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FIRST REGULAR SESSION
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*Begun and held at the Session Hall of the Senate,
GSIS Building, Pasay City, on Monday, July 22, 2019*

Session No. 1

Monday, July 22, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to Section 15, Article VI of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, mandating Congress to convene in regular session on the fourth Monday of July each year, the First Regular Session of the Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines was declared open on July 22, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. in the Senate Session Hall, GSIS Building, Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila, with the Senate President, Honorable Vicente C. Sotto III, presiding.

PRAYER

Sen. Sonny Angara led the prayer, to wit:

*Panginoon, ngayong araw na ito,
inihahandog po namin sa Inyo ang isang
bagong Kapulungan na humihiling ng*

*Inyong gabay mula ngayon hanggang sa
mga susunod na panahon.*

*Dalangin po namin na sa panibagong
yugto ng aming pagsisilbi sa bayan, ay
higit pang gabay ang Inyong ipagkaloob
sa amin. Nawa ay biyayaan Ninyo kami
ng dagdag-kaalaman at tibay ng loob sa
pagharap sa bawat pagsubok.*

Lord, bless this august Chamber and the public servants gathered here. Guide us all, especially our new colleagues so that in collaboration with each other, we may craft even more meaningful legislation and enact long-lasting change for our people.

*Pagkalooban Ninyo po kami ng mas
malawak na pang-unawa sa mga pang-
araw-araw na talastasan at iadya sa
anumang hindi pagkakaunawaan.*

Panginoon, manaig ang pagkakaisa sa bulwagang ito para sa kapakanan ng paglilingkod sa bayan, sa sambayanan, at sa mamamayan.

Ito po ang aming panalangin na itinataas namin sa Inyo, Panginoon.

Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Senate Choir led the singing of the national anthem and thereafter the singing of the Senate hymn, entitled "*Senadong Marangal*."

COMELEC RESOLUTION NBOC NO. 002-19

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Commission on Elections NBOC Resolution No. 002-19 proclaiming the duly-elected senators in the May 13, 2019 elections, copies of which were earlier distributed to the Members of the Senate, was considered read into the Record of the Senate.

Upon direction of the Senate President, Secretary Myra Marie D. Villarica read only the "resolved" clause of the Comelec resolution.

The following is the full text of the resolution:

NBOC RESOLUTION NO. 002-19

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections, sitting *en banc* as the National Board of Canvassers for Senators and Party-List Representatives, officially canvassed in open and public session, the votes cast for Senators in connection with the May 13, 2019 National and Local Elections (NLE);

WHEREAS, on the basis of the tabulated National Canvass Report No. 8, attached hereto, the following candidates for Senators obtained twelve (12) highest numbers of votes for the Office of the Senators during the May 13, 2019 NLE;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the powers vested under the 1987 Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code (Batas Pambansa Blg. 881), and other election laws, the Commission on Elections sitting *en banc* as the National Board of Canvassers hereby DECLARES the following as the duly-elected Senators of the Republic of the Philippines of the May 13, 2019 National and Local Elections ranked according to the number

of votes obtained by each, to serve for a term of six (6) years, beginning at noon of June 30, 2019, in accordance with Section 4, Article VI of the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines:

1. VILLAR, CYNTHIA A. 25,283,727
2. POE-LLAMANZARES,
MARY GRACE
NATIVIDAD S. 22,029,788
3. GO, CHRISTOPHER
LAWRENCE T. 20,657,702
4. CAYETANO,
PILAR JULIANA S. 19,789,019
5. DELA ROSA,
RONALD M. 19,004,225
6. ANGARA,
JUAN EDGARDO M. 18,161,862
7. LAPID, MANUEL 16,965,464
8. MARCOS, MARIA
IMELDA JOSEFA R. 15,882,628
9. TOLENTINO, FRANCIS N. 15,510,026
10. PIMENTEL, AQUILINO
MARTIN III L. 14,668,665
11. BONG REVILLA,
RAMON JR. B. 14,624,445
12. BINAY, MARIA
LOURDES NANCY S. 14,504,936

SO ORDERED.

COLLECTIVE OATH TAKING

Thereafter, Senate President Sotto administered the oath of office to the 12 newly elected senators.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate called the roll, to which the following senators responded.

Angara, S.	Marcos, I. R.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Cayetano, P. S.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Dela Rosa, R. B. M.	Poe, G.
Drilon, F. M.	Recto, R. G.
Gatchalian, W.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Go, C. L. T.	Sotto III, V. C.
Gordon, R. J.	Tolentino, F. T. N.
Hontiveros, R.	Villanueva, J.
Lacson, P. M.	Villar, C.
Lapid, M. L. M.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

With 22 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator De Lima was unable to attend the session as she was under detention.

Senator Pacquiao was absent.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

It was 10:10 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:11 a.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph G. Recto presiding.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the election of the President of the Senate.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri nominated Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III for the position of Senate President, describing his nominee as a workhorse, an institution in the Senate, and a man of the people.

The full text of Senator Zubiri's nomination speech follows:

Following his stellar performance as Senate President in the Seventeenth Congress, it is my privilege to nominate Senator Vicente C. Sotto III to once again assume the position of Senate President for the Eighteenth Congress. One of our most esteemed statesmen today, Senator Sotto has had a long and accomplished legislative career that has been marked by numerous elections as both Minority and Majority Leader, prior to his Senate presidency. No one is more familiar with the ways of the Senate than he is. Time and again, his colleagues have bestowed upon him their faith in his capabilities as a leader. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in doing the same.

It has been an astounding 27 years since the Filipino people first entrusted Senator Sotto to be their champion in the Senate, and since then, he has shown his unfaltering commitment to return that trust in the form of solid legislative moves to uplift the lives of the people. Some of the landmark laws that he steered into passage are the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, the Anti-Drunk and Drugged Driving Act of 2013, the Philippine Fisheries Code, the Rural Farms School Act, the Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act, the Anti-Hazing Law, and the *Masustansiyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino* Act—laws that respond to the problems across sectors, directing the nation toward a future where Filipino children will never know hunger, poverty, violence, and drugs.

Under Senator Sotto's able and wise stewardship as Senate President, we ended the Seventeenth Congress on a remarkably productive note, with 406 bills passed into law and 186 more in the pipeline waiting for the President's action. Having had the great honor of working closely with him in my capacity as Majority Leader, I can personally attest that were it not for his expert guidance, we would not have been able to achieve those numbers.

Whatever challenges that we faced as a body, Senator Sotto always showed us a way through. His approach to decision-making is both firm and understanding, fair to the interests not only of any political party but of the Filipino people. His hard work and discipline as our steadfast leader have set a standard for the rest of us to live up to. His astute judgment has steered plenary sessions into the right direction, while still allowing for — and indeed encouraging — healthy democratic debate among interpellators and sponsors. His deep respect for the proceedings of the Senate has spurred him to keep a perfect record of attendance.

Senator Sotto's legislative career speaks for itself, so I will say that on a more personal level, I believe he is the best man for this job. He is a great mentor, generous with his wealth of knowledge and experience. He is a man of great intellect, but also a man of great humor, knowing just how to break tension during heated debates, forming camaraderie and keeping a productive atmosphere on the floor. He is an accomplished artist with an intimate line of connection to the hearts of the Filipino people.

Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III is a workhorse, an institution in the Senate, a man of the people. And I hope you all agree with me, he is the Senate President we need for this Congress.

SECONDING REMARKS OF SENATOR LACSON

Senator Lacson seconded the nomination of Senator Sotto for the position of Senate President.

SECONDING SPEECH OF SENATOR RECTO

On behalf of Senator Recto, Senator Cayetano seconded the nomination of Senator Sotto for the position of Senate President, and forthwith delivered the following speech:

It is my privilege to deliver the nomination speech on behalf of the Presiding Officer, Senator Recto, and the Nacionalista Party.

The truth is, Senator Sotto is better in writing laws than in writing songs. He is better in putting ideas into policies than words into music.

Yes, he might have built an impressive catalogue of songs but this does not compare to his greatest hits in lawmaking.

He has amassed these in more than 30 years, from that day in 1988 when he first banged the gavel as presiding officer of the Quezon City Council, to that Wednesday night last month when he gaveled the closing of business of the productive Senate of the Seventeenth Congress.

On his own, he has authored laws, too many to count, on every issue that matters.

But while the Senate's scoreboard displays the names of the sponsors of a bill, it does not tally the hours one has spent in finalizing and finessing a measure others had authored but one seeks to improve.

In this, Senator Sotto, through many Congresses, had shown mastery of parliamentary skills honed by years of serving as Majority Leader and matched only by the generosity to share it.

Senator Sotto has an ear for music — and they say an eye for beauty too, as shown by his lovely wife — and this willingness to listen more than to speak he had applied in composing laws too.

Kahit presiding officer siya, nakikinig iyan at bigla na lamang may itatanong sa sponsor o kaya mag-i-interject sa interpellation. And sometimes, he will wade into the middle of it, yield the chair, and join the merry debate on the floor.

