

Presidential Communications Office

Presidential News Desk

SPEECH OF

PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE

**DURING THE 45th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY (NEDA)**

[Delivered at NEDA Parking Area, 12 Escriva Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig City | 06 February 2018]

Salamat po. Kindly take your seats. Thank you for your courtesy.

As usual, Malacañan just prepared about --- for your anniversary --- two pages of... *[laughter]* Medyo ini-small ninyo si ano ha --- *[where are the staff?]* Two pages for so many years of toil and hardship for the Filipino.

Let me... Allow me to make the acknowledgments. The Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and NEDA Director General Ernesto Pernia and other members of the Cabinet; officials and employees of NEDA and attached agencies; mga kasama ko sa gobyerno; mga kababayan ko.

I would be through in about a minute. Kanina pa sinabi ko kay Secretary Tugade, "Saan 'yang amoy na..." Sige ako inhale, exhale. May pagkain dito. *[laughter]*

Totoo 'yan ha. Hindi ako --- hindi ako nagbobola ng publiko eh. Alam mo kasi, it has always my article of faith in life that I do not lie because I do not have the obligation to anybody to lie. So why should I lie and keep on lying to cover the lie? So sa nanay ko marami pero 'yung sa tao...

Kaya ang sabi ko kanina, nagmamadali ako. Ang usapan kasi there will be a simultaneous destruction of the imported luxury cars in Davao, Cebu and Manila. Late na kasi ako so uminom lang ako ng gatas, tapos may naamoy ako na... Ito bang amoy na 'yan para sa amin o sa inyo? *[laughter]*

Kasi kung... Ilang beses ninyo narinig ako mag-speech-speech. Total alam naman ninyo ang ginagawa ko. Like you, we are all workers of government. No special significance is attached by just placing there officials of government. We are all workers of government and we work for the people.

Kaya nung si Bato. Tinawagan ko last week, sabi ko, "You place there another notice sa casinos lahat na workers of government are not allowed inside casinos." That is not my rule. That was the rule of Marcos which I think is appropriately also suited for all times.

So nilagyan ko. Sabi ko, "Ilagay mo lang diyan, 'workers of government.'" Sabi pa ni Bato, palibhasa pulis, eh sabihin niya, "Eh 'yung official, sir?" P**** *[laughter]*

Kaya lumalaki ang mga ulo niyang y*** na 'yan, official, official. Tayong lahat trabahante sa gobyerno. So... Well, I expect everybody to just honor it. I said, it's not my rule. It's Marcos' era. But it would be good as any other time to remind you that it does not look good.

So I may just opt to say something also from my heart. I'm not into politics. Let me be very clear on this. I'm not up to even as a kagawad, barangay kagawad. But just the same, let me all remind you that I was elected by the Filipino people. I was not a candidate of any politician.

As a matter of fact, I could only count by the fingers of my hands the --- ilan lang. I think --- Abet Garcia of Bataan; Imee; nobody from Cebu, not even a barangay captain; in Mindanao, Zubiri and there's another lady governor which I cannot mention kasi mahal ko siya. *[laughter]* Baka mabuko tayo at may asawa na siya.

So but, you know, from the sheer magnitude of my margin over the second opponent, it was just simply to --- there was just simply too big and pati ako natulala.

But I remember now, in the hindsight, anong --- ni wala akong sa Maynila, not even one barangay captain here. Pero what made the people decide in my favor? That's 15 million and six million of that is my margin.

Sabi ko ano? Because I carried or I am carrying now a very simple set of rules or messages. One, I said, I will try, I can only try to stop corruption. Second is, the problem of drugs has overwhelmed the Philippine fabrics of society, and this has to be controlled or stop altogether. Third is that, I would talk to all the enemies of the state, make peace with them, reach out a deal if possible. And fourth is that, I will allow the brightest financial managers of our country to help me run the economic side.

Lahat ho 'yan nagawa ko na. Pero ginagawa ko pa rin because it remains to be a problem. It is not a one thing time to solve it. Corruption remains and it will be even beyond my time. Drugs still abound by tonelada na dito at, you know, itong mga human rights they know...

Hindi naman --- every afternoon, tingnan mo sa TV Patrol. Lahat 'yan puro araw-araw seven, eight cases of killing, raping a six-month-old baby, killing the entire family. And that was the rule of the past even at a bigger scale before I became President.

