

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING HIS TALK TO TROOPS
IN AGUSAN DEL SUR

[Delivered at Camp Datu Lipus Makapandong, 401st Infantry Brigade,
Brgy. Awa, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur |
29 September 2018]

Commander, tikas pahinga order is requested. Thank you.

Agrarian Reform Secretary John Castriciones; Presidential Adviser on Military Affairs Arthur Tabaquero; National Defense Undersecretary Reynaldo Mapagu; Lieutenant General Commander Benjamin Madrigal, general --- Lieutenant General; 4th Infantry Division Commander Major General Ronald Villanueva; the 401st Infantry Brigade Commander Brigadier General Andres Centino; the 402nd Infantry Brigade Commander Brigadier General Franco Gacal; the officers and enlisted men, personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; ladies and gentlemen, magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat.

It's always a prepared speech but let me just also express my sentiments --- kung ano sa loob ko. I'm happy that I'm --- I've been --- I was able to make it here, maski ginabi na ako. This is one of the few last camps na hindi ko nabisita in my tour. But pupunta ako ng Samar sometime next week. Medyo...

But overall, I would like to commend the men and women of the Eastern Command for a wonderful performance. You were able to dismantle one, two --- maybe in the future. Maganda ang pinakita ninyo sa bayan and I give you my salute.

So I will read my speech because it is really prepared for you.

It was only June of last year when I visited your brigade at Camp Bancasi. A year has passed and since then, I have proudly witnessed the hard work, dedication and bravery of the men and women of the 401st brigade in maintaining law and order in your operations.

Through your valiant and relentless efforts, you have neutralized, apprehended and facilitated the surrenders of the regulars, Militia ng Bayan members, Sangay ng Partido Lokal members and more than 500 underground mass organization members. This led to the recovery of hundreds of firearms and explosives, and the discovery of enemy encampments.

Your steadfast support in the campaign against illegal drugs has not only resulted in the confiscation of shabu worth over 11 million, but also led to the neutralization of drug personalities, securing the provinces of Agusan del Sur and Surigao del --- Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur.

To this day, your cooperation with concerned government agencies, especially in the implementation of Martial Law in Mindanao, has not only made our kababayans safer in these challenging times, but also paved the way for the collective advancement of our communities.

These accomplishments, however, came at a price. In our bold --- to be rid of society with evil forces, many have been wounded and lives have been lost. I share my grief with you.

I, together with the Filipino people, are truly grateful for your gallantry of our wounded and fallen comrades and the courage of our troops to continue to make great sacrifices to defend our land, uphold peace and secure the freedom we now enjoy.

We have accomplished a lot since we had started this journey more than two years ago. Yet, there is still much to do as we continue our fight against the ills that plague our nation.

I assure you that you are not alone in this fight. As long as you perform your mandate in accordance with law, this administration will remain steadfast in supporting your organization and provide you with the necessary tools and resources that enable you to effectively fulfill --- as defenders of the nation.

If it is in the performance of your duty and you face charges, criminal and all, you need not worry. I will take the blame personally and I will protect you. And I would never, never allow you to go to jail.

Performing a duty for a nation is a noble job. I will not allow a single soldier to stay in prison even for one day. That is my promise to you.

We will see to it that the nation that we hand over to our children is one that is more stable, harmonious and progressive. I therefore ask each of you to continue doing your part so that we may soon realize our aspiration for a lasting peace and stability across the nation.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay ang 401st brigade. Saludo ako sa inyo.

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