There is another aspect that this keen perception of his has served the Senate. An expert in retail politics, Senator Sotto has kept his ear constantly pressed to the ground. When we have Senator Sotto, we do not need a political weather vane to gauge the public sentiment.

When a major bill is being discussed, I have made it a point to always ask, “Tito, *ano kaya tingin ng tao rito?*” Because more important than the prose of legislation is the public reception to it.

And he has always been prescient in his prediction, but it does not mean he will always go where the wind blows, or to rush where the applause is waiting, because in many fights he had waged, he would rather be right than popular.

As an artist, Senator Sotto knows that no matter how beautiful the score, it depends on the symphony which will play it, and in this, he has proven himself as the skillful conductor of 24 independent republics who like to toot their own horn, beat their own drum, and sing their own song.

And this is the same formula which two other Senate Presidents in this assembly—Senator Drilon and Senator Pimentel—had employed in making sure that despite our diversity, that despite the fact that we may not always sing in perfect harmony always—but as a whole, we must not sing out of tune with the people.

The people's impression of the Senate is what they see on TV, of 24 men and women sitting in this hall, or grilling witnesses in one of the rooms.

The fact is, most of our labors are done outside the glare of klieg lights — in conference rooms where the humdrum of policy-making is endured for hours.

The beating heart of the Senate is not in this volleyball court-size chamber which comes to life at 3:00 p.m. three times a week, but in rooms where policies are discussed and debated.

The session hall may be the showroom, but the production line lies somewhere else. It has been said that the Senate in session is the Senate in exhibition. But the Senate conducting committee hearings is a Senate at work.

And on this, Senator Sotto has shown to be an adept manager working behind the scenes, always checking if the production line of laws is

pro just

moving, and above all, giving each one of us the independence to pursue our advocacies.

He assesses a bill solely on its merits and never the political persuasion of the one sponsoring it. The Sotto Rule on bill analysis is this: When it is good for the country, the majority-minority divide dissolves.

It is for these many reasons I have just mentioned that I nominate the retention of Vicente Castello Sotto III as our Senate President.

Thank you.

CLOSING OF THE PERIOD OF NOMINATION

There being no other nomination, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the period of nomination for the position of Senate President closed.

ELECTION OF SENATOR SOTTO AS SENATE PRESIDENT

There being no other candidate and pursuant to Section 2, Rule II of the *Rules of the Senate*, the Chair submitted the election of Senate President to a *viva voce* vote.

With no Member objecting, the Chair declared Senator Vicente C. Sotto III as the elected President of the Senate.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Senator Drilon placed on record that he, together with Senators Hontiveros and Pangilinan, registered a vote of abstention for the election of Senate President.

NOTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair appointed Senators Poe, Binay and Pimentel as members of the Notification Committee to notify Senator Sotto of his election as Senate President.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

It was 10:23 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:25 a.m., the session was resumed.

OATH TAKING OF THE SENATE PRESIDENT

Witnessed by the members of his family, Senator Sotto took his oath of office as President of the Senate before Senator Lacson.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO

Senate President Sotto delivered his acceptance speech, as follows:

My dear and esteemed colleagues, the former senators in the Ninth Congress—Senator Kit Tatad and Senator Heherson “Sonny” Alvarez; to the members of the diplomatic corps; the members of the Cabinet here present; families and friends; your Excellencies and your Honors:

Magandang umaga at maraming salamat po sa inyong pagdalo sa Senado sa araw na ito. Welcome and thank you for your time and effort to honor us with your presence at the beginning of the First Regular Session of the Senate of the 18th Congress of the Republic of the Philippines. But of course, a most special welcome and heartfelt congratulations to the mix of familiar and new faces of 12 senators freshly-mandated to join this Chamber in the recently-held May 2019 elections.

Salamat sa inyo. Thank you for electing me today as the 23rd Senate President.

Like all beginnings, this day is full of hope and promise for the lifetime of the 18th Congress and the nation. A new wind has continued to blow over the political horizon, and the unexpected happened. It all started in 2016, when a straight-talking leader emerged, and a number cringed at his humor, his style, his irreverence. We admire the progress of nearby states brought by authoritarian leaders, yet criticize our very own. The diplomacy of many years under other mild-mannered presidents failed to bring back the Balangiga bells and made us a garbage dump of neat and progressive nations. Only a tough stance resulted in solutions we have long been waiting for.

And the 2019 saga of political change continues.

The youth of the land had been awakened

and risen, sending forth a clear signal that they can put their very own to the peaks of political power. They have taught us that poverty is not a hindrance to public service; nor youth, a disadvantage. We welcome their entry into the political ring, both their interest and active participation. The same phenomenon is happening 10,000 miles away, with articulate young and immigrant-rooted politicians hurling stones at their Goliath. Millennials have seized the towers of social media, debated in their chat groups, and launched to fruition the candidates of their generation. Rizal's hope in them had not been misplaced. His letters reached their destination in three months, while his millennial heirs send messages in three seconds to any part of the globe. His modes of transport were ships and river ferries, and horsepower then really came from an animal.

Though times have changed, the social ills of our hero's times remain tenaciously around. Poverty, lack of infrastructure and services for education and health, and a lingering sensitivity to foreign views and presence still inhabit the corners of the Filipino mind. For some of our countrymen, keeping body and soul together is a daily challenge. Getting a high school or college education is a major obstacle due to the need for daily earnings. Health facilities and doctors' services are Manila- or city-centric, far away from the barangays they reside in.

My esteemed colleagues, we are legislators. The Latin roots of the word convey the meaning of a proposer of laws. That is our main task—to craft bills, debate and refine them, get them approved by the other House, and seek the signature of the President to turn them into laws of the land.

Thus, we are primarily legislators. We are not prosecutors.

We are not judges. Our hearings had been known to be precursors of high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes and even self-injury. It should not be the case. The Constitution expressly provides that the rights of the invitees must be respected. And also because, being taxpayers, our invitees are our employers. I do not mean to soften our powers; I only mean that our inquiries should really be in aid of legislation. Although I also believe that those who lie in our face must stay in our premises if they continue to do so. What I am only saying is that we are legislators, primarily.

My dear colleagues, "thank you" is a very weak expression to convey the deep sense of gratitude that I feel today, for the honor of

being your Senate President. To be elected at large by the whole nation is indeed a rare honor and privilege for 24 in a more than a hundred million population, and to be elected by those so elected, as you did to me, is so much more humbling than a greater source of pride.

You have gifted me the honor of being your Senate President. I know the context of my position is different from what is usually understood. I did not become your superior; I am simply a presider of your sessions. Any concept other than this is misplaced and unwarranted. Additionally, I am your listener, your adviser if you so desire, your enabler for anything within my power to do so.

And the reason is simple. The Senate is made up of 24 independent republics. You bring here the diversity of your backgrounds, the fierceness of your advocacies, the ambitions you keep secret from others. Simply stated, I am *primus inter pares*, as Roman Law-inspired lawyers say — First Among Equals. And these lawyers may be right, for the Senate as an institution of governance is considered to have been there in the ancient Rome of the Caesars. The images remain — the politics, the oratory, the intrigues. It is for us, the inheritors of this legal tradition, to focus on truth, justice, peace, and the common good.

To reiterate the vow that I made when I first took this post, we will continue to nourish the trust and confidence that our country has bestowed on us by ensuring that this Senate will remain cooperative but independent, balanced, transparent and sincere.

And so, thank you for this laurel wreath of victory, and I hope it does not distract me from treading the path of true service to the people. On a personal note, allow me to thank my family for bearing with the life of a politician—to Helen, my love; my children and grandchildren that God had sent us; and to the Filipino people for this chance to serve. Likewise, I offer this day to my father Marcelino who worked with the then Central Bank, and my mother Dra. Herminia Castelo of Nueva Ecija, a staunch feminist in those early times.

And finally, I dedicate the honor this post may bring to the memory of my late grandfather, Senator Vicente Sotto of Cebu, a man for all seasons, a journalist, man of letters and of the arts, and a regular dissenter to the Great Manuel Luis Quezon, the first Senate President in 1916.

Thank you and all best wishes for today and always.

ELECTION OF THE SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the election of the Senate President Pro Tempore.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

For the position of Senate President Pro Tempore, Senator Zubiri nominated Sen. Ralph G. Recto who, to him, is a true Recto to the core, a facilitator, a unifier, and a leader.

The full text of Senator Zubiri's nomination speech follows:

What makes a Senate President Pro Tempore? What made colleagues vote for Senator Recto as the second highest official in the Senate in 2013 and again, in 2017? I will venture to answer these questions.

I have the privilege of nominating Sen. Ralph Recto as the Senate President Pro Tempore of the Eighteenth Congress. It is a post he was unanimously elected to by his peers in our last Congress. He served us well. He was a facilitator, a unifier and a leader. He was also a critic and a bully with a calculator.

He personified that space between a rock and a hard place. In 24 years as a solon, he consistently shone the light, and the numbers, on dark and gray areas of a bill, or, during Blue Ribbon inquiries, helped us uncover the truth and make better laws.

