

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE BOOK LAUNCHING OF "PROSPER THY NEIGHBOR"**

[Delivered at the Centennial Hall of Manila Hotel, Manila | 14 October 2018]

Before I start, I'd like to restate my oath of office in just two sentences. My oath of office says in not so many words that I swear to preserve the nation and protect the people. That is all there is to it. Nothing follows.

President Ramos, sir, thank you for inviting me. It's a great honor. It's more of... Your speech was a set of instructions and I appreciate it that you were talking about the ship of state which is really the most important thing for all of us, and under my stewardship that I should pursue the Filipino dream.

Although you might not agree with all the things that I have done or will be doing, let me assure you that the light at the end of the tunnel is my country. And I will do anything, anything for the Filipino people. *[applause]*

And this might not really be too harsh for you to understand it but when I was mayor, sir, I promised the people of Davao City that I will --- you know how it was then --- that I will build a city that would be comfortable for everybody.

Might not really be a rich city economically maybe on the same flat line as the others at that time, but I said that I would make it comfortable for you all.

And so I said with a little bit of hubris but which was really needed to make people understand and maybe to realize the gravity of the situation. And I said: Do not destroy my country because I will kill you and do not destroy the young people our only asset. They are the assets --- they are the human beings that would take care of us when we get old.

Sila 'yung magbayad ng aming medisina, oxygen, even the funeral parlor payments and a humble lot in a cemetery. Because we are not all rich so we have to depend on our parents as we depended on them when we were young.

So it is important that this must be understood by all. It's not in my speech, I have diverted because I wanted to express my feeling as a Filipino. Scripted man 'to, it's only two pages. Nakakahiya naman kay...

I was invited, I was reminded twice and I said I will go if it is His Excellency, the President Ramos, I will be there. *[applause]*

So that was my line perhaps to instill fear because rather than kill them, the criminals and all, the terrorists, I might just get or convey to them, say to them na huwag 'yan, not that thing because it will mean something more than just fighting.

And so when I became President ganun rin. And now not so many people realize it. Now Trump and Guterres in Indonesia were talking about the gravity of the drug situation all around the world.

Now in the Philippines I'd like to give you a little bit of what we have learned so far. I think this dope situation in Southeast Asia is being run by the Triad of Asia.

And [Sinaloa] it's doing it's thing, the Medellin Cartel, using the network of containers. That is why do not conclude right away that the owner of the container is the smuggler of the drugs. The smugglers and the [Sinaloa] have a captive audience inside.

So they would place it under the ceiling because it [unclear] all steel it is --- nakabalot pa 'yan, it's covered with high-grade plastics.

So one of those was intercepted in Davao. Kaya kawawa naman 'yung mga tao especially the legit importers and their containers are taken advantage of by criminal gangs.

So there has to be a thorough investigation before we start to blame mostly Chinese. Seek first the, I said the advice of... Anyway we have the cooperative international intelligence sharing and we can have that.

So what's more important really is not to drag along innocent people into a criminal case which we are not sure of.

My experience in Davao, what was the cargo? It was banana. Where was it headed for? In the United States. But the ceiling before it came from a

certain country nearby it was already half filled to pick up more containers before going to sailing, I think was in the southern part of America.

Iyan ang mahirap diyan eh. So if it's just a... Nobody in his right mind really would do that. Dito wala ng laboratory masyado kasi alam nila papatayin ko talaga sila.

So they have resorted to 'yang jettison plastics and all filled with drugs. No more... It's being cooked in trawlers, in dilapidated ships just along the coastal, international borders at itinatapon. They jettison it and it's being picked up by the landlords --- ah drug lords here.

Well as I said, there's the policy. I hope we do not have to stare at each other to say that I did not warn you.

Drug is very --- what would be the better word? ---vicious and it destroys. Bato says it's one million six hundred. Before PDEA pegged it at three million. Taking Bato's figures at 200 per day that would be about 6,000 a month. Times the 1,600 of Bato, times the number of days in one year. It could reach about 210, 215 billion industry. All reducing my countrymen into slavery to a drug called shabu.

