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PHOTO RELEASE



16 Mar 2020

Impeachment trial to proceed amid ICC trial

Senate President Francis "Chiz" G. Escudero says the impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte will proceed despite the ongoing trial of her father, former President Rodrigo Duterte, on charges of crime against humanity at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands. Escudero, during a media briefing Monday, March 17, 2025, said the impeachment trial has nothing to do with the ICC proceedings. "Those (the impeachment and the ICC trial) are separate incidents. I don't see any connection between the two, and it's not a..."

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Statement of the Senate President on the Filing of an Impeachment Complaint Against the Vice President

Published on: 5 Jan 2023

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The filing and endorsement of an impeachment complaint in the House of Representatives marks the beginning of a process enshrined in our Constitution to ensure accountability among our highest public officials.

In light of this development, I reiterate my call to my colleagues in the Senate to refrain from making any public comments or statements regarding the allegations in the complaint's articles of impeachment. Should the Senate be called upon to act as an impeachment court, any perception of bias or pre-judgment would undermine not only the integrity of the impeachment trial but also the public's trust in the Senate as an institution.

While impeachment is often described as a political exercise, it is crucial that members of the Senate approach it with the impartiality and objectivity demanded of us. We must remain steadfast in upholding the principles of justice and fairness, ensuring that every step of the process adheres to the Rule of Law. This is what justice requires. This is what our people demand.

Experience has shown that impeachment proceedings are inherently divisive and have the potential to polarize the government and the public. However, we must not allow this to detract from the pressing legislative work that lies ahead. We have a duty to enact laws that respond to the needs of our people, address urgent national concerns, and strengthen our republic.

As we move closer to the midterm elections in May 2025, it is even more imperative for us to rise above the din of political noise and focus on the work that matters most to our people!

We must not let politics negate the strides we have made in improving our economy and governance. We may have different political affiliations and views but, as public servants, we must preserve our unity of purpose as this is essential to sustain the gains we have achieved and to ensure that no Filipino is left behind.

While accountability mechanisms like impeachment serve an important role in a democracy, the outcome--whether in favor of or against the official involved--should not impede the Senate's broader mission to serve our countrymen. Allowing our legislative responsibilities to be overshadowed by the political dimensions of impeachment would be a disservice to our nation. May mga pangangailangan ang ating mga kababayan. Kung may impeachment man o wala, hindi ito puwedeng pabayaan.

The Senate stands ready to fulfill its constitutional mandate with integrity and impartiality while upholding the national interest. As we navigate this critical juncture in our history, let us remain resolute in our commitment to justice, unity, and the welfare of the Filipino people.



Pimentel to Tolentino: Set the stage for impeachment proceedings

Published on: 5 Jan 2023

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Senate Minority Leader Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III pressed Senate Majority Leader Francis "Tol" Tolentino to start the ball rolling on the impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte.

"The Senate Majority Leader should now set the stage for the impeachment in keeping with the mandate of the Constitution," Pimentel said in a statement on Tuesday.

"Preparatory work for the impeachment can proceed immediately as these actions are separate and distinct from the legislative functions of Congress," Pimentel said.

"We have a constitutional duty that must take precedence over our reelection bid. While we may be busy with our campaigns, the best campaign is fulfilling our constitutional responsibilities. I trust that the upcoming election will not interfere with our mandate," Pimentel stressed.

Pimentel said his letter to Senate President Francis "Chiz" Escudero was referred to the Committee on Rules, which Tolentino chairs.

"The Senate's Committee on Rules must forthwith, immediately, right away, and without delay review the impeachment guidelines," he said.

The former Senate President said the committee can either reaffirm the existing rules in their entirety or to propose targeted amendments that better align with the constitutional intent.

In an interview with ANC on Monday, Pimentel said the legislative calendar is different from the court calendar.

"We should not be bound by the so-called Senate legislative calendar. It is because the Senate is still existing as a Senate, and we can declare that we are now convening as an impeachment court. The court calendar is different from the legislative calendar. We can act earlier than June 2," he said.

