

Presidential Communications Office

Presidential News Desk

SPEECH
OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE 121st FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE PHILIPPINE ARMY

[Delivered at the Philippine Army Headquarters, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City | 20 March 2018]

Kindly sit down and salamat ho sa kortesiya ninyo.

Troop commander, could I request you to give the order to the troops of tikas pahinga?

I will dispense with the introductory amenities because you know magkakilala naman tayo. I am proud na ‘yung kasama ko sa CAFGU may award rin. Eh CAFGU lang po ako hindi ako umabot ng... So it is good that may award rin kami.

It was only last year when I led... Hindi ako nagbabasa ng speech kaya lang I am very sorry I was late because we ended the Cabinet meeting at 3 o’clock in the morning. We started at 2 in the afternoon. Natapos ho kami ma’am ng three, ang pinag-usapan namin ikaw. [laughter]

It was only last year when I led the 120th Anniversary of the Philippine Army and had the privilege of honoring our men and women in uniform for their acts of courage and bravery.

Two months later, our troops would embark on a five-month urban warfare, far from your accustomed jungle operational environment. You went beyond the call of duty to successfully liberate the once thriving and vibrant Islamic City of Marawi from the terrorist groups who sought to force their extremist ideology on our people.

A year after, you continue to play a crucial role as we rebuild the city and endeavor to ensure that our fellow citizens are able to live in an environment of peace and stability. Your continuous internal security operations in Mindanao and the rest of the country have allayed our people’s fear of any possible resurgence of these terrorists.

As your Commander-in-Chief, you have made me proud and you continue to do so by your induction to the Palladium Balanced Scorecard Hall of Fame for being the beacon of governance. My salute to you my beloved soldiers. [applause]

With your continued growth and progress, I have every confidence to believe that this feat will only bring you closer to your vision.

The Filipino people are eternally grateful for your service and sacrifice for our nation. I have said before, as [long] as you perform your duties according to the rule of law, I will take care of your needs.

With the approval of Joint Resolution (JR) No. 1 and the implementation of the Second Horizon of the Revised AFP Modernization program, I can assure you that the government is doing its best to ensure that our men and women in uniform are provided with the benefits and armed with the equipment to perform their duties effectively.

As you celebrate 121 years of service and sacrifice for the Filipino people, let me take this opportunity to thank and honor every member of the armed forces, past and present, for your selflessness, heroism and faithful service to the Republic.

There are no shortcuts to success. We will continue to face challenges as we trudge the noble path of building a stronger and safer nation. However, because of your contributions, these goals are now within reach.

Putulin ko muna itong English na ito. I'd just like to remind you that right after the Marawi siege --- and just for your information, by then --- baka hindi alam ng lahat --- I released 500 million to the Armed Forces for the medical interventions para kung kailangan ninyo. At tinanong ko si General Peralta --- Macario rather. Sorry. Akala ko kasi pareho na kayo ng ranggo eh.

I also released 50 million sa V. Luna for their needs aside from the 500 million. Pati 'yung mga nag-retire [applause] they can get their... Every month, it's 50 million for V. Luna.

You can sort out your retirement management. Maraming management diyan and most of you suffer --- karamihan sa inyo liver pati kidney.

I don't know why but it might be really because of the unsanitary limits where you have to push yourself during a war or violence.

At another 50 for the AFP and I have bought you the baric and all and palagay ko 'yung bagong building ninyo uumpisahan na to replace the first building diyan sa AFP.

So I think that this time, we have done enough in government to make your life comfortable.

But please do not hesitate. I'd like to have the rapport personally with each and everyone of you.

If you do not have the number sa office ko, get it from somebody who knows, marami diyan. And if you have a problem na hindi mo ma --- medyo mahirapan ka at medyo naman konting mahirap rin sa command mo, call me and I'll give you time and we'll have coffee and talk about...

Kasi 'yung unang tinatanong ko, "ilan ang asawa mo?" Hindi ako nagbibiro, totoo. Kasi --- tapos kung magsagot, "ilan ang anak mo?"

‘Yung kanina sabi niya, “lima.” Sabi ko, “umuwi ka na sa inyo, mag-retire ka na.” Iwan ka ng lima. Dapat kasi --- pag mag-ganun-ganun ako, nag --- nagtatanong ako kung ilan --- two, three, boundary. Start early so by the time na ano, medyo you retire early so dapat sila they should also start to go to school.

By the way, itong Bonifacio na ito sabi ni General Guerrero, they are now negotiating --- the very thing I told you before. Hindi naman ninyo kailangan talaga lahat eh. Malaki ito. You develop it just like Taguig ‘yung --- lease it to the people and you will earn millions.

The Finance Secretary insisted that maggawa siya ng mini GSIS kasi hindi kayo kasali. Meron kayo but it’s not really enough in life.

Iyong sa edukasyon ng... Retire kasi kayo nang maaga. Tapos by that time ang mga anak mo kung may apat ka, tatlo, nasa ano pa. I would like that contract completed on time.

And I give you my assurance na hindi pakialaman ng civilian government ‘yan. It shall be the military welfare fund but we will just have to put in some civilians who are good economists also so that it will flourish and serve you.

Malaking pera ‘yan. Take care of it because... Huwag na kayo... Sige kayo parade-parade dito. Konti lang.

Dalawang kompanya tama na ‘yon. What is important you have money to support your family especially during the time when you retire which is really very young for you at marami ka pang mga obligasyon sa mga anak mo.

I will insist that it should be finished this year and it will be dealt solely by the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Ang habol lang ni Dominguez is there should be a facility. Hindi niya...

Ayaw niyang ibigay diretso sa inyo. Gusto niya dumaan ng parang bangko ninyo. And that would be like a GSIS only for the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

Iyon na lang siguro ang pinaka solusyon about the perennial problem of pera and despite of the doubling of salaries, I know that it is not enough.

Not even triple o i-quadruple mo because we are talking of lives here and the law of averages apply. And that is why gusto ko siguraduhin kayo at ang inyong pamilya. Iyon lang ang maiwan ko sa sundalo ko at sa pulis.

It is only through our combined efforts that we will be able to create real and lasting change in our country. I therefore ask you to join me in this endeavor not just for ourselves but for the sake of the generation of soldiers to come.

Happy 121st anniversary at mabuhay ang Hukbong Katihan ng Pilipinas! Mabuhay kayong lahat! [applause]

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