He reminds us of Plato who warned: "We can easily forgive a child, who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life, is when men are afraid of the light." Senator Recto has time and again heeded that warning. He has shone that light.

Give him the goods, so he could do the numbers, and he will help you craft your pet bill into a pro-people, pro-Familyang Pilipino law.

I had the opportunity of seeing him in action during my first term in the House of Representatives — it being his third and last — where he espoused social reform and poverty alleviation, trade liberalization, creation of economic zones and reforming the Tax Code. And, I am happy to note that while I was still in the Lower House in 2006, he supported me here in the Senate with one of my pet bills, which was the Biofuels Law.

He was a true Recto to the core. In 2001, older colleagues welcomed their Benjamin and

baptized him the good Nicomedes. He was given the unenviable task of chairing the Ways and Means committee. He proved to be a *barako* who munched on algebra, calculus and what have you, as the government's *dakilang* fundraiser. Thereupon, he rightfully earned the title, and, to this day, he is still, the undefeated *Boy Numero ng Senado*.

His grandfather Claro M. Recto said, "Nationalism is not a passing emotion, not a naive longing for the trappings of sovereignty. It is persevering, militant and mature." Senator Recto displays such "perseverance, militancy and maturity" as he crafted laws that increase social goods and services to Filipinos, especially the poor.

Among those are:

- Granting P100,000 to each Filipino Centenarian here and abroad (RA 10868);
- Free public wi-fi along with the creation of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (RA 10844);
- Protecting OFWs by strengthening the OWWA (RA 10801);
- More benefits to PWDs (RA 10754);
- More benefits to National Athletes and Coaches (RA 10699);
- Modernizing PAGASA (RA 10692);
- Increasing tax exemption ceilings on 13th month pay and other benefits (RA 106530);
- PhilHealth coverage for All Senior Citizens (RA 10645);
- Philippine National Railways Charter extension (RA 10638);
- The K-12 Program (RA 10533);

There are so many. I may take half an hour just reading all the laws that he authored and coauthored. These are just a few of the hundreds and there are many more.

We clearly recall how Senator Recto hammered on, to my own initial perturbation, about the major peace-building law, the Bangsamoro Organic Law. By the way, we have with us in this Chamber, the Chief Minister, Al Haj Murad. His questions extended the sessions and bicameral conference committee meetings into the late hours. He tinkered on each formula incorporated.

He, very early on, signified support. Then came his tough questions on funding the law. But he, in fact — and I put this on record today — saved the day for Bangsamoro, and peace in

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Mindanao region for the whole country. For Senator Recto's effort and of many others who graced this hall, the BOL did not become an unfunded law gathering dust. Today, the Bangsamoro is a functional body funded and supported by the Filipino people. We thank you, Senator Ralph.

On his 15th year as senator, I know he will be as consistent and persistent as he was on Day One. Therefore, I respectfully nominate Sen. Ralph Recto to the position of Senate President Pro Tempore.

SECONDING REMARKS OF SENATOR VILLAR

Seconding the nomination of Senator Recto for the position of Senate President Pro Tempore, Senator Villar gave the following statement:

My fellow senators, I would like to nominate Sen. Ralph Recto as Senate President Pro Tempore of the Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines. Senator Recto has what it takes to take on the position which he has previously held during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congress. We all know that he is a no-nonsense legislator and has led all the committees he chaired in an exemplary manner. It is really not surprising since he came from the lineage of legal luminaries and statesman.

On top of that, he has the distinction of being the youngest member of the House of Representatives during the Ninth Congress at the age of 28 and the youngest senator at 37 during the Twelfth Congress. To say that he is adept at lawmaking is an understatement. His insights, not only in his own legislations, but in ours also, are invaluable. His expert inputs and on-point interpellations result in better crafted laws.

His legislative experience is truly well-rounded in whatever side of the political fence or branch of government he may be. In the legislature, he has served as Senate President Pro Tempore, Senate Minority Leader and Deputy Majority Leader. Thus, he will surely hit the ground running, so to speak, if reelected Senate President Pro Tempore.

There is no doubt that as a nationalist and patriot as his late grandfather and father were, Sen. Ralph Recto will continue to uphold the independence and integrity of the Senate as he continues to be his brilliant self as a legislator and, hopefully, as our Senate President Pro

Tempore again. With that, I wish to second the nomination of Sen. Ralph Recto.

CLOSING OF THE PERIOD OF NOMINATION

There being no other nomination, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the period of nomination for the position of Senate President Pro Tempore closed.

ELECTION OF SENATOR RECTO AS SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

There being no other candidate and pursuant to Section 2, Rule II of the *Rules of the Senate*, the election for the position of Senate Pro Tempore was submitted to a *viva voce* vote.

With all Members present voting unanimously, the Chair declared Senator Recto as the duly elected President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

OATH TAKING OF SENATOR RECTO

Senator Recto took his oath of office as Senate President Pro Tempore before Senate President Sotto.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the election of the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

NOMINATION SPEECH OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva delivered the following statement nominating Sen. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri for the chairman of the Committee on Rules:

As a former TESDA secretary, I think, most of you, if not all of you, know me very well as an advocate for matching jobs and skills. I know the one fit for the job when I see one. And when it comes to the job of the chairman of the Committee on Rules, I do not think that our criteria should be limited to just knowledge, competence and work experience—a great deal of those and more.

I believe that we need a chairman who is an inspirer. We need a chairman of the Committee



on Rules who, as we poetically say, treats everybody like it is their birthday while making sure that the Senate is in order. It may be the reason why until now he is the undefeated Mr. Coop.

I can find one man who will stand out in this august Chamber for clearly demonstrating those out-of-the-box qualities, the son of Bukidnon, Sen. Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri.

We need an inspirer in the Senate plenary hall so that we can always find a way to pass the much needed laws of the land. We have seen this character exceptionally demonstrated during the last Congress when Sen. Migz Zubiri successfully shepherded the approval of several key pieces of legislation. It may be the reason why as many as 592 Senate bills were signed into law last Congress.

The job of a chairman of the Committee on Rules is not a bed of roses. It is never easy to be in the middle as a referee. We need a chairman of the Committee on Rules who has the natural ability to negotiate and find the common ground among the 24 republics in the Senate. Senator Migz seems to have been born with it. Indeed, he has a gift of making everyone feel like it is their birthday while making sure again that the Senate is in order.

As your Labor Chair last Congress, age discrimination is not in my vocabulary. And so, do not get me wrong when I say with conviction that the 18th Congress needs a Senate Majority Leader who will bridge the gap among generations.

Senator Migz is obviously not only the most baby-faced among us but more importantly, he is the most energetic and he can speak the language of the younger Filipino generation. I believe that we need a chairman of the Committee on Rules who can communicate to our people the way in which this institution needs to, wants to, and thus serve them.

Let me add that we need a chairman of the Committee on Rules who can show up every day. Based on the track record of Senator Migz for the past 15 years as a legislator, he certainly can do this job perfectly.

My esteemed colleagues, I believe that Sen. Migz Zubiri is who we need, what the Senate needs as chairman of the Committee on Rules of the 18th Congress.

I therefore nominate Sen. Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri as Senate chairman of the Committee on Rules.

SECONDING REMARKS OF SENATOR MARCOS

Seconding the nomination of Senator Zubiri for the chairmanship of the Committee on Rules, Senator Marcos described Senator Zubiri not only as a dear family friend and a valuable colleague from the 11th Congress but also as an impassioned and enlightened legislator.

She said that without doubt, Senator Zubiri, as the pride of Bukidnon, ably and completely represented the long-neglected and still beleaguered island of Mindanao. Youthful in appearance and energy but sage and wise in experience, she said that electing Senator Zubiri for the position would be beneficial to the Senate and to the entire nation.

SECONDING REMARKS OF SENATOR GORDON

Preliminarily, Senator Gordon lauded Senator Zubiri, a fellow Red Cross volunteer, for excelling in his passion for humanitarian pursuits, particularly in responding to disaster situations.

He also commended Senator Zubiri for being an outstanding Majority Leader, as he ably harmonized both views of the Majority and Minority in important legislative measures. He said that the fact that Senator Zubiri was able to convince Senator Drilon to work with him, in spite of the immensity of the latter's knowledge and experience, was an accomplishment in itself.

Moreover, Senator Gordon pointed out that Senator Zubiri has been successful in husbanding tremendous laws such as the Cooperative Development Act, the law on the Ease of Doing Business, Renewable Energy Law and the Bangsamoro Organic Law. He lauded Senator Zubiri for being attentive to his work duties by religiously attending the sessions – being the first to come in and the last to leave – while ensuring that important legislation is passed, and still managed his family life well by being a dutiful husband to Audrey as well as a great father to his children Adriana, Jaumi and Santi.

Senator Gordon also said that apart from being a devoted family man, Senator Zubiri has been consistent in his passion and compassion, a caring, competent, and a very competitive Majority Leader, the reason why in the Fourteenth and Seventeenth Congress, the Senate passed the most number of laws in the country.

