

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK

SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2018 PALARONG PAMBANSA

[Delivered at President Elpidio Quirino Stadium, Bantay Ilocos Sur | 15 April 2018]

Kindly sit down. Umupo na. Sit down. You guys there sit down.

May I be allowed to make some acknowledgments? Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, who is an Ilokano; Education Secretary Leonor Briones; Senator Jose Pimentel Ejercito; Ilocos Sur Governor Ryan Luis Singson; Bantay town Mayor Samuel Parilla II; officials, coaches, athletes and Palarong Pambansa 2018 led by Secretary-General Tonisito Umali; mga kasama ko sa gobyerno; mga kababayan.

It is my pleasure to be with you today as we commence the Palarong Pambansa 2018.

I thank the province of Ilocos Sur for its efforts to make this much awaited annual national event a success. Congratulations for hosting this affair for the third time.

May the organizers and hosts take this sports competition as an opportunity to promote Ilocano culture and the history of Ilocos Sur, especially as it celebrates its bicentennial anniversary this year.

More than just a showcase of the Filipino youth's talents and skills in the field of sports, the Palarong Pambansa serves as a training ground for future leaders and national builders whose values and principles are founded on perseverance, discipline, teamwork, integrity and love of country.

The government remains steadfast in promoting physical education, encouraging sports programs and supporting athletes, especially as they compete in international events.

To the student athletes who have flown all the way from their provinces to compete and represent their respective schools and regions, congratulations. The fact that you are here with us today is enough proof of your determination and excellence in your chosen sports, and that makes all of you winners and champions already.

While you devote yourselves in sports, do your best to excel in your studies too. Your ability to balance academics and your other interests measures your aptitude for skills such as multi-tasking, time management and decision-making—skills that you will need as you take on greater responsibilities in the future.

To the parents, there is no better way to show your love for your children than to help them realize their potential. Support them as they discover themselves and explore the limitless possibilities for their growth and development.

Sports serves as an avenue to divert the youth from illegal drugs, criminality and other lawless acts. We in government continue our campaign to eradicate these social ills to ensure a safe and progressive tomorrow for you and for the next generations.

Rest assured that this administration will never stop working hard to make the Philippines a better nation. We, however, cannot do this alone. We call for your participation in making our national plans and programs tangible.

Being a delegate to the Palarong Pambansa is just one of the many firsts in your journey towards success. Embody good values and enhance your skills, for this is the beginning of your greater participation in nation-building. I look forward to your more significant contributions to society in the days to come.

Again, congratulations and good luck. Mabuhay ang batang --- kabataang Pilipino!

Now I officially declare the Palarong Pambansa 2018 open. *[applause]*

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Source: PCOO-PND (Presidential News Desk)