And they were hunger for it and they will crave for it for the rest of their lives in an inutile and paralyzed human being. Iyan ang masakit sa akin. And most of all what pains me are those millions of Filipino workers.

You know when you remove a mother from a family, when she is going to work in the Middle East, that family is partially dysfunctional. If the husband and the wife will decide to work leaving their children sometimes to their neighbors, sometimes to their relatives, the family becomes dysfunctional totally.

And yet we know that they suffer abuse. There are certain --- I am not saying all --- but there are certain tribes there that allow slavery and even if you are a paid domestic, abuse comes naturally.

Kaya masakit sa akin ng itong mga Pilipina na taga-bukid, nandoon Abra, Pangasinan, as far as --- pati mga Moro na mga babae nagpunta doon. They endure it.

Abortion is just an everyday thing there. That is why itong mga pills malakas ang bentahan. Wala tayong magawa. And they stayed there for four years,

three years and suffered rape, abuse, sometimes placed in a freezer for one month and you want me to just smile or we just let the diplomatic...

That's good that --- I thank the Lord that we saw our countrymen now before I agreed to resume the --- normalize the situation. I said that they must be given one day off. Cellphones and passports cannot be confiscated. No physical abuse or physical contact. And their pays should be directly paid to the bank.

All these agreements were acquiesced and we have a working document there to govern our relations. Well, I would not name the country but this is it.

I will gamble. And they say that, "You cannot invite them home." "Why not?" "Because you do not have any money." "Why? We cannot spend for our suffering fellow countrymen?"

Ayaw ninyong gumasto 'pag nag-uwi lahat 'yan dito? Eh 'di magtiis tayo. Ubusin ko 'yang pera ng gobyerno, ipapakain ko diyan sa mga Pilipino.

What's the use of having a GDP of --- and yet you suffer the... Our countrymen are humiliated, degraded of their human dignity.

Kaya 'yung nag-react ako, I am prone to mag-express --- curse, epithets. Ganun ako kasi nakaka-ano naman eh. Iyan ang sentimiyento ko. Huwag na huwag mong pahirapan ang Pilipino kasi 'pag pahirapan mo ang Pilipino, hindi ko matiis. P**...

You know, we are not --- I was not born equal to your standards or values. May kanya-kanya tayong --- how we look at...

Mine is simply, I said, to preserve the nation and that is addressed all --- to all revolutionaries. Either we talk or we fight. We'll give all the chances.

And government has been talking --- Misuari has been biding his time. He said that I will --- it will depend on Duterte's timetable. I told Nur na hintay ka lang but we will come up with a happy compromise for all.

I may not be able to give you everything. But in a scale of one to 10, if I can deliver about six, that would be good to me. Don't you agree? Sabi ko you're getting old. Me, they said that I'm dying. Of course, I will die someday. Walang problema 'yan.

Death should not worry anybody. It's inevitable and it can happen any day. So what is there to talk about? My discoloration. Eh pumunta ako ng Jordan lalo... Desert and I was watching the --- well I'm not, it's --- it has something to do with military. I cannot discuss it with you in public.

Pero tinignan ko 'yung --- mabuti kung... If it materializes then we are thankful to everybody who can help us. The Marawi incident shows the need for cooperation with everybody --- with the United States, Australia. The government of America shared with all of these things.

And ako naman, sabi ko sa military, "Just go ahead." I'm not in the mood to --- wala naman akong alam sa armas eh. I do not know anything about... I'm not a technical person, I'm a lawyer. So just go ahead.

So that's my stand. Remember, remember this momentous event, the --- maybe one of the many crowning moments of your life, Your Excellency President Ramos.

But remember this, how do --- I do not know how you look at me --- but remember this: If we cannot have law and order in this country and if we cannot control corruption, we will never rise even in parity of the level now of Malaysia and Indonesia in five or 10 years.

But do not castigate or crucify our country. Depende 'yan eh. So would you ask: Is God fair? I don't know. I've been asking that question. But I'm sure there is God. How it evolves into something to human beings in this universe is something which I cannot really answer.

But you know the human history, right after the war, everybody was scavenging but at the same time, desperately looking for the resources to build their nations.