For those reasons, Senator Gordon seconded the nomination of Senator Juan Miguel Fernandez Zubiri as the Majority Leader and chairman of the Committee on Rules.

CLOSING OF THE PERIOD OF NOMINATION

There being no other nomination, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair declared the period of nomination for chairperson of the Committee on Rules closed.

ELECTION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

There being no other candidate and pursuant to Section 2, Rule II of the *Rules of the Senate*, the election of chairman of the Committee on Rules was submitted to a *viva voce* vote.

With the majority of the Members voting in favor, the Chair declared Senator Zubiri as the duly elected chairman of the Committee on Rules and pursuant to the *Rules*, the Majority Leader of the Senate.

OATH TAKING OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Witnessed by his wife, Mrs. Audrey Tan-Zubiri, and his children, Senator Zubiri took his oath of office as chairman of the Committee on Rules before Senate President Sotto.

MINORITY LEADER

At this juncture, Senator Pangilinan manifested, on behalf of the minority, the designation of Senator Drilon as the Minority Leader.

Consistent with democratic practices, Senate *Rules*, legislative practices and precedents wherein the minority selects its own leader, on behalf of the Minority—Senators Hontiveros, De Lima, and himself, Senator Pangilinan informed the Body of their desire for Senator Frank Drilon to retain his position as the Minority Leader. He stated that the depth and breadth of Senator Drilon's experience as legislator has been invaluable, not only for the Minority but also for the Majority. In closing, he quoted world leader John F. Kennedy who once said, "Without debate, without criticism, no administration and no country can succeed

and no republic can survive." He said that he could not think of anyone else in the Minority who can ably lead in collaborating for better legislation other than Senator Frank Drilon.

MANIFESTATION OF THE CHAIR

Formally recognizing Senator Drilon as the Minority Leader, Senate President Sotto associated himself with the statements of Senator Pangilinan.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri thanked his colleagues and family for supporting him in his role as Majority Leader. He promised to be always available to ensure that the Senate would be able to pass all the necessary legislation that will help the country move forward.

Senator Zubiri stated that he was honored to be working once again with Senator Drilon, the distinguished Minority Leader, former DOJ secretary, former executive secretary, former Senate President, and former Majority Leader. He acknowledged that he has learned a lot from Senator Drilon and that many of the laws that were passed in the Senate became better and improved versions because of him.

ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the election of the Senate Secretary in order.

Senator Zubiri nominated Atty. Myra Marie D. Villarica.

Senator Drilon seconded the nomination.

CLOSING OF THE PERIOD OF NOMINATION

There being no other nomination, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the period of nomination for the position of the Secretary of the Senate closed.

ELECTION OF ATTORNEY VILLARICA AS SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

There being no other candidate and pursuant to Section 2, Rule II of the *Rules of the Senate*, the

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election for the position of Senate Secretary was submitted to a *viva voce* vote.

With no Member objecting, the Chair declared Atty. Myra Marie D. Villarica as the duly elected Secretary of the Senate.

OATH TAKING OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

Witnessed by her family, Atty. Myra Marie D. Villarica took her oath of office as Secretary of the Senate before Senate President Sotto.

ELECTION OF THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS OF THE SENATE

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the election of the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate in order.

Senator Zubiri nominated Major Gen. Edgardo Rene C. Samonte as the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Before proceeding to the election, Senator Zubiri placed on record the distinguished service of the former Sergeant-at-Arms, General Balajadia, who passed away recently and whose presence would be sorely missed. He wished the late General well in the next life.

CLOSING OF THE PERIOD OF NOMINATION

There being no other nomination, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the period of nomination for the position of the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate closed.

ELECTION OF MAJOR GENERAL SAMONTE AS SERGEANT-AT-ARMS OF THE SENATE

There being no other candidate and pursuant to Section 2, Rule II of the *Rules of the Senate*, the election for the position of Senate Sergeant-at-Arms was submitted to a *viva voce* vote.

With no Member objecting, the Chair declared Major Gen. Edgardo Rene C. Samonte as the duly elected Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate.

OATH TAKING OF THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS OF THE SENATE

Witnessed by his family, Major Gen. Edgardo Rene C. Samonte took his oath of office as Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate before Senate President Sotto.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1

Upon motion of Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 1, entitled

RESOLUTION INFORMING PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE THAT THE SENATE HAS BEEN ORGANIZED WITH THE ELECTION OF ITS OFFICERS AND THAT THIS BODY HAS ENTERED UPON THE EXERCISE OF ITS FUNCTIONS FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Secretary Villarica read the text of the resolution, to wit:

Resolved by the Senate, That President Rodrigo Roa Duterte be informed that the Senate has been organized with the election of its officers and that this Body has entered upon the exercise of its functions for the First Regular Session of the Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 1 was adopted by the Body.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 2, entitled

RESOLUTION INFORMING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT THE SENATE HAS BEEN ORGANIZED WITH THE ELECTION OF ITS OFFICERS AND THAT THIS BODY

HAS ENTERED UPON THE EXERCISE OF ITS FUNCTIONS FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Secretary Villarica read the text of the resolution, to wit:

Resolved by the Senate, That the House of Representatives be informed that the Senate has been organized with the election of its officers and that this Body has entered upon the exercise of its functions for the First Regular Session of the Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 2 was adopted by the Body.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered House Concurrent Resolution No. 2, entitled

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO HOLD A JOINT SESSION TO HEAR THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Secretary Villarica read the text of the resolution, to wit:

Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring, that both Houses of Congress of the Republic of the Philippines hold a Joint Session on Monday, July 22, 2019, at four o'clock in the afternoon at the Session Hall of the House of Representatives, to hear the message of the President of the Republic of the Philippines.

ADOPTION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 2 was adopted by the Body.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1, entitled

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CREATING A JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES THAT CONGRESS, NOW CONVENED FOR ITS FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES, IS READY TO HEAR HIS STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS IN A JOINT SESSION OF BOTH HOUSES.

Secretary Villarica read the text of the resolution, to wit:

Resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives of the Philippines concurring, that a Joint Committee of Both Houses of Congress be created, composed of members, to be appointed by the President of the Senate and to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to notify the President of the Philippines that Congress, now convened for its First Regular Session of the Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines, is ready to hear his State of the Nation Address in a Joint Session of both Houses.

ADOPTION OF SENATE CONCURRENT NO. 1

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1 was adopted by the Body.

JOINT COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT

Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1, Senate President Sotto appointed Senators Zubiri, Go, Recto, Villar and Gordon as members of the Joint Notification Committee, on the part of the Senate.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri congratulated Senator Pacquiao for his historical win over boxer Keith Thurman,



saying that at age 40, he put a lot of 20-year old fighters to shame.

Senator Zubiri likewise requested the Members to remain inside the Session Hall for a photo session and advised the public not to enter the area while it was ongoing.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Senate President Sotto declared the session suspended until four o'clock in the afternoon for the Joint Session of Congress, after which, the session of the Senate shall be considered adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day.

It was 11:25 a.m.

Joint Session held at the Session Hall of the House of Representatives, Quezon City.

At 5:06 p.m., the Secretary General of the House of Representatives announced the arrival of the President of the Philippines.

OPENING OF THE JOINT SESSION

The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives declared the joint session open at 5:08 p.m.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

The national anthem was sung by Armand Ferrer followed by ecumenical prayers led by multifaith leaders.

THE STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

The President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Roa Duterte, delivered the State of the Nation Address, to wit:

Senate President Vicente Sotto III and the honorable members of the Senate; House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano and the honorable members of the House of Representatives; Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo, *magandang hapon po sa inyo — sa iyo, ma'am, kung nasaan ka*; former Presidents Fidel V. Ramos, Joseph Ejercito, Macapagal-Arroyo; His Excellency Caccia and the esteemed members of the diplomatic corps; Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and the other members of the Cabinet; Chief Justice Lucas Bersamin and the Supreme Court;

my fellow workers in government; *mga mahal kong kababayan*.

Let me begin by extending my hand in gratitude to all who kept faith with me in our most trying times. Numbers speak a thousand words and tell a hundred tales. But the landslide victory of the Administration candidates as well as the latest survey results shows that my disapproval rating is 3%. I hope that the members of Congress — *sana hindi kayo* included sa 3% — inspires me with determination to pursue relentlessly what we have started at the start of my administration.

Few men imbued with the will and the courage to do what he believes is right and just and whatever be the opposition in terms of numbers and noise, makes a majority. For it is not the eagle in the fight but the fight in the eagle that matters. Believe me, I will end my term fighting.

It has been three years since I took my oath of office, and it pains me to say that we have not learned our lesson. The illegal drug problem persists. Corruption continues and emasculates the courage we need to sustain our moral recovery initiatives.