Now, I would tell you that I --- there was this promise which turned out to be a nightmare, a fiasco. Well, because when I was mayor, I made the promise --- ang mindset ko was Davao. And I maybe, naiveté, had something to do with that also.

Sabi ko, in six months time, I will solve the problem of drugs. But that was based on the factual situation in Davao, numbers and all. But when I became President, nakita ko 'yung magnitude, the dimension of the contamination at it run into millions, at maraming namatay.

In Davao, maraming namatay. Itong stupid na Human Rights, you don't go to war with criminal syndicates. We are killing people. And me? I have lost something like mga 300 ever since we started or I embarked on it, including the losses in Marawi.

You remember --- I'm just trying to tell you straight. Kayong mga Moro, huwag kayong --- do not get mad at me. Pareho tayo, pareho tayo. 'Yung nanay ko anak ng Maranao. Hindi ko alam ganyan kalaki, including generals.

So I thought that I made the correct projections. But to my horror, pati mga generals ng police. So I said, including the Customs people.

So I was fighting the front here at my back, the Customs people who are so corrupt, they were also in cahoots with the others, importing droga --- so by tonelada.

And there are ships in the international waters, old ships, junked, they are cooking shabu, placed them in a plastic bins na blue, throwing it out to the sea, placing a homing device tapos 'yung

kukunin lang ng mga --- kaya makikita mo 'yan Regions I and II and III, it's all awash with plastic bins. Shabu 'yan. And shabu remains to be a number one problem.

Remember that I did not declare shabu as a national security threat. It was Arroyo who did it. Inadopt ko na lang kasi sa panahon ko, I am not trying to attribute anything to the past presidents.

Sabi ko sa panahon ko, sabi ko noon sa mayor ako, when I was a mayor, I said, "I am not a policeman ha, I am not soldier. I am just an ordinary worker of government tasked with keeping the country safe and the people from the dangers. Do not destroy my city and do not destroy the young because I will kill you."

When I became President, the same problem but of different magnitude, severity, I said, "Do not destroy my country. I am just trying to build a country freed from any of those painful experiences of other countries. Do not destroy the youth because I will kill you." Talagang papatayin kita.

And the human rights, kini-clip nila 'yan diyan, they are hanging to that, "destroying my country".

Now, tell me what is wrong when a leader says, "I will kill you if you destroy my country." Anong mali diyan? Sisirain mo ang bayan ko, bubuhayin kita?

Dreaming ka. And these human rights people are attributing because my orders to the police and military were really very simple.

It's a national security threat. Go after the organized crimes. Destroy the apparatus and destroy the people behind it. What does it mean? It simply means that if you have to die, you will die. 'Yan ang order ko, as simple as that.

Corruption, sabagay hindi naman 'yan but... Sinira ko lang 'yung mga kotse.

Eh never-ending 'yan eh. No President has done that. Pero sa panahon ko, I may have a different...

Ang problema kasi sa akin is there was never a paradigm shift from being a local mayor, local lang pang-local, to being the President of the Republic of the Philippines.

Ang bunganga ko pati 'yung mindset ko is all about mayorship. I look at the Philippines as a city with all the attendant problems of a country and city almost similar. At ang bunganga ko, bastos daw. Eh totoo 'yan.

Bastos talaga ako. Wala akong breeding? Eh 'di wala ako... Hindi naman ako manok na bini-breed doon sa amin eh. *[laughter]*

Pinalaki lang ako ng nanay ko ng ano at sabi... Tugade here is our class valedictorian sa law school. Eh ako, it took me seven years.

Tugade got the 90s. 'Yung mga 70, 75, 77, amin 'yun. *[laughter]* We were never groomed to be a topnotcher.

Sabi nila, si Duterte hindi daw statesman kasi hindi pwedeng mag-Presidente, bastos ang bunganga, nako p***** i**. *[laughter]*

Akala ko ba College of Law ako. Wala namang subject na statesman, how to be a statesman or a son of a b****. Pareho lang 'yan sa akin.

So pasensya na ang Pilipinas and I do not really mince words. 'Pag sinabi kong ganun ka, ganun ka. Kasi sa law school kami, ganun rin 'yun.

You are happy with my language? Kaya mag-usap kami noon, I tend to forget my Tagalog. Kami laking Davao, melting pot eh. Kayong taga-Davao alam niyo 'yon, it's a melting pot.

