

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**SPEECH OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE CONFERMENT OF AWARDS ON ASEAN NATIONAL
ORGANIZING COUNCIL OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL**

[Delivered at Heroes Hall, Malacañan Palace | 03 December 2018]

Kindly sit down. Thank you for your courtesy.

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and other members of the Cabinet; ASEAN National Organizing Council Director-General for Operations Ambassador Marciano Paynor; officials and personnel of ASEAN National Organizing Council headed by its Chairman Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea; fellow workers in government; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen

I am almost tempted to... Hindi ako nag-aano ha --- I am not trying to pull a leg somewhere. But may I just --- personal observation.

Maybe I call the attention of the guys in the ASEAN Secretariat. *[May kopya ba kayo ng ano? When is the next meeting outside?]**[Official says: Thailand next year]*

You know we start at 8:30 in the morning --- *[Official says: April 2019 in Bangkok]* --- in Bangkok --- and we end up almost 10? 11? Nandiyan man `yan silang lahat.

And it's every --- every 30 minutes, 8:30 tapos 9:30, 10:30, iba na naman. Baka akala nitong ASEAN Secretariat boy scout kami. *[laughter]* Hindi kaya `yan. It's whole day hindi kaya.

Lahat ng mga... Huwag kang maingay ha pero si Bolkiah nakatulog na palagi eh. But he has that talent na --- Sandhurst kasi eh. Hindi gumaganon. Pikit lang nang... So it is as if he is contemplating of his oil. *[laughter]*

Hindi talaga kaya. You have to give that to the technical working group or at least on the lower echelons sa ministerial. We only take `yung pinaka importante, `yung mga nuisances about other country huwag na --- ano na `yon. Only the urgent and immediate concerns of ASEAN.

Hindi talaga kaya. Noong ako dito, I just came in from a nowhere tapos kinabukasan umpisa na. I think I was in India. Susmaryosep. Walang tulog. And the more that the crescendo becomes faster mas lalo kang hindi nakakatulog kasi may hinahabol ka na babasahin eh.

And so you do not want your President to look ignorant or sound ignorant, so I have to catch up with the reading. Wala na talagang panahon.

Siguro mga --- start at 8:30 pero wala namang gumigising ng 8:30. It should be 9:00 --- 9:00, tapos the next meeting would be lunch, then 2:30, then another one at 4:30. Apat lang pero kung every 30 minutes.

Nakita man ninyo. It's a killing activity and I think the... My age, ako hindi masyado kasi nagma-marijuana ako eh para ma --- para magising. *[laughter]* Sa iba hindi na kaya.

Iyong mga tao diyan puro revolutionary 'yan. Lao... They had to undergo turmoil and... Hindi ko talaga kaya. I don't know how to reconfigure the style of taking up the... I said the only important, the most urgent, the most immediate.

Pero 'yung iba, hindi talaga kaya. Pangit pa ng mga ulam. Susmaryosep. *[laughter]* Totoo. Ayan o nandiyan 'yung protocol. Nandiyan man sila ano...

Nagbabaon ako ng carne norte pati tuyo. Totoo. Alam mo Bisaya ako eh, I have to have a salty diet. Hindi ako pwede 'yang bland, patay.

Kaya 'yung kwarto namin doon sa New Guinea ang baho na. *[laughter]* Doon niluluto sa kwarto eh di 'yang bulad. *[laughter]*

Hindi ano... Ay sus kaligaya ko na lang matapos 'to. Nagbaon ako maraming carne norte sa India kasi alam ko ang pagkain doon.

Pagbaba namin sa carne norte, "hindi pwede dito sa India 'yang baka". *[laughter]* Bawal. In the Middle East, wala ka ring makadala ng baboy na canned goods. So...

When the Philippines assumed Chairmanship of ASEAN during its milestone 50th year in 2017, I considered it as a distinct privilege for our country and a great responsibility for our government.

While this task was indeed enormous and overwhelming, I never once doubted our capability to succeed in this endeavor, mainly because of

the able and dedicated people behind the ASEAN National Organizing Council --- kayo.

It is thus my pleasure to lead today's ceremony that will recognize the extraordinary service of the outstanding men, women, and institutions who faced tremendous odds to make our Chairmanship a resounding success.

First, let me take this opportunity to honor the heroism of Police Officer 1 Mark A. Mendoza who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. We posthumously confer upon him the Order of Lapu-Lapu in recognition of his extraordinary service to our nation while taking part in the security operations during the Summit.

We are saddened by PO1 Mendoza's untimely passing and we remain hopeful that his heroism will inspire other fellow government workers to put our nation's interest above all else.

Indeed, our other honorees today have been inspired by PO1 Mendoza's sacrifice, and their individual and collective contributions to this undertaking will forever be part of this historic event that made the Philippines a major player in the regional and international stage.

Without your invaluable help, our country would not have successfully steered our nation towards lasting peace and stronger economic integration --- a challenging task that required us to engage not only with our fellow ASEAN nations, but also with the entire global community.

Indeed, the success of the various Summits held in April and November of 2017, the numerous ministerial meetings and the commemorative activities held throughout the year, and the extensive outcome documents arising from several ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms, are the result of your hard work, professionalism, excellence, and dedication to duty.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you for your selfless commitment to do your part in this national endeavor that underscored this administration's balanced approach to community-building, diplomacy and regional cooperation.

Through your vision, and guided by an independent foreign policy that gives primacy to our national interest, we were able to build on ASEAN's rich history and forge stronger relations not only among ASEAN member-states and our traditional Dialogue Partners, but also with non-traditional partners and the larger community of nations.

May your outstanding service not only highlight ASEAN's gains while the Philippines was at its helm, but also inspire our regional community to forge far-reaching strategic partnerships that go beyond the boundaries of Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific Region.

Let these awards immortalize the commitment and dedication of the hardworking men and women of the ASEAN National Organizing Council, whose efforts have been instrumental not only in the overall success of our Chairmanship, but also in the nation's initiative to secure for ASEAN a legacy that future generations can look forward to in the next 50 years.

Maraming salamat. Mabuhay ang ASEAN. Mabuhay kayo at ang ating bayang Pilipinas! *[applause]*

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