Pimentel said that deferring the trial to June 2 would contravene the constitutional mandate that impeachment "trial by the Senate shall forthwith start."

"The Senate can make a decision to convene as an impeachment court and come up with its own court calendar separate from its legislative calendar," he stressed.

He added: "Ang sabi sa constitution, ang sabi doon isunod agad ang paglilitis sa senado. Ano naman ang meaning ng agad? Eh ordinary meaning din yan mabilis, dagli-dagli, mayroon pa ngang malalim na tagalog karakaraka."

Pimentel acknowledged that the Senate could begin the preliminary preparations in March and defer the presentation of witnesses until after the upcoming election. However, he argued that such a delay would still run counter to the framers' original intent and the spirit of the Constitution that "trial by the Senate shall forthwith start."

In the same interview, Pimentel emphasized the need for an all-senators caucus.

"Gusto naming makita o dapat naming makita what is now the level of interest among senators over this case. Kung nagpatawag ang Senate President ng all-senators caucus and yet there is no quorum even in that caucus, that is a reflection of, you know, more than one half do not have this in their radar, do not consider this completely their priority," Pimentel said.

"The Senate must address the impeachment complaint against Vice President Sara Duterte with the seriousness and speed it deserves. It is time for the leadership to take the lead in ensuring the Constitution is followed," Pimentel said in a statement.



Chiz Orders Creation of Impeachment Trial Administrative Support Group

Published on: 5 Jan 2023

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Senate President Francis "Chiz" G. Escudero has signed Special Order No. 2025-015 (OSP) Series of 2025 for the establishment of an administrative support group that will assist the Senate when it convenes as an Impeachment Court for the trial of Vice President Sara Z. Duterte.

"This Special Order is vital to ensure that the Senate, in its role as an Impeachment Court, operates smoothly and efficiently. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of justice and due process throughout the proceedings," Escudero said upon issuance of the order.

The special order, signed on February 20, is effective immediately and will remain in force until the conclusion of the impeachment trial of Vice President Duterte.

Under SO 2025-015, the Senate President designates the Secretary of the Senate as the Clerk of the Senate sitting as an Impeachment Court in accordance with the Rules of Procedures on Impeachment Trials.

The Secretary of the Senate has the authority of the Senate President to issue administrative orders, directives, and guidelines as necessary to support the Clerk of Court and the Impeachment Court.

The order outlines the detailed responsibilities and designations of support offices and personnel from the Senate Secretariat to provide comprehensive legal, technical, administrative, and general staff support to the Clerk of Court.

The primary offices involved include the Office of the Senate Legal Counsel, the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Legislation, and the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms, all of which will also act as Deputy Clerks.

The roles of these offices during the impeachment trials are as follows:

Office of the Senate Legal Counsel:

- Drafting of subpoenas, writs, summons, orders, resolutions, decisions, and other legal instruments.
- Preparation of legal memoranda and briefs, summaries of proceedings, and pleadings as required by the Presiding Officer or the Impeachment Court.
- Marking and maintaining custody of exhibits submitted before the Impeachment Court.
- Provision of procedural and substantive support to the Clerk of Court.

Office of the Deputy Secretary for Legislation:

- Transcripts and journals of the trial, custody and maintenance of the Oath Book, preparation of the Business of the Trial and scenario for each trial day.
- Drafting of Impeachment Court resolutions.
- Custody of and handling all documents pertaining to the proceedings.
- Processing requests for copies of Impeachment Trial documents, subject to approval and applicable fees.

Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms:

- Ensuring necessary security and safety measures to maintain order during the proceedings.
- Serving summons, subpoenas, and other legal documents as directed by the Presiding Officer or the Clerk of Court.
- Ensuring order in the chamber and its premises during the proceedings.
- Carrying out all orders and directives of the Presiding Officer related to the preservation of order and decorum.