Years ago, we saw the terrible devastation caused by illegal drugs. On May 23, 2017, our law enforcers launched an operation to serve a warrant and to neutralize terrorists. A group of armed men with sophisticated weaponry and aided by locals radicalized by extremist dogma and teachings fought our troops for weeks. During that Marawi Siege, tons of shabu worth millions and millions of pesos. Drug money killed 175 and wounded [2,101] of my soldiers and policemen in that five-month battle.

I am aware that we still have a long way to go in our fight against this social menace. Let the reason why I advocate the imposition of the death penalty for crimes related to illegal drugs. Our citizens have begun to do their part in the war against drugs, and through the barangay formation of anti-drug councils, and also actually surrendering bricks of cocaine found floating in the sea into our islands. I call this responsibility. However, the drugs will not be crushed unless we continue to eliminate corruption that allows this social monster to survive.

I respectfully request Congress to reinstate the death penalty for heinous crimes related to drugs, as well as plunder.

My countrymen, it is a sad commentary that we cannot distinguish our need from our greed, our principles from our prejudices, the real from



the fake, and the truth from a lie. The reason is because that many of us, what matters above all is the “self.” It is selfishness [at] its worst for no purpose other than personal aggrandizement.

To borrow the language of F. Sionil Jose, we have not risen above and beyond the parochial interests. Our warped loyalty to family, friends and tribal kin continue to exact a heavy toll on our programs designed to uplift the poor and reassure our investors, our foreign investors local, and the business sector in this country.

The recent uncovering of the massive fraud perpetrated against the public health insurance system proves that corruption is pervasive. Huge amounts of medical funds were released to cover padded medical claims and imaginary treatment of ghost patients. I am grossly disappointed. The government is conned of millions of pesos which could be used to treat illnesses and possibly save the lives of many. Thus I ordered the NBI to arrest and cause the prosecution of those liable. I appointed a new PhilHealth President, whom I know is a man of integrity, a military man, a former military officer, and gave him marching orders to prioritize ridding the agency of corruption.

By the way, I commend the Bureau of Investigation for its handling of high profile cases resulting in the arrest and prosecution of criminals. These culprits will have their day of reckoning in court. I hope it happens during the last three years of my term.

Concerning the unscrupulous persons manning our ports and scalawags in uniform, we have been unyielding in our reforms to weed them out of public service.

I have fired or caused the resignation of more than a hundred officials and appointees of government without regard to relationship, friendship and alliance. There is no sacred cow, as the saying goes, in my Administration.

Institutions that are the stewards of our resources and agents of development have long been a major source of public frustration. Drastic reforms within these agencies have yielded results. Our government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), infamous for high salaries and bonuses being paid their executives and employees, have started to shape up. As of July 9, 2019, we collected more than P61 billion from GOCCs or government corporations, 32% of which, or P16 billion, from PAGCOR. This is more than the P36 billion collected in 2017. My salute to Andrea Domingo. *Magpasugal ka pa, ma'am, nang marami.* Bureau of Customs, though

corruption-ridden, managed to collect Five Hundred Eighty Five Billion Pesos (P585,000,000,000) in 2018. Imagine how much more could have been collected had the BOC been clean and less corrupt.

May I cut and just — *magsalita lang ako kung anong sa isip ko.* I went to the Bureau of Customs two weeks ago and found out that there were about 63 of them facing charges, criminal charges, and 61 of them under investigation. I hope that I can have the cooperation of Congress if we cannot abolish their position. And if I cannot dismiss them for the reason that there is a security of tenure, I will just allow them to have their plantilla positions but they have to report to Congress everyday to help me in the huge paperwork that we have to do everyday. All of them will go out from the premises of the Customs area. I do not want them back.

We, in government, talk too much, act too little, and too slow. I recall saying that before the Congressional hearing when I was Mayor of Davao City. I say that again to emphasize how little we have changed since then. We are long on rhetorics but short on accomplishments. It's either you Congress or — even the Executive department and maybe me. So I am here to rectify my own error.

That is why, I implore those who occupy positions of power and authority, to let your deeds and accomplishments do the talking. Lead by example. Words ring hollow when not followed by positive and prioritized action.

Time and again, I have emphasized that like my fellow workers in government, *trabahante lang po ako ng Pilipino.*

Last year, I assign — I signed the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act, a significant piece of legislation to improve service delivery and fight corruption, still until now.

However, much [has] to be done in ensuring our responsiveness to the people's needs. Based on complaints received by the Contact Center [ng] Bayan, Contact Center [ng] Bayan — that's in my office — the LTO, SSS, BIR, LRA, and Pag-IBIG are the top five agencies that need to drastically improve their service.

I reiterate my government — my directive to the government and instrumentalities, including the LGUs and the government corporations: simplify. May I... *Nandito ba kayo?* Simplify. Just like the others. You can do it electronically. You do not have to go to the office.

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I've been asking that from you since three years ago. *'Pag hindi pa ninyo nagawa 'yan ngayon, papatayin ko talaga kayo. Nabubwisit na...*

Simplify and make your services responsive to — client-friendly. Your client is the Filipino, our employer — from where the money in our pockets come from, from our salaries.

Thanks to Executive Secretary Medialdea, we have increased the number of lines [for] Hotline 8888 to make it more responsive to the public. Our ultimate goal is for our people to be freed from using these hotlines because government service and response have markedly improved.

Again, I will... *Ang problema kasi ng Fili — I'm addressing now to the Filipino. Kayo rin kasi sinasabi ko na sa inyo, be assertive. At 'pag kayo o ikaw hiningian more than the required payment by government at humingi pa sa iyo, I've been telling you mag-eskandalo kayo sa opisina. Make a scene. Sampalin mo 'yang p***** i** na 'yan. Kasi aabot rin sa akin 'yan.*

And I have done that. *Ako mag-prangka ako sa inyo, ako lang ang Presidente na hanggang ngayon nagbubugbog talaga ng tao diyan sa loob ng Malacañan.*

*Pinapakain ko ng pera 'yang mga y*** na 'yan. Eh galit na ako sa inyo eh. Kindly be assertive. Pagka hiningian ka, sabihin mo, "T*** *** mo. Sabi ni Duterte, the President told us, that if you extort money from me, I will slap you."*

At sampalin talaga ninyo. Hindi na bale magkaaway. I will defend you. At kung maaari and this is what I've been doing all along. There's an [8888]. Be sure that it is true. Though you are not liable for libel pero huwag naman 'yang makasakit ka ng kapwa-tao na wala namang kasalanan. [8888], then place "To President Duterte, re: abuses by the director asking for money." Text mo, lalabas 'yan diyan. And that is for the public to view.

At kung totoo, Malacañan, I said, is open 24 hours — 24 hours basta corruption. And that is why that fiasco about the frigate ni Trillanes was because 'yung Koreano na napagbili ng barko, who sold the ship to the Philippine government, wala pa hong delivery. And it was there already ready.

And that is why that Korean went to Malacañan just to complain why is it that there is no request for delivery. So I told Bong, "Bong,

ayusin mo 'yan." He went to Lorenzana and Lorenzana *nagsulat siya. May nakakuha* because *sa Malacañan*, every administration *may tao 'yan diyan*. Every administration leaves some of the men because they are appointed on plantilla position.

Eh kinuha nila then it was brought here, before the Congress. And so Bong was called to testify. And he said, he was assured it will be a closed-door. I told Bong, "No, ask for an open and public hearing."

Sabi ko, "Sabihin mo sa lahat — wala — you have nothing. Just say the truth." Sabi ko, pagkatapos niya testify, sabi ko, "Bong, maniwala ka hindi, you will be a senator." Totoo 'yan. That is the story of how convoluted politics and corruption here in our country works.

Equipped with political will, the government ordered the closure of Boracay Island for six months to prevent its further deterioration. We cleaned and rehabilitated the island and I allowed it to heal naturally. I am proud to say that it has been restored close to its original pristine state. Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force led by Secretary Cimat, and fully supported by Secretaries Año, Romulo-Puyat — Oh what's her name? *Puro* surname *ito*, Romulo-Puyat. What's her name? *Ah si — ah Berna. Ah, Berna Romulo-Puyat, Bello and Villar, and then TESDA Chief Mamondiong* for this huge success. Kudos are also due to the PMS for integrating the six-month Rehabilitation Plan, and the NEDA for the recently-approved [Medium]-term Boracay Action Plan.

Boracay Island is just the beginning. And the girls there, the foreigners are waiting for you gentlemen to visit the place. They are all on the beach sunbathing. You are invited to — I have not been there.

Alam mo, nung naayos 'yan, day before we were told that there's gonna be an opening tomorrow. So on the TV on that day, *Magandang Hapon*, showed a lot of buntings and banners, "*Salamat Duterte.*" So when I saw it, I called the military and the police, "Remove the buntings. I am not going there." No need to really arbi — ah advertise. I am paid for what I'm doing. *Nakokornihan ako.* Too much adulation, bordering pretensions. I can always smell it a mile away.

And I never went there until now. What I did was I went to the other side of the island and asked the DAR, "What is the status of the land behind the beach of Boracay?" And they are still

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categorized as forestal and agriculture. "Not..." I said, "Not commercial?" "No, sir."