So nakakaintindi ako ng Ilocano, nakakapagsalita ako ng Ilonggo, madamo sa Davao ah. *[laughter]* Nakakapagsalita ako, pati 'yung intonation. Nakakaintindi ako ng Tagalog, pero itong minsan Tagalog, nagta-Tagalog ako tapos hinahanap ko ang... Ano ba ang Tagalog nitong p***** j**** ano na ito?

Ah ganun, sinaw kasi 'yung mga flashy cars, sinaw. Kanina p***** j** --- andiyan man media.

Sabi ko, "Masyadong sinaw 'yung kotse kasi --- " Eh mga sports car eh. Sabi ko, "sinaw." Ano ngang Tagalog nitong p***** j***** sinaw na ito? Sabi nila... *[Ano gani 'yon? 'Yung Tagalog?]* Makintab.

Ang problema kasi nitong mga Tagalog, ayaw matutong mag-Bisaya. *[laughter]*

Kung hindi ninyo ako naintindihan, problema ninyo 'yan, hindi ko problema 'yan. Sabi ko kanina, sinaw. Sinaw in Visayan is makintab. So 'yan.

Magprangkahan na lang tayo. Treat me as just a worker. Wala naman akong ambisyon na mag-pasyal-pasyal.

I hate to travel really. I mean, I've been invited by the EU. Isa pa rin 'yang mga g*** diyan, isang organization na.

Mismong, si Tusk, the Commission and the Council invited me to Brazil. Sabi ko, "for what?" Kung tingin ninyo sa akin ganun noon, sabi ko, why change your assessment of my persona? So what I'm going --- what am I supposed to go there? To ask me questions? Insultuhin ninyo ako? Eh p***hin ko kayo lahat doon.

Huwag mo ako ganunin. Hindi ako kagaya ng ibang president na pwede mo lang... Sabi ko, bahala kayo diyan. Trump has a standing invitation.

So sabi ng dalawang senador doon, "If that Duterte comes here, we will lead a protest."

Sabi ko, you know guys, you are too presumptuous. Whoever told you that magpunta ako diyan sa lugar ninyo? Anong makuha ko diyan? Anong makita ko? Girls? *[whispers]* Baho. *[laughter]*

Unlike the Filipino. Totoo. I am just being frank with the public --- noong congressman ako. Pagkatapos gabi, magbabaan na 'yung mga g*** diyan sa Congress, maghanap ng babae.

Ako, faithful ako sa Filipina kasi 'yung --- sa malayo, maganda, exotic eh. 'Di mo nakikita pero paglapit mo, queer na ang amoy. No, no, no, no, no. Balik tayo sa kwarto.

At saka faithful ako. *[laughter]* Oo talaga, faithful ako. Faithful ako sa Filipina. Marami lang sila pero faithful ako. *[laughter]*

'Di naman kailangan isa lang. *[laughter]* Basta faithful ako sa Filipina. Mabango eh. Mabango tapos --- tapos bibirahin na naman ako ng mga sexist daw ako. Maya-maya tingnan mo. "Hindi ka pala makasabi ng totoo dito." *[laughter]*

Eh kung malaman ko na sirado, hindi na ako pumunta dito. Control my mouth. *[laughter]* Totoo man. So 'yan.

Dito sa panahon ko, I have a standing order to the Cabinet na --- puro bright man kayo. Pernia, UP --- Tugade --- Dominguez is the Finance. Kababata ko 'yan. Kindergarten to college, valedictorian 'yan.

Vit Aguirre was *[cum laude man si Vit 'no?]* Cum laude. Kita mo, naubos ang buhok sa kababasa. *[laughter]*

Sinabi ko sa kanya huwag mong sobrahan, kita mo, tupi na. Lahat 'yan. Si Lorenzana, Defense Secretary.

Sabi ni Quiboloy, you know the one --- the evangelist guy on TV, taga-Pikit 'yan sila, Cotabato. They are Ilocanos but Mindanao 'yan sila.

Eh 'yung Ilonggo ko, tonong Ilonggo na ano 'yan Cotabato. Puro valedictorian 'yan sila. Bantay ka diyan kay Piñol, valedictorian 'yan. May punto lang na ano. "When I talk in English..." Pero it's perfect English, valedictorian 'yan. May regional twang. Pero puro bright 'yan.

Kaya I am sad and I am happy. I am happy that I've been able to gather all the good men, honest men thereabout to work for government, kami sabay-sabay. Pero ang --- happy ako diyan.

