

**Presidential Communications Operations Office  
Presidential News Desk**

**SPEECH OF  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
DURING THE GRAND OPENING AND INAUGURATION OF  
DUSITD2 HOTEL DAVAO AND  
DUSIT THANI GRAND BALLROOM**

[Delivered at Stella Hizon Reyes Drive, Bo. Pampanga, Davao City | 06  
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His Excellency, before --- may I be allowed to just say my apologies. I just came in. I had about four.

One is that I went purposely to Cebu with the other commitments on the line because I visited the wake of a friend who was my dorm mate during our student days. I felt that I should be there. I was the best man when he was married and a friend for a lifetime.

The wife was --- had already dementia. But I was really surprised that she remembered the things that happened when she got married. On a long-term, I realized that really, they could retrieve some of the pieces, bits and pieces of memories.

I was sad and I stayed for a quite a while. But the other commitments, I did it in a jiffy just to be here. Again, my apologies.

His Excellency Vasin Ruangprateepsaeng, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand for the Philippines. I hope sir that I have pronounced your... *[applause]* It's quite a tongue-twister but no offense intended. Nice to see you here in Davao City.

The Cabinet Secretary Karlo Alexei Nograles. We had a Cabinet meeting last night at --- it ended at about 3, 3 in the morning. Was it? Two o'clock? I am not surprised that you seem to be drowsy, Secretary. *[laughter]* And also the --- our Tourism Secretary, Bernadette Romulo-Puyat. Well, walang problema ito si Berna. Kasi puyat na puyat na talaga `to eh. *[laughter]* Sa pangalan pa lang. We were talking about this affair last night.

Senator Bong Go. [*Saan si Bong?*] [*applause*]; the officers and staff of Torre Lorenzo Development Corporation led by its Chief Executive Officer Mr. Tomas Lorenzo [*applause*]; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Let me congratulate Torre Lorenzo Development Corporation for the grand opening of the DusitD2 Davao Hotel and the Dusit Thani Grand Ballroom. I supposed that we're in this room right now.

It is truly my pleasure to join you today as we welcome this vibrant premium hotel infrastructure in my home city of Davao.

I am optimistic about the boundless opportunities that this project offers to Davao's socio-economic development. I thus look forward to the hotel's contribution in boosting tourism and generating employment for my fellow Davaoeños.

This contemporary structure is indeed a commendable work of architecture as it boldly stands as a symbol of our continuing path [to] sustainable development not just for the city but for the rest of Mindanao.

May this functional and relaxing environment that you provide your guests enable you to set the standards in hotel management in the country. You have a neighbor there ha, Insular Hotel, somewhere. Adapt to our people's improving lifestyles and serve as a haven for those who need an escape from the bustling cityscape.

I trust that you will continue to expand your projects in the urban centers and destinations across the country, demonstrating in the process of your commitment to the customer satisfaction and excellent service. Your neighbor again is just a few...

May our distinct Filipino hospitality guide you in serving your guests. We look forward to your future projects that will offer the same level of comfort, luxury and relaxation for Davaoeños and tourists alike.

Rest assured that the government will remain dedicated in its efforts to provide a more conducive business environment where [businesses] may thrive and flourish.

With the help of the hospitality industry, I am confident that we can pave a wider path towards sustainable progress for Davao and the rest of Mindanao.

I'm tempted to just add a few but I --- medyo matagalan na tayong. Masama na ang tingin ninyo sa akin eh. So maybe, we can talk about it. I'm --- I was going to just give you the factors that would, you know, shape Mindanao whether for the worse or for the better.

We have been able to strike a solution in central Mindanao. There is less fighting now because of the BOL. And I'd like to congratulate my brother Muslims, Moros of Mindanao that there has been almost no incident here in the central Mindanao area.

The NPAs remains to be a big problem. I was mentioning... I thought that --- turns out that it is really near your place, just a few minutes. I was thinking of the long route towards ComVal valley, added to the fact that there's quite an active activity there of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Well, by the way, I just hope that we'd be able to do something about it before my term ends. 'Yun lang. You have to consider the law and order of Mindanao. I do not recommend any new economic activity or investment on the western side, especially in the islands there. I do not think that it would be prudent for you to consider it.