Ang problema --- I do not know if God has something to do with it, but I'd rather talk about the --- the thing itself.

Meron ang Indonesia, Malaysia, pati Brunei, Brunei especially. They're awash with oil. Kasi it's a favorite --- it has become almost a cliché na sabihin mo na, "Ah 'yung Pilipinas number two noon, tapos ngayon we are second to the last, Bangladesh."

Why? Well, mas marunong man kayo sa akin. We do not have oil. We do not have the buffer for supply and even the hedge in the economy. You can take it out pero you know everything that you see around, everything is oil. This one is made by a machine powered by oil. The chandeliers, the step there.

Gusto kong umiyak kasi --- I don't know how much of the gross domestic product would eat into our income sa dito.

So every time, 'yang mga Pilipino naman, I don't blame the others, it's politics. The name of the game is politics. So the more that you are --- that's politics. That's how --- the way to get power, intrigue, lies and everything. Kung anong --- everything is fair in love, in politics, and in war.

Iyan talaga ang totoo. Why would you blame the Philippines sabihin mo na...? You know because every time there is an increase in oil prices, if it's 60, it's 60 per barrel, we are in trouble. And I will admit to the Filipino nation that it could not just be something like a huge inflation. It will redound to something like almost suffering.

And that's why do not believe in --- that I do not have a God. Of course I believe in God.

You know, even by computation, I started to doubt. But I --- when I was in high school, I started to compute. Earth is they say four point five to six billion years old. And the skies are full of trillions and billions and trillions and billions of foreign matter, planets, galaxies.

If I try to compute the average odds of us being hit by another meteor that could be as big as ours... Tingnan mo sa for four --- five hundred billion wala talagang tumama? Walang tumama because there is God. Because if God allows everything to go out of their gravitational positions, we will be banging each other and there will be no universe.

Considering how huge the universe but also the foreign bodies there at four point five to five billion... Magsabi ba really that long walang nangyari? If there is no something of a universal mind controlling this universe, matagal na tayong tapos. And that is my thinking of why there is God.

Pero to... If asking na bakit ibinigay ng Diyos 'yan na wala sa atin, that is something for the human mind and soul because the soul has the mind and probably at that time God will give us the answer.

In the meantime, we are going four point five or five billion years. In maybe in 200 billion years may tatama talaga basta... But I will be shaking hands with you in heaven.

So that is my... But for the... Sir, basahin ko nalang, sir, with your permission 'yung speech ko. Kaawa naman 'yung gumawa nito. *[laughter]* I know you have been President. The staff works overtime really.

So to... I do not use "former." "President" is a title that sticks to you until kingdom come.

So His Excellency President Fidel V. Ramos and Madam Amelita "Ming" Ramos; their Excellencies in the diplomatic corps; Education Secretary Leonor Briones and the other members of the Cabinet; Senator Cynthia Villar, ma'am and other members of the Senate who are here. Ma'am, 'yung kandidato ko ma'am, maawa ka naman. *[laughter]*

UCCP Secretary General Bishop Melzar Labuntog; Chairman Pastor Keith Arleigh Quebral and other members of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

It is my pleasure to have been invited by President Ramos to give this keynote message on the launching of his book, "Prosper Thy Neighbor." Indeed, we all want not only the Filipinos but our countrymen to be in a comfortable place.

This is indeed another milestone in his brilliant and [prolific] writing career, and one that is surely to inspire all of us for a long time. Please stay around for another 100 years. We need you. *[applause]*

This compilation of speeches, essays, anecdotes and editorial underscores the role of a president as the "skipper" or "captain" of the Philippines --- the one person who can unite us in resolving pressing issues that we face as a nation.

He also offers valuable insight on the role of the Philippines in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Built on the core principle of "leaving no one behind", these goals target education --- the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development across the world.

Mr. President, I assure you that this administration is exerting its efforts --- ultimate efforts --- even utmost in making more progress to achieve these development goals not just because it is mandated by the UN, but more importantly, because it is for the good of the nation, the Republic of the Philippines.

This is why we have made great strides --- and we remain unrelenting --- in our efforts to address the root causes of poverty and hunger, unemployment, corruption, criminality, dangerous drugs, endemic disease, environmental degradation, and climate change.

