

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE
BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO
(BARM)

[Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Complex, BARM Compound, Cotabato City | 29
March 2019]

Kindly sit down. Thank you.

Excellencies of the diplomatic corps; Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol; Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año; Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity Carlito Galvez Jr.; Interim Chief Minister of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, his honor, Al Haj Murad Ebrahim; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Before I would start reading my prepared speech, may I just express in front of you my extreme happiness that... *[applause]* It gives me the high that we were able to realize at least a part --- maybe not all, but a part of what the entire country would have wished for the Moro people of Mindanao.

I cannot express my sense of gratitude to you for understanding, for giving us the time to craft the law, to make it legal, and a promise a new dawn for the Moro, the Bangsamoro area or territory.

So, ganun na lang po. Accept my --- talagang totoong kaligayahan ko that... *[applause]* Maybe in due time with the prayers to our Allah that we'd able to fix also the western part and I hope to talk to our brother Nur Misuari on the western side. I pray for success and the guidance of Allah in our endeavors.

Today, we proudly open a new chapter in our history as we inaugurate the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the new autonomous entity that we had envisioned to address the injustices of the past and plot

the new course towards a more promising future for Mindanao and the rest of the country.

Earlier this year, an overwhelming majority of registered voters from the proposed Bangsamoro region expressed their desire to end more than half a century of armed struggle that affected tens of thousands of lives.

Our victory in this plebiscite is proof of our determination to bring genuine peace and development in Muslim Mindanao through a responsive government that truly reflects the identity of its people.

We owe this victory to the fruitful collaboration between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front, the Commission on Elections, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, and the local government units of the provinces and cities and municipalities that participated in the plebiscite.

We likewise owe the success of this plebiscite to the hardworking teachers, canvassers, and voters who courageously played their respective roles in this electoral exercise and our nation owes them dearly.

This momentous event brings us a step closer to the realization of our decades-old dream of a peaceful region that is governed by the autonomous government that serves all Muslims, Christians, lumads, and other indigenous peoples, and every Filipino who also call Mindanao their home.

We entrust this responsibility to the distinguished members of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority under the able leadership and through the vision of Chief Minister Al Haj Murad Ebrahim. *[applause]* Sir, sumasaludo ako sa inyo.

It is my sincere hope that the new Bangsamoro regional government will not just live up to its aspirations and principles embodied in the past peace agreements with different Moro fronts, but also promote good governance, transparency, accountability, and inclusive political empowerment.

To my dear Bangsamoro sisters and brothers in the BTA, the power to chart the course of your region's future is now in your hands. *[applause]*

I trust that you will wield this power with utmost care, the future of succeeding generations of the Filipinos, especially the Moro of Mindanao, depends on it.

As we enter the transition period, I ask everyone to work towards building lasting peace and inclusive progress that will benefit all Mindanaoans and the entire country as well. We do this ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of the Annex on Normalization, which includes the decommissioning of former MILF combatants.

As we mark a new chapter in our history, I call upon Bangsamoro to take advantage of this opportunity and finally correct the historical injustices and forget the bitterness of the past so that we may embrace each other as Filipinos. *[applause]*

Before I end, let me repeat and reiterate my solemn promise to you, a sacred one which I promised also to Allah *[applause]* for his blessings, that in my term and for the next three years, we will all work and truly work for the benefit of the Bangsamoro people. *[applause]*

Salamat po.

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