

Presidential Communications Operations Office  
Presidential News Desk

**MESSAGE OF  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
ENHANCED COMMUNITY QUARANTINE**

[Malacañan Palace, Manila | 20 March 2020]

I want to say something very important to the LGUs. LGU refers to the local government units.

We are in a critical time. We have resorted to this extreme measure of an Enhanced Quarantine or quarantine for Luzon, because the magnitude of the threat that we are facing calls for it. By its nature, it severely restricts the freedom of movement of our countrymen, and thus deprives many people of the ability of earning a living for the coming weeks.

Let me add my own words. I'm really very sorry but I have to do it.

Now I call [upon] LGUs. The national government needs your help during this time, but I want to tell you: Do not make this quarantine or quarantine more difficult for our people than it already is. LGUs should take note of this --- that at this time let us make ourselves clear that we are not a separate from a republic or from each other.

There is only one republic here, the Republic of the Philippines. And therefore, you should abide by the directives of the national government when it sets aside by the directives of the whole for the good of the country and the protocols observed during the time of the lockdown.

Let me add that at this time I do not think it is just a quarantine or quarantine. I think that we are already in the stage of a lockdown simply because the contagion continues to take its toll in the countryside.

I know you have the mandate to deal with emergencies affecting your localities. I was a Mayor myself, in case you have forgotten. But this is an emergency of national proportions, and therefore it is the national government that should call the shots.

The national government body in charge of laying down the standards for this quarantine is the IATF or the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Let me be clear to everyone. So when the IATF says: "Do not restrict the flow of cargo of whatever type", then no LGU should say that they only follow or allow food or essential goods to come in. You are setting already your standards, and making this quarantine more difficult for all.

I am ordering all LGUs that are doing this to stand down, and to abide by the directives of the IATF, the task force not mine but the task force, and those issued by the Office of the President.

And to make sure that what the IATF says should be closed, is closed, and those that should be open, stays open.

You know, the only reason why you can impose these quarantine restrictions and impose it on everyone passing [through] your areas, is because the national government is allowing you to do so. But if you go beyond the standards that we have set, you are abusing your authority, and you know that it can lead to – administrative cases or even worse, unless you stop what you are doing and [cooperate] fully. Criminal cases cannot be far behind.

I am therefore directing the DILG and DOJ to closely monitor the compliance of LGUs with the directives of the office and to file the necessary cases against wayward officials.

You know let me be just... Sundin na lang natin tatala para man ito sa lahat. Do not try to overdo things or think that you can do what you want to do because that is not allowed. We, you know, move in one direction, in one unison, precisely to place the contagion in control for the better health of our Filipino, our countrymen. Wala namang gusto nito eh and we do not want to be lording it over your local governments because we do not want to do that. I do not want to do that --- that's an added task. Ayaw na ayaw ko 'yan pero wala tayong magawa. Sundin lang natin. Ang ibig sabihin do not --- huwag kang magbiyahe ng sarili mo, sa Tagalog pa. Kung sa jueteng, huwag kang magpalaro ng iba. Huwag kang magbiyahe. Isa lang, sa gobyerno lang. Pero ako sa jueteng alam ko hindi niyo sinusunod. Well, there will always be a time for that.

In the coming days, we will need the help of the LGUs more and more. So I want to make this clear early on. Let us work together to implement this quarantine, and it should all begin with the LGUs making sure that your actions are consistent with the national directives. To do otherwise would sow confusion. All over the world, there is confusion and chaos already because of these lockdowns. We are not the only ones into it. All countries of the world, as a matter of fact, are doing it. And that is why it adds more trouble than what is already there that we can handle.

We are not alone. But let our country lead the way in imposing a lockdown [that] is strict enough to effectively kill COVID-19, liberal enough so that our people will not die of hunger, and orderly enough, so that our country will not be driven towards chaos during this difficult time.

Problema kasi nito COVID-19 is passable --- sa tao lang. It's contact. 'Yung handshake o 'yung just maybe rubbing each other's elbow.

We have to look further and think of the economic survival of the country even after this crisis is over.

Alam mo sa totoo lang, ang importante lang man malaman ninyo, we are imposing the social distance kasi nga ang transmittal tao lang ang pwedeng magbigay ng sakit na 'yan sa'yo. Hindi anong --- walang ibang bagay. Tao ang magbigay sa iyo ng sakit na 'yan.

So iwasan mo ang kapwa mo tao. 'Pag magdating 'yung nagpautang sa iyo, magtago ka na nang husto. Okay 'yan. Sabihin niya na nagtatago-tago ka. "Gusto kong bumayad, si COVID ang ayaw."

‘Yung stranded, we will try to help you. The --- your Air Force and your Army will help you wherever you are. Kung wala ka nang mauwian, kung wala na kayong matulugan, I am asking the military commanders of the different camps all over the country that you can go there and ask for accommodation at pagkain. And they will --- they would only be too willing to help you. ‘Yan ang ating army at pulis, bigyan kayo pagkain at tulugan. And in the meantime, they will try to communicate the authorities in Manila to --- we will try to...

Anyway, makukuha ko kayo. That is a very terrible thing. You know, as a matter of fact, it would have been very cruel for you to drive away lalo na ‘yung mga bata nagbakasyon tapos walang mauwian, walang tatanggap.

I --- my heart bleeds for them. Hindi mo malaman na kung saan ka pupunta. Pilipino ka naman pero wala namang tatanggap sa iyo. To me, I can understand your refusal. But more than your feeling, ‘yung akin is to somehow protect and help Filipinos in distress.

As your President, I am now invoking the sanctity of my oath of office --- to help people and my countrymen.

To all LGUs, let us move forward together with one accord, implement the lockdowns, and save our people from the dreaded disease, once and for all.

Ang pinakaremedyo dito is just to --- magkalayo kayo. Ngayon, kung ‘yung bahay ninyo sa bukid maliliit, eh dikit-dikit kayo, sabayan na lang din natin ng... Ano bang prayer? Ah dasal. Sabayan na lang natin ng dasal na tutulungan ‘yung mga tao, mga Pilipino na hindi --- they are not in a position --- wala sa kanilang kakayahan na magsunod ng mga social standing. Better still, just keep your distance from strangers or friends, just so na maputol ‘yung contamination from A to B, B to C. Kung kay D putulin natin doon. ‘Yun ang maganda.

So it’s actually the social intercourse that is bad at this time. I hope you can understand us at maintindihan rin ninyo kung ano ang ginagawa namin.

Maraming salamat po.

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