Ito, tingnan mo ang Boracay ngayon. Eh sabi nila bukas mag-inaugurate sabi ko... I will go to Boracay but I will go to distribute the lands given to the Atis. Hindi ako masyado --- I'm not into sumptuous celebration. But I will go to Boracay to personally distribute the land reform program certificates to the Lumads there, the natives. Ibinigay ko sa kanya 'yung entire... The whole of...

Kasi alam ko 'pag hindi mauubos 'yan and Boracay is just a small place. If you allow hotels and every subdivision there, it cannot. It's because a world class --- everybody wants to go there. And if you have a land... It cannot carry beyond its normal capacity in terms of environmental loads and burdens.

So hindi ako pupunta doon but I'll go there someday to... I'm waiting for the Department of Agrarian Reform to... Doon. Para sa akin mas importante 'yan. I am through with the dramas and show-offs. I'm stuck with my term and I do not have to go politicking.

I might go there someday but not just to... Ayaw ko ibandera. Maganda na kasi daw ang Boracay eh. And I saw the footages sa TV. And I hope that

now that it's clean, it has been eradicated of the bacteria, the huge bacteria there.

I hope that the --- the local government and of course with Roy Cimatu who is there --- I just talked to him. He was asking me a moment ago if I'm going there. Sabi ko, "No, I'm not." I'll go there to --- for the land distribution of the land reform.

The Philippines remains firm in preserving our diplomatic relations with our traditional allies and the international community as long as it is[consistent] with our national interest. It is under this paradigm that we continue to do our part in global cooperation against the universal problems that plague our world today.

Let me thank President Ramos again for his im --- wisdom and for his inspiring thoughts conveyed to our people especially our youth to take part in achieving the international community's aspirations for lasting peace and sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all.

I said remember that it's not our fault really, even with the present. But we are trying.

You know, at one time I was so exasperated in a command conference that I asked that if every major commanders of the --- of the Armed Forces, Navy, Army... Sabi ko, "Tumindig lang kayong apat ngayon. You stand up to signify your willingness that I will step down and I will step down."

I offered to step down. Sabi ko hindi ko kaya. Corruption dito tapos maasahan mo dito, pagdating mo meron na naman na bago. It was a Cabinet meeting then after that a command conference, sabi ko "hindi ko kaya". Hindi ko kayang habulin. Hindi ko talaga kayang habulin.

Every desk in that --- in this government, with a few exceptions, merong 'pag mag-transaction talaga. So I have to revise the procedure. Hindi naman tumindig ang military pati pulis, ibig sabihin na sige trabaho ka muna diyan. I will revise the entire...

You know, my, my... I don't know if I have the time. But just a vignette --- vignettes of life. My father was a governor of Davao, 12 years. But when President Marcos won, he got my father into the Cabinet, General Services.

So my father was one of the two remaining Nacionalistas who did not jump over the fence. As the usual, ganon, kung saang administrasyon, doon 'yan. But my father and I think it was Governor Ebarle of Zamboanga refused.

So when President Marcos won, he got my father into the Cabinet. His Excellency, President Ramos, my favorite president, amongst all including the incumbent. *[laughter and applause]*

He was --- he was the chief Philippine Constabulary at that time. But Ramos was very bright. Because under the General Services was the Bureau of Supply. Philippine politics, Philippine culture. Maagang-maaga nandiyan.

So President Ramos --- ah Marcos said, "You know, go into some kind of a canvassing." There is always the international pricing. Kung magbili ka ng tractor, tingnan mo lang. And it's a matter of three or four percent mga commission-commission 'yan pati freight.

Pero kung mag-abot ng mga --- ang price difference, you compare it with the international pricing and it's about 10 or 20 percent, that's corruption.

So malaman ko man, so I'm setting up that body. Nothing but tignan lang nila 'yung mga presyo sa lahat. Start with paper clips down to paper bonds, then to chains. Then I will decide who will... Titignan lang nila. Just checking, another checking.

