The medals that I give to my soldiers now are all Lapu-Lapu awards for bravery. Iyong talagang nag-fight sa invaders at hindi lang pinatay talaga si --- merece. Whoever told Magellan to come here and f*** with our country.

So ‘yan po ang kaunting pakiusap. Sabi ko hindi ko kayo pigilan nang mainit. I’d like to thank you for coming over and enduring the heat sa gym because we are under a galvanized… Alam ko so mahiya rin ako na pigilan ko kayo dito, how uncomfortable it is, and for that, I am very, very thankful.

And to my soldiers, I will talk to you separately. But then we will have another space, I have a space for you after this. So hindi na ako magtagal, sabihin ko sa inyo assalamu alaikum at sa puso ko ‘yon talaga ang totoo.

I have no --- wala akong obligasyon sa buhay na ito, even in government sa Maynila, ang sabi ganito, ganito. I have no obligation at all to lie. Walang tinuro ang nanay, tatay ko na magsabi na magsinungaling ka. There is no law which says that I have to foist something which is false, it is all true and it comes from my heart. And I would just say I really love the Muslims and the Christians, and all the indigenous tribes here.

Maraming salamat po. [applause]

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