Sad lang ako kasi nakikita ko itong mga bright sila, utusan ko lang. *[laughter]* Ako 'yung 75. *[whistles]* "Gawin mo 'yan." *[laughter]*

So I just give them one month. Important papers, one month. Kayong mga directors listening to me now, be careful. I have fired so many.

They are supposed to do it in 15 days. The local executives who are drafting the executive order would be given only --- Davao three days lang. That's the maximum.

Kasi mag-apply ka ng business permit, it takes almost eternity. They sit on it tapos magpa --- that's why nandiyan ang corruption eh.

Noon sa Davao, ako ang mayor noon, three days, lalabas 'yan. Huwag ka nang mag-follow up. Tapos punta ka doon sa engineer, hindi mo makita ang mga.. Alam ko kasi 23 years akong mayor eh.

Sabi ko nandiyan ka sa opisina mo. I suppose that they would want you to be the first and the last to leave.

Huwag mo akong pakitain na magdaan ako diyan na wala ka diyan. Magtiis ka kung hindi ka magtiis, maghanap ka ng ibang trabaho. If you want an assignment, 'di bale, okay. Ganun ako. Para walang --- three days.

Tapos itong... Well, I know that some trips are valid and legit, okay 'yan sa akin. But kung mag-travel ka almost 22 times, 12 times every month tapos lahat na lang ng convention pati 'yung mga seminar, may conference sa climate change sa South America, nandoon ang buang. Tapos

may climate change sa Brussels, nandoon rin 'yung tonto. O tapos sa America, sa New York, climate change.

Sige lahat ng climate change. Ang p***** j**** niyang bagyo, hindi na humihinto doon sa climate change.

Palabas pa lang 'yung isa, binubuntot na doon sa p*** 'yung p***** j**.

Anong natutunan mo? MARINA. Sabi ko, you get out 22 times? Nabuang ka?

Sabi ko, for those na ano --- talagang tiningnan ko. Licuanan, every month lumalabas, eh kasi CHED raw kailangan ng edukasyon. Eh 'wag mo akong bolahin.

Nung nakita ko 'yung mga allowances ng mga scholars hindi pa nagbayad, eh kasi ginanun niya 'yung pera eh. Nahulog --- na-devote doon sa different main line agencies. She gave an order na mapunta lahat sa --- eh 'di six years spending.

Oh tignan mo si Popoy de Vera, sa eskwelahan niya ibinibigay so pumupunta 'yung... Biro mo isa-isahin mo 'yan? So sabi ko, "You are up to something because I know that you know and I know na walang resulta 'yang ginagawa mong puro kalokohan."

Noong nakita ko siya, "Get out." Sabi ko kay Medialdea, "Call the girl." Marami 'yan sila.

So 'yung, itong pag-usapan kasi natin na ano --- ako, nakikiusap lang, I'm not referring to you guys. I'm addressing myself to the nation.

'Yung --- stop. Stop muna. Tatalagaan lang ako eh, I'm now on my years ---fourth? Going fourth --- my second or third, madali lang 'yan. In a jiffy, I'm out. But at this time during the remaining years of my presidency huwag, 'wag talaga kasi uupakan kita.

That goes for the military, the police and all. 'Yung Budget namin, undersecretary, halos sinipa ko sa mukha. P***** j** ka. I just fired him, 'yung undersecretary ni Diokno.

Ang style ng walang-hiya, p***** j** niya, ikaw, director ka, oh director kulang ka ng pera. Kausap siya doon sa ano... Lakarin niya doon sa budget. Ito gobyerno talaga 'tong pera ha, walang drama ito, walang --- q** s* j*** kung saang pera --- sige, magbulong siya doon.

If you want to add that is something out of the budget or out even of the GAA and there are some unexpected expenses and you want to perform, you need the money, you just call this guy because he has another guy, runner niya. He gets the money for you, approval, but you give him something in return.

'Yan, 'yan --- pati ako, piniprito na kami sa sarili naming mantika diyan. Kaya pinatawag ko, ginanun ko talaga sa mukha, "T*** j** ka, pati --- pati dito ginawa mo." Hindi na bale 'yung importation, tapos kumita ka sobra-sobra or procurement.

That is why ang procurement --- hindi ako maniwala sa COA, and somebody in Congress also spoke against it. Hindi ako maniwala sa kanila because alam ninyo, alam ninyo sa puso ninyo, 'yang --- 'yang lowest bid na 'yan, that is the source of all corruption, beginning from the national to the local hanggang barangay. Alam ninyo 'yan.