So I told the Agrarian Reform, "Go to the place, have it inspected because I will declare the whole of the island a land reform program." And I gave the islands piece by piece to the Atis, the natives of the place *para walang masabi. Marami kasi ginawa ko raw para linisan ko, ibigay ko sa mga kaibigan ko.*

Wala akong kaibigang mayaman. Ayaw kong kaibigan ng mayaman because pagka mayaman ka, tatahi ka lang sa akin, pati ako napahiran na ng kung ano-ano ang hingiin mo sa gobyerno.

There are those who violate environmental rules. I am giving due notice to the LGUs and other stakeholders, *kayo po*, of tourist destinations to take extra steps in the enforcement of our laws and the protection of our environment.

On January 27, 2019, we officially started the Manila Bay rehabilitation. Though we have a long way to go, we are encouraged by the test results of the waters near Padre Faura. We will relocate informal settlers — I hope it can happen during my time — along the waterways and shut down establishments that continue to pollute and poison our waters.

Make a choice. I'm going to the... [*Malaki ba 'yung building diyan?*] I'm going to dismantle your burning — ah building — or just simply burn it down so that we can have a new set-up of environmental friendly, whatever that means.

Through the Build, Build, Build Program in emerging economic hubs outside Metro Manila. This will swiftly gain ground, thanks to the efforts of the Economic Team led by Secretary Dominguez. Hard at work in the interconnection of our islands and cities by air, land, and sea are Secretaries Tugade and Villar.

Alam naman ninyo. Magaganda na ang airport ninyo. Inuna ko nga kayo eh. Everybody's complaining about the Davao airport and I said, "Davao will be the last." Kung hindi na maabutan, sabi ko mga taga-Davao, pasensya na kayo. Para walang masabi ang Congress sa atin, baka nga 3% sila doon sa kabila.

We also paved the way for the entry of third telecommunications provider. Do not worry about this. There is no corruption at all. I guarantee you, upon the grave of my father. I do not allow — I do not talk to them. I just say: Just do your work. And *kung maaari*, according to what the specifications are required by this government.

I challenge this new player to fulfill its commitment to provide fast and reliable telecommunication services to our people, especially in the underserved areas. DICT Secretary Honasan will be the lead man in this endeavor. I hope he is here.

However, developmental gains will not be felt by our people in the countryside if we cannot maintain law and order. '*Yang* peace and security, *wala 'yan*. We need to enforce the law.

After almost two decades of peace negotiation, the Bangsamoro Organic Law was finally passed and ratified.

For decades, our Muslim brothers in the ARMM have been mired in poverty. My late Muslim brother, MinDA Chair Abdul Khayr Alonto, envisioned a progressive, peaceful, and united Mindanao during our lifetime. It is my hope that the Bangsamoro Transition will fast-track the establishment of regional government that will secure comfortable life for Muslim brothers and sisters, and all indigenous communities in the Bangsamoro Regions.

Additionally, I have taken the helm of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict and have assigned a Cabinet member to each region to harmonize government efforts in attaining national development [and] security.

Through the exceptional leadership of Secretary Briones and the DepEd, I am proud to say that this year more Filipino learners are receiving basic education, with over 27 million enrollees from Kinder to Senior High School.

And because we have still a little to spare, the fastest population growth, one of the — is the Philippines. We are so industrious that we are producing more people than... I do not want to quarrel with the religious but...

More than [823,000] — sorry my eyes is not good — for the... *Isinusuot ko lang 'to 'pag mag — paminsan-minsan eh.* Out-of-school youth and adult learners were able to access non-formal education through the Alternative Learning System. For our national sports development, I support the proposed measure to create the National Academy of Sports for High School students.

Almost 86,000 micro, small, and medium enterprises or the MSMEs have received over P3 billion worth of loans since 2017, thanks to the efforts of Secretary Lopez and the DTI.

Additional benefits for solo parents, the assignment of health workers in all barangays,

and the expansion of the Malasakit Centers, are what we also hope to achieve through the bills filed by the original concept of Bong Go. *Para manalo sa kampanya, 'yon ang mantra niya. Totohanin mo lang, Bong, mapahiya tayong lahat.*

I also implore Congress... You — look. You have to study this very carefully. Congress has to postpone the May 2020 elections and 'yung Barangay, Sangguniang Kabataan to October 2022. Because if you read it, this... To rectify the truncated terms. *Paiba-iba na eh.* The truncated terms of sitting barangays but also provide them with the ample time to finish their programs and projects. I suggest Congress should also enact the Magna Carta for Barangays.

This Administration's *malasakit at serbisyo* program has, of course, reached the Filipinos who labor in foreign lands. The milestone signing of the Bilateral Labor Agreement with Kuwait in 2018 is a testament of my commitment to stop abuses inflicted on our overseas Filipinos. To ensure their welfare, protection and their access to government services, the establishment of the Department of Overseas Filipinos will sufficiently address this particular need.

Our accomplishments for the past three years and the plans for the next three are discussed in detail in my mid-term report to the people, copies of which shall be made available before the day ends.

Let me repeat what I said many times before. Honestly, I have identified the enemy who dumped us into this quagmire we are in. I have met the enemy face-to-face and sadly, the enemy is "us." We are our own tormentors — addressing the Filipino people — we are our own demons; we are as rapacious predators preying on the helpless, the weak and the voiceless. We find corruption everywhere in government with every malefactor watching his cohort's back in blatant disregard of his oath when he assumed public office. Even the language has evolved to soften the wickedness of the criminal act. "For the Boys", "sponsoring an event" or what-else-have-you. No amount of euphemism can trivialize or normalize betrayal of public trust or any other criminal offense. It is an injury laced with insult. It is both a national embarrassment and a national shame.

For every transaction, a commission; for every action, extortion; and a request that goes on and on — endlessly and shamelessly.

Catharsis is what we, individually and collectively, need to do today — not tomorrow but today. Self-purgation followed by the resolve

to do what is right and proper, is good for the nation's health.

Let me ask you: When will corruption end? *Kailan ba talaga 'to? Hanggang kailan?* Well, I don't know. I've been in — with government for almost 35 years now. I am not singling out myself. It's the entire gamut of our system.

Corruption exasperates. It frustrates. It is also exasperating that there are times when I think that perhaps it is blood that we need to cleanse and rinse away the dirt and the muck that stick to the flesh like leeches.

Of course, it is only a thought. I am simply thinking aloud. To dispel any controversy that my statements in this regard will create something else. Words of Pedro Guerrero who said, "Sometimes they write what I say and they write — and they write what I say and not what I mean." So 'yung *mga pa-purga-purga lang diyan*. I use similes, metaphors, hyperbole, and other figures of speech every now and then, to prove or stress a point. I am as human as anybody else.

On the matter of the Philippine — West Philippine Sea. The avoidance of conflict — armed conflict and protection of our territorial waters and natural resources compel us to perform a delicate balancing act. A shooting war is grief and misery multiplier. War leaves widows and orphans in its wake. I am not ready or inclined to accept the occurrence of more destruction, more widows and more orphans, should war, even on a limited scale, break out. More and better results can be reached in the privacy of a conference room than in a squabble in public. That is why I will do in the peaceful way, mindful of the fact that it is our national pride and territorial integrity that are at stake.

Short of expressly advocating a call to arms, there are those who say that we should stand up and stop those who fish in our economic zone. Of course we will do in due time. There is...

Alam mo ganito 'yan eh. Noong — when I became President and when the M16 rifles were cancelled by America upon the prodding of the US Congress, I found myself in a quandary because reports were already very ripe *na* there was the passing of arms in Marawi.

And because of the arms were already — mostly in the hands of the police, hands-me-down from the army were quite old and sometimes the bolt that pushes the bullet flies out and the barrel has really become loose, and there are no more launch and planes to push it into a circular trajectory to maintain its accuracy.

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So I was forced to go to China. Eh *mabuti't na lang nasabi ko sa inyo* 'to. Then in China, we had a bilateral. I brought along the military man — Año, the chief of staff then, and all of them, Lorenzana, Esperon, National Security.

In that meeting, I said — Cabinet members were there — “I want to go to my territory to dig oil.” That was the word, “I dig.” Because that is ours. *Ang sabi ni* President Xi, “Well, you know there is a conflict there. Do you think, rather than go there and have a confrontation — not necessarily the grey ships, war ships. But you know a squabble there could lead to something else.” *Sabi niya*, we just became friends. And perhaps we can talk about this. But not an outright precipitate move because... He said it softly, “It can mean trouble.”

If the trouble comes out from the mouth of a president of a republic, *anong magawa ko*? So what did I answer? “Well then maybe, sir, we can talk about this at some other time.” But definitely, before I go, we must talk about the West Philippine Sea. We cannot you know, have our cake and eat it too.

