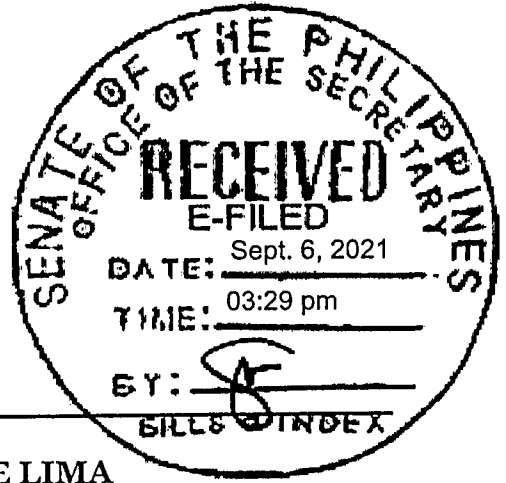


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 898

Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

RESOLUTION
TO EXPRESS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SHOW COURTESY TO A CO-EQUAL INSTITUTION AND URGE THE PRESIDENT TO REFRAIN FROM MAKING STATEMENTS INTENDED TO DIMINISH THE RESPECT DUE TO THE SENATE OR ANY OF ITS MEMBERS

1 WHEREAS, Article XI, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution states that “[p]ublic
2 office is a public trust. Public officers and employees must, at all times, be accountable
3 to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency;
4 act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives;”

5 WHEREAS, Article VI, Section 21 of the 1987 Constitution states that “[t]he
6 Senate or the House of Representatives or any of its respective committees may conduct
7 inquiries in aid of legislation in accordance with its duly published rules of procedure;”

8 WHEREAS, on 18 August 2021, the Senate Committee on Accountability of
9 Public Officers and Investigation (Blue Ribbon Committee) commenced an investigation,
10 in aid of legislation, on the possible misuse of COVID-19 funds;

11 WHEREAS, in response to the investigation, President Rodrigo Duterte, in his
12 public address last 30 August 2021 ranted about Blue Ribbon Chair Sen. Richard
13 Gordon. He was quoted saying, “*Huwag 'nyo ibalik sa Senado kasi magdaldal nang*
14 *magdaldal 'yan, mag show off, magyabang. Marami 'yan, lalo na si Gordon;*”¹

¹ Ranada, Pia. Rappler. *Duterte slams Gordon, Lacson after bombshell Senate hearing on pandemic funds*. (31 August 2021). Retrieved from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/duterte-slams-richard-gordon-after-bombshell-senate-hearing-pandemic-funds>

1 WHEREAS, he also threatened to do an exposé on Sen. Panfilo Lacson. Pres.
2 Duterte said to Sen. Lacson, *“Tanungin ko si Panfilo Lacson, are you honest? Answer*
3 *me truthfully, are you honest? Kung magsabi ka ng ‘yes,’ sasagutin kita next program.*
4 *May ipakita ako;”*²

5 WHEREAS, Pres. Duterte also mocked the looks of Sens. Gordon and Lacson. He
6 said, due to their lengthy interrogations, he was getting dizzy watching Gordon and
7 Lacson and their “strange” hairstyles. *“My advice to you is to lose weight so that...”*
8 Pres. Duterte said, trailing off. *“I get dizzy when I look at you... It’s true, even your*
9 *hairdo is strange, both you and Ping;”*³

10 WHEREAS, Pres. Duterte also told the Senate not to investigate ongoing
11 programs of government agencies as it “muddles up” and causes delays in their progress.
12 He said, *“Do not investigate programs which are ongoing. You will derail it, you will*
13 *delay it by your incessant penchant for investigating government offices.” ... “Gusto*
14 *ninyo lahat pakialaman na lang. Alam mo, you do not run this government alone.*
15 *Kung hindi naman po nadispalko, bakit ka nagtatanong? The money is there, it is*
16 *unspent, nobody’s stealing it, it’s there;”*⁴