So 'yang lowest bid, 'pag sinabi, "bakit ang quality...?" --- eh lowest bid eh. They are group or groups of --- umiikot lang 'yan sa mga probinsya.

'Yung mga asawa ninyo kung nag-golf, "Ah, mag-golf kami sa Bukidnon, sa Malaybalay." Bantay ka, may dalang babae 'yan, abangan ninyo, patayin na lang ninyo. *[laughter]* Pahiramín ko kayo ng baril. 'Yang mga asawa ninyo, kung ganun, hindi kayo. 'Yung sa camera.

Mag-ano lang, they go around, nakiki-ano kung may bidding ba dito. Grupo 'yan at da-dive 'yan, ang isa, may singit, magda-dive 'yan ulit.

Kung may mag-singit pa, dive, diretso hanggang mag-surrender kasi hindi na kaya.

One hundred million, kung may mag-dive 'yan ng 60, 70, ilan naman ang mag --- always mga five percent.

Itong mga 'to mag-dive, tapos bayaran ang governor, ang mayor, Malacañan, engineer, pati barangay captain, hindi ko malaman kung bakit kasali sa bigayan. He has to sign the documents sa completion of projects.

Hala ka, marami nang niluto na barbeque, malakas na masyado ang amoy. *[laughter]* Wala pa akong kain sa totoo lang. *[laughter]* Ang baon ko o candy lang. *[laughter]* So 'yan.

So tayo, turnkey. Mega project, hindi na ako mag-imbinta, I'll just call Consunji. Of course, it will also deny the small ones of making his life more easier for his family.

But kasi ganun, sanay --- gusto kong tumulong na medyo angat lang nang kaunti, and to the process, baka --- it might just add to the middle class, growth of the middle class.

Pero kung kasing ganun, ang sabi ko, so turnkey ka. How much? Gawain mo according to specs, gawain mo talaga kasi 'pag umalis ka diyan sa --- not to my liking, then I will not pay you.

So kung ikaw 'yung magtrabaho, bakit mo --- bastusin mo 'yung project mo para hindi ka mabayaran, eh mga milyon 'yan. Kaya itong mga malalaki, sabi ko 'wag na 'yung malilit kasi corruption lang ang lalabas rin diyan.

Ito ngayon, sabihin, "Paano 'yung lowest bid?" Swiss challenge na lang kung gusto mo. We go to Swiss challenge, 'yun ang mabibigay ko. Pati dito sa baba --- I don't know, but COA seems to be adamant on it.

So I'm telling the Congress, I will not follow you. Magkagulo tayo --- mag --- bahala, mag-demanda kayo. Tatal sa bay-sabay lang sila sa human rights, magpakulong ako.

'Yung human rights maski sa International Court of Justice, bigyan lang niyo --- saan ninyo ako i-detain, what prison, federal facility? Just to make sure that the rules are followed.

Number one is the conjugal visits must be honored. At saka 'yung conjugal visits hindi lang dapat isa ang allowed. *[laughter]* Ma-lonely man 'yung iba 'di syempre. Eh kung nasa America, pamasahihan ninyo. Itong akin mga apat siguro. *[laughter]* Totoo.

'Yung mga sexist diyan sabihin na ano, totoo 'yan. Kailangan ng katawan 'yan.

Even the presidential debates, I was asked, "Mr. Duterte, marami ka raw extra flings, marital indiscretion. Anong sagot ko kay Luchi? Sabi ko, "Ma'am, biology lang 'yan," sasabihin ko, "Bakit ikaw?" Gusto ko sabihin, "Bakit ikaw, wala kang biology?" *[laughter]*

Ang akin, 'yan lang naman, just stop. Now, when I was in Davao last week. I stayed there for so many days and there was a JICA assistance. Binigyan nila ang Davao ng Montero, police car. Napaka-swerte ng mga pulis.

Ako, sa totoo ma'am, 'yang taga-Davao, sabihan ninyo sa kanila --- pick-up lang ---1988 naging mayor ako, pick-up ako, hanggang ngayong pick-up lang ako. Itong mga pulis, t*** j**, Montero, luxury cars.

Eh nandoon ako, nandiyan 'yung JICA, I remembered, kasi hindi ako --- ayaw ko 'yang barat eh, kung magbili ako ng kotse, Isuzu or Hilux, Toyota.

Kaya 'yung mga police --- 'yung mga police cars ko na binili ko, when I was on my fifth year as mayor, nandiyan pa, ngayon nadagdagan.