Maybe, in the fullness of God's time, we'd be able to come up with something that's a workable solution for all. But upwards, towards the north, Visayas, would be a good place to just look at and think of the things that you can do or invest your money in those places.

Pero medyo saturated na ang Visayas, except for the --- well itong eastern side underdeveloped pa and the western side. But 'yung Cebu and Bohol are really good places to consider.

So I... You just talk to Berna. She knows my mind and the things that we consider especially tourism when we offer a program for whatever connected with the business and investment.

Again, I'm very sorry for being late. I could not really do something more --- and doing it faster. Alam mo, you have to --- there's a commitment there and you have to talk and all the things. So I thought that nag-uwi na kayo. *[laughter]*

When I came in, there was only one single motor vehicle na naka-parking. Sabi ko, hindi na nakahintay. But I did not know na... Wala man akong nakitang sasakyan. Saan sasakyan ninyo? You came in via --- from the water? Ah.

Few motor vehicles are really outside. Kaya sabi ko, hindi na nakahintay. Mabuti ito. Well, I thought na nung pag-akyat ko, sabi ko medyo ano ito kasi may ballroom.

Anyway, let me just say that I'm very happy to see you and I'd like to give you a handshake to make up for the ano --- the delayed opportunity to maybe have a talk, more the usual. The things that you'd like to know.

So to the Lorenzos, this is a good move. Sir, I have a new Secretary of Agriculture. And... *[laughter]* I was really considering you. *[laughter, applause, and cheers]* I just could not find you. *[laughter]* In the previous years, you were everywhere. Be it in the hotels and the...

So I settled for somebody who was a farm boy and huwag mo lang sabihin sa kanya. *[laughter]* Without being really offensive to anybody but you know how are --- the Ilonggos, they were --- may ara na lahat na solusyon sa buhay naton (They have all the solutions in our lives).

Kay during the first Cabinet meeting --- huwag ninyo isabi sa kanya na --- mapahiya 'yung tao. English spokening 'yan eh. "Mr. President, I would like to say something about my desire to come up with something and to make you realize that you did not commit an error in putting me in my position. Mr. President, I think that with the proper funding and efforts that can be given to the maximum, I guarantee you that maybe, just maybe, at the end of the year..." "Which term?" "First year. We would be a net exporter of rice."

Wow. Dominguez was there, Berna was not yet... *[Nandoon ka na ba? Wala pa?]* Si Bong nandoon na. Sabi ko, damo sang hangin na 'yan. *[laughter]* Kasi alam ko kulang talaga. Eh matagal akong loc --- ay local government so you'd know the fluctuations of what? Even the brainwork of people.

Sabi niya, it's quite a long shot but maybe I... Come now the mid-year crisis. P\*\*\*. *[laughter]* Walang bigas. And I had to, you know, disregard the rice council and I told the NFA at that time... He was a good one. Misunderstood lang.

Sabi ko, go ahead and import rice. Because you know, the people or constituents are really visual. Ang Pilipino 'pag nakita niya 'yung bodega mo tapos ganun lang kahaba ang supply mo, even if it would suffice a large --- medyo discouraging 'yan sa kanila.

Sabi ko, kung may pera ka, punuin mo. Magbili ka. Tatal first in, first out 'yan. Taasan mo hanggang ceiling. 'Pag nakita ng Pilipino, okay na 'yan. Pero 'pag nakita niya na mas... Even if you have the entire bodegas there reserved, 'pag hindi niya nakita, kinakabahan. So you create a crisis.

But it was really all in the mind. We had enough rice. How you know the other side would generate the sentiment and even the fear. So I could... Sa panahon mo sir, wala. So Dusit of Thailand was really correct in partnering with you. *[applause]*

So with that, I say, again I am sorry and thank you for listening to me. *[applause]*

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