17 WHEREAS, Pres. Duterte also went on to discredit Senate investigations. He said,
18 *“Wag ho kayo maniwala dyan sa mga imbestigasyon, imbestigasyon. Kita naman*
19 *ninyo walang nangyayari. Puro lang, we will investigate, investigate;”*⁵

20 WHEREAS, Pres. Duterte called on the public not to believe the Senate
21 investigations as they only result to “nothing”—“no recommendation, no charges filed,
22 no persons jailed;”⁶

² Ramos, Christia Marie. Inquirer.net. *‘Are you honest?’ Duterte asks Lacson.* (31 August 2021). Retrieved from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1481357/are-you-honest-duterte-asks-lacson>

³ Yap, DJ, Jerome Aning, and Melvin Gascon. Inquirer.net. *Duterte airs threat, mocks Gordon’s girth, Lacson’s hair* (1 September 2021). Retrieved from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1481669/duterte-airs-threat-mocks-gordons-girth-lacson-hair>

⁴ Aguilar, Krissy. Inquirer.net. *Duterte to senators: Don’t investigate ongoing projects of gov’t agencies.* (3 September 2021). Retrieved from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1482817/duterte-to-senators-dont-investigate-ongoing-projects-of-govt-agenciesk>

⁵ Aguilar, Krissy. Inquirer.net. *Duterte hits ‘posturing’ of senators, says investigations result to nothing.* (26 August 2021). Retrieved from: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1479463/duterte-hits-posturing-of-senators-says-investigations-result-to-nothing>

1 WHEREAS, the Senators led by no less than Senate President Vicente Sotto III,
2 debunked the claim of Pres. Duterte. By way of example, he cited on the PhilHealth
3 investigation, saying that, “[m]ost of his appointed officers have now pending cases and
4 were removed because of the Senate investigation;”⁷

5 WHEREAS, Sen. Gordon also noted that past probes eventually led to filing of
6 cases or even the removal of erring officials, like the investigation into the involvement
7 of Bureau of Customs and Philippine National Police officials in the illegal drug trade, as
8 well as the various corruption allegations hounding the Bureau of Immigration;⁸

9 WHEREAS, the doctrine of separation of powers “enjoins upon the three
10 coordinate departments of the Government a becoming courtesy for each other’s acts;”⁹

11 WHEREAS, transparency and accountability are cornerstones of our democracy
12 and our institutions must work together, rather than hindering each other, in making
13 sure that our people’s money are well spent and that the public officials are being held
14 accountable for the funds entrusted to them;

15 WHEREAS, it behooves each of the branches of our government to treat each
16 other with courtesy in the performance of their respective constitutional mandates;

17 WHEREAS, petty, inflammatory, and personal statements by the President
18 against the Senate or any of its members only lead to the erosion of public trust and
19 confidence in our democratic institutions;

20 WHEREAS, as the leader of our nation, the President must set a good example in
21 allowing democratic processes to run its course without undue interference, much less
22 cheap political attacks that do not aid in uncovering the truth behind anomalous
23 government transactions;

⁶ Ramos, Christia Marie. Inquirer.net. *Lacson, Sotto debunk Duterte’s claim that Senate probes lead to ‘nothing’*. (27 August 2021). Retrieved from:

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1479628/senators-debunk-dutertes-claim-that-senate-probes-lead-to-nothing>

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Cepeda, Mara. Rappler. *Senators hit Duterte’s rants vs probes: ‘Brush up on checks and balances’*. (27 August 2021). Retrieved from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/senators-reactions-duterte-rants-vs-probes-hearings>

⁹ *Cawaling v. Comelec*. G.R. No. 146319. 26 October 2001

1 WHEREAS, any public attempt at discrediting the Senate and preventing the
2 same and any of its committees from performing its mandate could result in a
3 constitutional crisis which serves to weaken our republic to the detriment of our people;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, to express the sense
5 of the Senate that the President should show courtesy to a co-equal institution and urge
6 the President to refrain from making statements intended to diminish the respect due to
7 the Senate or any of its members.

Adopted,


LEILA M. DE LIMA