

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

**SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE CEREMONIAL SIGNING OF BILLS**

[Delivered at the Rizal Hall in Malacañan Palace | 24 June 2021]

Kindly sit down. Salamat po.

Maybe I --- maybe I'm allowed to read this message to the family of the late Benigno S. Aquino III and the entire country.

It is with profound sadness that I learned of the passing of Former President Benigno S. Aquino III this morning. We thank the former President for his service to our country. I hope that my fellow Filipinos will be inspired by his legacy.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to the Aquino family. Be assured of the government's assistance in this period of mourning and, above all, please accept the love and the prayers of a grateful nation.

Before we proceed, let us take a moment of silence to honor the memory and pray for the eternal repose of the soul of President Benigno Simeon Aquino III.

May he rest in peace.

You know, as always when I talk to the family --- I had a chance to talk to the family of the --- 'yong namatay --- I could hardly find the right words to say the condolences.

So but every time sinasabi ko na para naman ito sa lahat sa atin: Ecclesiastes 3. And the long and short of the message there is there is always a time for everything in this planet. So whatever it is we will always have our appointed time.

So sometimes we just take for granted life, but in times like these, lalo na na kilalang presidente, we always put on notice of our mortality in this world that also we cannot last forever.

House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco; Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea; Health Secretary Francisco Duque III; Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año; Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque; Commission on Higher Education Secretary Prospero De Vera III; PLLO Acting Presidential Adviser on Legislative Affairs Luzverfeda Pascual; Senator Bong Go; Senator Maria Imelda Marcos, ma'am; Senator Francis Tolentino, I think I saw him, yeah, I'm sorry; House of Representatives Majority Floor Leader and the future senator of the Republic of the Philippines Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, no, not --- sorry senator, vice president pala; *[applause and laughter]* Misamis Oriental 2nd District Representative Henry Waminal; ladies and gentlemen.

I congratulate both Houses of Congress for working together in passing these legislative measures that all intend to improve the quality of life for all Filipinos.

The signing of these sixteen laws today is a testament to the cooperation between Congress and this administration in providing our people with equitable and sustainable service, especially in the areas of quality healthcare and education.

Thirteen of these laws are health-related and are all very crucial in strengthening the capacity of our healthcare system as we continue to overcome the current pandemic.

Indeed, the establishment of new public [hospitals] would make quality medical services more accessible to our people, especially those from far-flung areas.

Increasing the bed capacity of existing public hospitals would likewise greatly augment our inventory of [much]-needed hospital beds that we badly need as we deal with a pandemic.

As we pass these health-related bills into law, let me assure our dedicated medical frontliners [that] this administration cares about your plight and we continue to work with Congress to equip you with proper and functional medical supplies and logistics.

I am therefore directing all our government agencies to continue to work together in implementing the newly enacted and existing healthcare laws, and at the same time, apply the Whole-of-Nation approach in our endeavors to ensure an inclusive and seamless response to the current challenges facing the nation.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize the need for fruitful collaboration [with both] Houses of Congress to ensure the passage of the remaining priority legislation of this administration.

These priority measures include the Package 3 and 4 of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program and the amendments to the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, the Foreign Investments Act, and the Public Service Act, among others.

The Filipino people eagerly await these genuine reforms, and may these laws come to fruition soon.

Let me assure our kababayans that this administration will continue forging people-centered policies geared towards sustainable development.

We are asking for your trust and cooperation with the government as we pursue a harmonious, organized, and progressive society supported by active, responsible, and law-abiding citizens.

I am more hopeful that, with our concerted efforts, we will reach our shared aspirations for a healthy and productive nation.

Maraming salamat po. *[applause]*

My fault really but I did not realize that there are second and third pages of persons in the list of persons to be acknowledged. So I'm sorry but just the same, let me read out your names.

Quezon 4th District Representative Angelina Tan, ma'am, sorry, ma'am ha;
Pangasinan 4th District Representative Christopher de Venecia, yes, sir; La Union 2nd District Representative Sandra Eriguel, ma'am, sorry, ma'am ha.
Next time hindi na mangyari 'to. La Union 2nd District Representative Sandra...

Bataan 2nd District Representative Jose Enrique Garcia III; Ilocos Sur 1st District Representative Deogracias Victor Savellano; Pangasinan 6th District Representative Tyrone Agabas, yes, sir.

Pangasinan 2nd District Representative Jumel Anthony Espino; ABONO Partylist Representative Conrado Estrella III.

Alam mo puro second generation na itong naabot ko. I was a first --- I was around during the --- if you count it by stages --- during the first generation. Si Imee nandoon na rin 'yan. *[laughter]* Totoo. Pero ito nakikita ko puro mga anak na --- second generation. The second generation in my family would really be Inday and the congressman, si Pulong.

Mandaluyong Lone District Representative Neptali Gonzales [II]. Your father was my --- your father was my law professor in constitutional law.

Basilan Lone District Representative Mujiv Hataman. Yes, sir. Basilan Lone District Representative --- no, nadoble --- Quezon City 4th District Representative Jesus Suntay; ACT-CIS Partylist Representative Eric Yap.

Pangasinan Governor --- Misamis Oriental Governor Philip Tan; Pangasinan Governor Amado Espino III; Bataan Governor Albert Garcia, Bet.

Bataan Vice Governor Ma. Cristina Garcia; Mandaluyong City Mayor Carmelita Abalos; my fellow workers in government, ladies and gentlemen.

[I-cut mo muna 'yong ano, camera. Kami-kami lang mag-chit-chat. You know I said...]

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