Pero I said something there that... Kasi nagbili ako minsan, i-ulit ko lang ito, 'yun ang sinabi ko sa Customs.

Hilux, 'yung first delivery was 10 units. Ewan ko kung anong nakain ng p***** pulis na ito, opisyal pa naman, gi-drivan tapos binunggo.

One week after delivery nakaganun 'yung Toyota diyan sa [inaudible], binunggo diyan sa island-island. Umiyak talaga ako kasi ang sinaw nga, kasinaw nung bago pa ito, "Ang p***** j***** pulis na 'to, j*****."

Kaya may sinabi ako sa kanila, but it carries, it bears with --- it bears my pictures, 'yung sinuot ka sa Marawi, but I'd like to address myself again to the Moro community, ginamit lang nila 'yung picture ko kasi parang matapang daw ako doon eh, 'yung sa Marawi.

Pero 'yung --- I was talking about corruption, about fixing cases. May sinabi ako, and it was, I think, it caught --- it caught the attention of...

[*Pahiram nga, ma'am.*] Galing ako nun doon sa pantalan, ito 'yung kapitan sa --- pangulo, totoo. She is a graduate of Annapolis, si [Chyna?]. Nagkakapitan ito ng barko. Siya 'yung nagdadala ng --- [Chyna], kasi maliit 'yung --- singkit. [*laughter*] Kita mo nahiya, nagtago.

So idinagdag nila ito, pero might as well, I'm just --- pwede na itong guntingin, ganito lang 'yan. And I said, sabi ko sa kanila, "Not during my watch. 'Wag sa panahon ko." Kasi either magkaibigan tayo or magkalaban tayo.

'Yun naman dito sa telecommunication, ayaw ko na lang magyabang, meron silang maraming demands. Sabi ko kagabi sa Cabinet meeting --- kaya ako na-late eh. We started at 2 o'clock, we broke off mga something like 12:30. Kahaba ang discussion.

But I had a warning for these people dito sa tel --- telcom. Sabi ko sa kanila, just send them this message: "Do not --- this government."

Wala ako --- 'wag ninyo tatakutin, kaso-kaso. Maya-maya magdating 'yang BIR and start to audit you during the first year of your business.

Harass? No. Kung magnanakaw ka --- sino bang hindi nagnakaw diyan sa kanila? 'Yan sila. Not during my watch.

Ang hinihingi ko lang naman four years eh. But kung magkakaroon tayo ng magandang ekonomiya, kayo, alam ninyo na we are moving a little bit faster, but not that much.

But I will try to --- if we make it big in the succeeding years, then maybe. So 'yun lang ang mensahe ko sa inyo.

Ang problema kasi baka nandito 'yung sumulat, *[laughter]* mainsulto. So as a product of our --- of a co-worker sa ating gobyerno, bigyan naman natin ng importansya maski speechwriter lang ito siya.

I am happy to join you today on the occasion of NEDA's 45th Anniversary. *[laughter]* This is a celebration of the dedication and commitment of the hardworking men and women of NEDA in shaping our country's socio-economic agenda in the past four decades.

As the primary agency tasked to oversee the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022, NEDA will play a crucial role in our medium-term vision of turning the Philippines into an upper-middle income economy by year --- quite ambitious --- 2022, baka sakali lang. In the fullness of God's time, baka makatsamba tayo.

I am optimistic that we can achieve this goal because of the professionalism of our NEDA officials and personnel. Your accomplishments in the past year and a half speak a lot about your skill and competence to fulfill your mandate.

In streamlining the guidelines in the processing and approval of flagship projects, the creation of a task force to ensure the timely implementation and integration of the 15 Regional Development Plans into the PDP are just some of the undertakings that uphold the integrity and efficiency of our national development agenda.

We will build on these gains by boosting development in the regions. We will create more jobs, improve social services, encourage innovation and connect the country to growth centers by aligning regional plans with our national development agenda.

Indeed, we have a bright future ahead and I count on NEDA to never waver in the --- in supporting government's middle-term and long-term socio-economic agenda. Always uphold good governance in the civil service as you provide direction to the formulation of our economic policies.

As we celebrate your accomplishments and look forward to a brighter future ahead, let me ensure that public interest remains at the heart of all government plans, projects and programs.

With NEDA at the helm, I am confident that we can realize our vision of a prosperous Philippines by working together in laying a solid foundation for a stronger and more resilient nation.

Thank you at mabuhay kayong lahat!
[applause]

--- END ---