You know, I cannot go there even to bring the Coast Guard to drive them away. China also claims the property and he is in possession. *'Yan ang problema*. *Sila 'yung* in possession and claiming all the resources there as an owner. We are claiming the same but we are not in the position because of that fiasco *noong dalawang nag-standoff* doon during the time of my predecessor si Albert, ambassador. If I'm correct. I do not know his real name. *Tayo ang umatras*. *Pagsabi niya umatras*, that was a kind of a compromise. *Tayo ang umatras*. *Noong umatras tayo, pumasok sila*. *Marami na*.

That day, we lost the Spratly and the Panganiban Island. *Iyan ang totoo*. *Walang bolahan 'yan*. *Ngayon, may arbitral ruling*. I... I said, I could not even ask for the oil claiming the entire resources of the...

Anong sabihin ko sa kanila? Kaya sinabi ko, “Let us do this mutually.” Of course, when Xi says, “I will fish,” who can prevent him? And *sabi ko naman*, “We will fish because we claim it.”

And *sabi ko*, “Please allow because...” Before that, they were driving away our fishermen. *'Di ba inaabog nila? Kaya sabi ko*, “Do not drive them away because the Filipinos are of the belief that they are also — they claim it.”

Now, if you deprive — deprive the Filipinos of — there, *magkagulo talaga 'yan*. And it

could lead to *ano* — not really war, and I said, “we have to...”

Kaya ang sabi ko... When I said, “I allowed,” that was on the premise that I own the property. *Pero hindi tayo* in control of the property. *Ayan magsabi sila*, “Of course, I will allow you.” *Kaya pinabalik*.

Eh 'yung disgrasya, 'yung pagsabi “a mere incident — legal, marine incident,” *'yan ang ginagamit sa batas 'yan*, “a marine incident happened.” *Hindi naman sinasabi na* “marine accident.”

It was just *nabangga, wala naman*. So they wanted to talk, *tapos ayaw dito*. And so, “So *sige*, we will investigate and you investigate, and when you are ready, we should meet and compare notes, and let us determine who pays for what damage.”

Ganun lang. *Ipadala ko 'yung marines ko* to drive away the Chinese fishermen. I guarantee you, not one of them will come home alive.

Kung ipadala ko 'yung limang — pati 'yung frigate ko na bago, 'yung pinagkaguluhan nila ni Trillanes diyan sa — that made Bong a Senator, *ubos 'yan* because there are already guided missiles in that island.

And the fastest that they have installed there can reach Manila in seven minutes. You want war? *Alam mo, asaran 'yan eh*. *Supladuhan 'yan*. *Kung supladuhan lang, murahin*, “P***** i** mo, l**** ka. *Umalis ka diyan*.”

Kung ganunan lang, bright ako diyan. *Hanggang bunganga lang*. *Pero kung bunutan na ng baril, ah pwede siguro basta dalawa lang*. But the problem is, there — whether we do it in a diplomatic way, there will be heated arguments, *sigurado 'yan*.

We do it in a confrontation *doon*. We try to drive them away, it could lead to a violence. Any way *'yan*. By the way the President answered when I said “I will dig my oil” the first time I went to China.

Nakita ko 'yung tao eh. So you can, more or less, draw a profile of his, “Please do not do that because there will be trouble.” *Ano... Anong magagawa ko?*

I go there, I said, “The fisheries who were...” And besides, I was invoking *'yung* traditional fishing rights. It is in that arbitral ruling. *Ayaw lang ninyong gustong tignan*.

It is mentioned there that even before countries were in existence, people around an

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ocean or a lake had already been fishing there for generations. And that is why fishing rights are allowed in the so many cases between Finland and Germany, decided by UNCLOS — UNCLOS and the International Law of the Seas.

UNCLOS is a product of a treaty. That treaty is also a part of our land because we are a signatory. *Eh kung basahin lang ninyo 'yan nang husto*, it is there. You might just...

China and everybody recognizes traditional fishing rights for the natives who were there even before the creation of republics and governments. That law is a humane law.

So I'm sorry I have to... I promised you 40 minutes. My God, I... You want me to stop? We can go home now. I have exceeded my... There is the, you know, there is a time for everything.

Do not believe the others because they are not my friends. They are my political enemies. They said I do not believe in God. Who says? I am a believer of a universal mind there.

But I do not believe that a God so perfect would create hell for his creation. What kind of God is he? He is not my God. There is a time to — for everything. A time to negotiate and a time to quarrel with your enemy, with your political opponents or with your wife.

That is why some lives here are... And a time to antagonize and a time to make peace and a time to go to war, and a time to live and a time to die. That's Ecclesiastes 3.

Our ownership of the Philippine — West Philippine Sea is internationally recognized. However, both the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Arbitral Award in the case of People — "Republic of the Philippines vs. People's Republic of China" recognize instances where another state may utilize the resources found within the coastal state's Exclusive Economic Zone.

The arbitral ruling even states, the one that they are charging me for violating the Constitution.... *Sino gani 'yon? Suntuin lang kita diyan ngayon mabuti pa. Nandito eh.* The arbitral ruling even states that the Philippines may enter into fishing agreements with other states, provided certain conditions and requisites in the UNCLOS are met.

So *'yung akin, sabi niya*, "Let's go fish." *Sabi ko*, "You have to act..." You know, they have been there fishing since time immemorial. I think it was Adam who got the first Lapu-Lapu there.

Let me assure you, that national honor and territorial integrity shall not — shall be foremost in our mind, and when we may take the next steps in this smoldering controversy over the lines of arbitral ruling, the West Philippine Sea is ours.

There is no ifs and buts. It is ours. But we have been acting, along that legal truth and line. But we have to temper it with the times and the realities that we face today.

Poverty incidence fell from 27.6 percent in the first half of 2015 to 21 percent in the first half of 2018. The most important number, though, is the six million Filipinos we need to pull out from poverty. Kindly help me on this.

And you know, as I said, corruption is everywhere. You are free to investigate. I don't take offense. If there is anything wrong in my department, the Executive, you are free to open the investigation anytime.

You do not have to call me. Call the idiots, expose them, and send them to jail. You are helping me. Do not be... I am not... I've been a prosecutor. I know how it works. Feel free. Feel free to expose anything that is not in accordance with law.

We have pursued tax reforms to fund our poverty reduction programs. I therefore implore Congress to immediately pass Package 2 of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program, or the TRABAHO Bill, which shall gradually lower the income — corporate income tax, and rationalize and improve fiscal incentives.

It will energize our MSMEs and encourage them to expand their business and hopefully generate, hopefully — I'm missing the word hopefully *para sabihin na* "you're all talk" — hopefully [1.4] million jobs in the coming years. The MSMC — MSMEs hold the promise of raising a lot of the Filipinos.

I therefore believe that it is now time for Congress to approve a new version of the Salary Standardization Law. *Ngayon na.* And to the teachers, *alam mo dito* who toil and work tirelessly to educate our young.

Kasali na po dito 'yung hinihingi ninyo. Hindi naman masyadong malaki, pero it will tide you over during these hard times. A little bit bigger than before. This is intended to increase the salaries of national government workers, including teachers and nurses. Nurses, correct.

I am also asking Congress to pass the remaining packages of my Administration's Tax Reform Program, and the bills that would further

raise excise taxes on — very good, let us do it — tobacco and alcohol.

Sinong naninigarilyo dito? They should be exterminated from the face of the earth. They are the ones... You know, I... I'm... I do not hide my — what's wrong with me. I acquired Buerger's disease because I smoke.

But I made it a national policy because you know when I was new mayor, I went around to see the discos and night clubs. I could hardly see the faces of the people inside. You have to wade into a thick smoke to just recognize one.

So that's when I decided. But I was still smoking. But I decided because I knew, I already had it. So it's time to — *sabi ko*. And a national law, *para lahat na*, that at 12 o' clock, everything closes.

I am not trying to pull a chair here. Mine was that two o'clock noon sa Davao, it was two then I reduced it to one. When that boxing mayor there became mayor, she reduced it to six. *Walang order*, no orders in advance.

Kasi we have ordered already, so you can close but we have to drink. *Itong ngayon*, at 12, everything closes down. Nobody works. So I... I think that we should adopt it. Most of the states, in many states, in many countries, *ganun man*. *Alas dose*, *sarado na talaga*.

We have to stop drinking. And jukebox, they're only good up to eight, nine. Eight, *maganda 'yan*. It's a... It's there in every corner, store. Blares out noise and the children who will go to school and the working class, and you are there with your store.

I have prohibited it in Davao. And at 12, as you see, Davao is quiet because everybody is resting already. Be it in the memorial parks, cemetery, or in the comfort of their homes.

The valuation system has also to be improved local government units and rationalize capital income [taxation]. I urge Congress to review and pass the Government Rightsizing Bill to reconfigure the existing Metro Manila-centric bureaucracy; streamline government systems in order to deliver services without delay and within a short timeline.

These reforms would be for naught if we cannot avert of a "new poor" every time a disaster strikes. The Philippine experience has shown that natural disasters and — are poverty creators.