So I do not need to --- this is not a setup for a --- no. But rather just to call your attention that "you know medyo mataas 'yan". You know, nandito man lahat Cabinet members. No transaction will ever reach my table.

Nandiyan man 'yang mga Cabinet members, Esperon, si Delfin Lorenzana. Walang transaction dito na MRT, LRT, reclamation, they do not... It begins and ends with the Cabinet member. I only sign mga appointments tapos 'yung Central Bank or whatever.

That's submitted to me by Dominguez. Iyon lang. And for the life of me, you can ask anybody. Walang papel na ano. Iyong frigate, I promised everybody that if there is corruption, you can come to me and I will give you any time of the day or night.

Sabihin mo lang doon sa guwardiya "may i-reklamo ako kay Duterte na may corruption," and I will call the idiot immediately.

Ang nangyari dito, the complainant was the winning bidder. Nag-complain siya doon sa Malacañan, bakit hindi pa i-deliver 'yung frigate?

So as practice, pagka sabi corruption, we give it attention. Ibinigay kay Secretary Lorenzana, tapos ni-refer niya sa legal which is really the proper course. He is not a lawyer. Somebody got hold of it, 'yung frigate-frigate.

So Malacañan was... Wala, tapos na 'yon eh, pa-deliver. Ang nanalo sabi niya, "Kailangan ko i-deliver 'to kasi pera 'to eh." Iyon lang ang complaint niya. Well it could be misconstrued, misinterpreted but still the policy is there.

If it is corruption, there's an [8888]. You can call it anytime. Just leave your number. If you do not want to be identified, leave a cellphone number and I will treat it with utmost confidence.

Iyan lang. Tapos tawagin ko. 'Pag negosyante ka ganon, corruption, I will call him as I did in so... May undersecretary ako diyan sinipa ko sa mukha. Kaya tinawag ko 'yan. So what's your complaint? He is here right now.

'Yan nakikita talaga ng... Itong... Nanibago siguro itong mga presidential guards kay butangero 'yung... Ngayon lang nakakita ng Presidenteng nambubugbog eh. Sinipa ko talaga sa mukha.

But it was really a serious offense also. I could have killed him. It was so serious I could have killed him. Sabi ko, "Just go away."

Iyan ang policy ko. Kaya magduda kayo. Sabi ko nga you cannot file a case against me for corruption not in a million years.

I do not even call them. You can ask them now. Was there a time when you swore to office na tumawag ako sa kanila for anything? Or whatever for any matter. I do not use the cellphone. Sabihin ko lang kay Senator Bong.

Eh ito si Senator Bong --- ah Go, *[applause]* hindi ho ito ano, he looks Chinese because the father is a Go. Mga... Sino bang taga-Batangas dito? Kababayan niyo ito --- ano ito, Tesoro. Doon sa Batangas. Batangueño talaga 'yan.

Kaya nag-migrate sa Davao, nag-asawa ng... But 'yung ano nito, ang beginnings nito sa --- on the Philippine side, Batangueño ito. Tesoro ang nanay nito.

Eh sabi ko kay Bong na, "sabihin mo lang mag-uusap na lang kami bukas." Totoo, tanungin mo 'yan sila. Magtanong ka maski sino. Your one peso will win one million. Wala akong tinawagan. I do not even know their numbers.

Just a reminder, pakisabi kay Delfin Lorenzana na we have to talk about these things. Ganun po ako. So rest assured na sabihin niyo may paborito ako na... If at all, if at all, it could take place sa mga Cabinet members ko. But I tell you they are all honest.

If they are into business na legit, they have to earn a living. Most of them are military. Now, why? Let me explain, sir. This is the last paragraph. Ah basahin ko na lang baka makalimutan ko.

On this note, I would like to congratulate my idol. Palakpak. *[applause]* Kayo lang ang audience na kailangan pa i --- *[laughter]* you have to egg... Where's your enthusiasm?

On this note again, I would like to congratulate my idol for his successful book launch.

I wish you good health, sir, and greater success in your undertakings. We will be forever grateful for your uplifting leadership and for your selfless service to the nation. Sir, my salute. *[applause]*

Thank you at mabuhay kayong lahat. *[applause]*

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