

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE AFP CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY AND
TESTIMONIAL REVIEW IN HONOR OF GENERAL BENJAMIN R.
MADRIGAL AFP
(Delivered by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana)**

[Delivered at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City | 24 September 2019]

Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo; Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo M. Año and other members of the Cabinet; members of the House of Representatives present; outgoing Chief of Staff General Benjamin R. Madrigal Jr. AFP and his family who are here; the new Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Lieutenant General Noel Clement and his family; my wife Mrs. Editha Lorenzana; major service commanders; former AFP Chiefs of Staff; former major service commanders, enlisted personnel and civilian employees of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; other distinguished guests already mentioned a while ago; ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

[Troop commander please give tikas pahinga]

Before I read the speech of the President, let me congratulate in my capacity as the Secretary of National Defense the former Chief of Staff General Madrigal for a job well done. *[applause]* And the new --- I'd like to wish good luck to the new Chief of Staff.

And let me read the speech of the President.

It is my pleasure to be a part of this momentous occasion for the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Today, we look back at the achievements of the AFP under the able hands of Gen. Benjamin R. Madrigal and honor his dedication in strengthening our military and securing our nation.

General Madrigal, I congratulate you for completing your remarkable tour of duty as Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. You have made

a mark in this noble institution by initiating and pursuing organizational reforms to strengthen its operational effectiveness.

Your untiring commitment has paved the way to numerous reforms such as the increase in the AFP's authorized troop strength and the activation of the 4th Marine Brigade to improve command control over our forces in Jolo.

Our country's internal security operations have continued to improve under your watch as well. Thousands of local and communist terrorist group members have been neutralized, apprehended or surrendered, making our communities safer.

Our troops have also remained at the forefront of humanitarian assistance and disaster response, particularly in the aftermath of the earthquake in Batanes and the capsizing of a motorized banca in Guimaras, among others.

You have likewise conducted hundreds of surface and air patrols in our seaboard and deployed AFP personnel to the Kalayaan Island Group, thus bolstering our territorial defense.

General Madrigal, we thank you for your steadfast leadership and for ensuring that the AFP remains to be a reliable player in our whole-of-nation approach to achieving security and development in the country.

I now enjoin the troops to continue the fight against the threats of terrorism and insurgency under the leadership of the new Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Noel Clement.

As your Commander-in-Chief, I assure you that the Philippine government will continue to support you as we upgrade your capabilities and pursue initiatives in securing the safety of every Filipino.

Be assured that the entire nation is behind you as you bravely march towards the battlefield to advance the common good and secure genuine and lasting change for our motherland.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay kayong lahat.

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