That is why, we need to hasten the establishment of a Department of Disaster Resilience

(DDR) so that these department focus on the natural hazards and climate change. I urge Congress to fast-track the passage of the Administration of this bill — Administration version rather. In 2017, I reminded all of you of the probable consequence of a catastrophic earthquake in Metro Manila and its surrounding provinces. Since then, I have established the Project Management Office for the Earthquake Resilience and the Greater Manila Area to implement two-pronged strategy on earthquake resilience and mitigation efforts.

I just heard, it's not in my speech. I just heard that from a psychic that the first crack when the "Big One" hits, will be right here in the center of this...

'Yan man ang sabi nila. "Philippines is so corrupt, it's so lousy that if you kill all congressmen, senators and the president, we will have a new day." So I pray that if the earthquake comes, it comes now. This moment. *Kumpleto na tayo*. *May madamay pa tayo doon sa harap*.

We weathered one damaging effect of climate change this year. The El Niño were wreaked havoc in the agricultural sector and caused water shortage in the greater Metro Manila area. We need to pass bill creating the Department of Water Resources and Water Regulatory Commission.

Alam mo, the agencies and the guys there handling the — the entire water works system — you have to change it immediately.

You know what, there was this three-day no water. I was in Davao. So everybody was complaining and I was even afraid to come here because what if my girlfriend will not be able to — to take a bath. She will smell like hell. So I said, I'll wait for the water to wash her.

Alam mo kung hindi ako nagmura... and then when I arrived in the morning, there was water. And my girlfriend was fresh.

I also call on Congress to pass a law mandating a Fire Protection Modernization Program. *Diyan tayo nagka-ano*. If you go to Davao, you'll find the best. The best of everything, 911, all the cameras, all the screens. We did that if you can find it.

Alam mo — alam mo sabi ni... Is there... Sonny is here? Secretary Dominguez? Ah Sonny. *Siya man ang magyayabang*. *Sabi niya*, "marami tayong pera". Pero 'pag tanungin namin siya doon sa Cabinet meeting, "tsk tsk tsk tsk, walang pera, walang pera". Si Diokno ganun rin kaya gi-tapon ko sa Central Bank.

Every time *sabihin mo*, you know we discussed projects, we plan and we submit it to Congress, it's final *imprimatur*. Eh 'di kami ang, "May pera ba tayo diyan, sir? "Wala." "Magkano?" "Four billion." "Tsk tsk tsk tsk tsk that is not the *tsk tsk* practice. No money, no money." *Saan pala ang pera natin dito? Sa bulsa ninyo? Karaming collection natin dito. But Sonny says that we can fund. This one we have to answer.*

Now, I would like to remind... *Pagbigyan na lang ninyo ako tatal para naman ito sa lahat. Alas-sais pa nga ginugutom na kayo. Hindi pala kayo nag-merienda?*

Alam mo, ever since *na-integrate 'yan* you would notice in your cities and provinces the deterioration of the service itself. *Wala ng mga truck, luma na*. And would you believe it in Davao City, I'll show it to you, we have a 1934 Studebaker fire truck. *Maganda pa*.

So we have to — we have to do better than this. There are other cities which are utterly — utterly without the tools to respond the challenges of fire. We have to come up with something that is really good.

I mean at this age, it would be a shame if you cannot put up a fire in two days, three days, my God. We have to set aside.

Sonny, you have the money? Oh yes. Oh see. *Basta sa maraming tao mahiya man magdeny. Totoo 'yan. Totoo 'yan*. We have the money so maybe Sonny can give you a figure that we can set aside.

Nakakahiya talaga itong ano natin. Ang Davao, meron. Davao has a very good 911. *Hindi ako nagyayabang*. And we have cameras in every corners that's why we can solve crimes immediately. And *meron kaming 911*. "What is your emergency?" That's the standard. So it's fire, they call the fire department.

Sabi ko, "911." "Yes." "What's your emergency?" "I — I seemed to lost my — to have lost my girlfriend." "We know you, Mayor. You go back to Manila there are plenty left there. Go."

This will equip the fire — Bureau of Fire Protection with tools to respond to the challenges. I further ask Congress to urgently pass the *Na — ito* — the National Land Use Act or NALUA within this year. *Paki lang po*. So that we can proceed with the new... Well, we can meet the — the demands of the new investors coming in. *Ang lupa natin ang problema eh*.

A science-based national land use plan would serve as basis for the LGUs in crafting

respective development plans, and help disperse economic activities to the countryside.

The dispersion of economic and business activities to Visayas and Mindanao is not just a campaign promise. It is an economic imperative and a key to our country's sustainable and equitable development. We will encourage investments that would develop the rural areas and Metro Manila and other mega urban areas.

Let me cut here, *tatal maliit na lang*. I would just like to remind everybody. No offense intended to the mayors and governors to the local government. *Pero 'yang style ninyo na* it takes about three days, four days for the employees of a certain company, store, or whatever to go back and forth, back and forth.

When they go back, you have a new regulation. He gets it, he secures it and when he goes back, oh there's still you have to follow — you have to get this paper.

I will tell you now. *Hindi ako nagyayabang*. In Davao, it's one hour unless there is a need for ocular inspection. I am directing you publicly mayors — mayors. I am directing also the DILG, Secretary Año of the local government to see to it that this is honored. All clearances, permits emanating from your office that would need also your approval, must be out at the very least within three days.

You do not do that. I am directing *si* Secretary Año, is he here, sir? *Nandito ka?* Oh Secretary Año, he is the former chief of staff, he's also a military man.

I want three days, unless there is an exceptional reason, three days, *para hindi na magpa-balik-balik kasi diyan ang perahan eh*. *Pagdating doon meron na naman hingin, pagdating doon may hingin*.

Kaya I said the Filipinos if it is done to you, I'm telling you, slap the guy, create a scene, create a scandal because that incident however little will reach me. And if it does, you can be sure, if I do not call you and the idiot, I will go there myself. That is a promise, that is a pledge.

Make it a part of my oath of office. *Lahat kayo diyan pati 'yang tsk — easement*. Well, under Villar, *okay na*. *Pero 'yang easement billion dollar — ah billion pesos*. Well, if it's a foreign company, it's a billion dollar thing.

Ganun 'yan. *Pabalik-balik at hindi bina-bayaran*. That's why *nagpatong*... If all moneys and revenues due government are collected in good faith, *marami tayong pera*. I'm telling you

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as President. *Marami tayong pera para extra money to uplift the — the mass of Filipinos who are suffering. Maski ospital lang and housing.*

Jobs, it's the economy that runs it. If the economy is good, more jobs. At the meantime, *itong hospitalization, education, the basic things at saka itong relocation. Kaawa talaga.*

Kung makolekta lang lahat hindi ma-corrupt ang pera, marami tayong pera. Kaya ako nagsabi. That's why I — I resi...

You know, I will make it public. I was at the Nayong Pilipino. I gave it to a group of people. *Tapos nagpa-bidding sila. Ang nagbidding nila* is to allow a gambling casino to be erected there inside the Nayong Pilipino.

Anong kahulugan ng Nayong Pilipino kung lagyan mo ng sugalan and without a bidding? You know, *nandiyan na 'yung mga generals, they are there, chief of staff. Kasi pag galing doon pumunta ako sa command conference. Pagdating ko sa command conference, may ipinasa si Sonny — ghost delivery sa AFP hospital. Eh galing pa ako doon sa...*

When I was facing the military and police, *sabi ko*, "Look, I thought I had my back covered by you? If I cannot trust you, you better tell me now. Because if you the commanders of the Air Force, Army *pati* Albayalde and the Navy, I will step down now. I am resigning, I'll go back to Davao. You do the explaining to the people why."

Ginanun ko talaga. And in one of the Cabinet meetings *ganun rin*. There was this two-year, *pabalik-balik na 'yung — back and forth, back and forth, for two years it was sitting on their ass, the papers.*

So when they were explaining to me the revised plan and with so many requirements, clearances from NBI, I stood up with the Cabinet members, *lahat kami*. In a Cabinet meeting I said, "Stop. That idiotic matrix is not for me. That is intended for the next — maybe the president after the next." *Lumabas ako sabi ko, "Inyo na 'yang gobyerno ninyo."*

Sabi ko wala ako... I — I'm tired. I'm tired and I am... *Talagang gusto ko na rin mag-resign. Sabi ko* I am not happy anymore. *Sabi ko* anytime — ah the military said, if you want to go out? If you want to take over *coup d'etat*, go ahead. Do not bring your armors. Do not bring your weapons here. Just call me and we'll have coffee.

I do not believe. I think Marcos and Estrada were correct that they did not allow the... *Kasi*

'yung guwardiya mo, guwardiya dito, pareho 'yan. Lahat sila dadaan 'yan sa presidential command. All of them will be assigned. Nag-iikot 'yan sila lahat. A taste of everything. Hanggang Mindanao kaya kilala ko 'yan sila lahat dumaan ng Mindanao eh.

Sabi ko talaga, "Inyo na. Ayaw ko na." Sabi ko, "Sige, sinong gusto? Raise your right hands. I..." "I..." "Duly appointed member of the junta, will now make the SONA next month."

Ah bahala kayo diyan. You threatened about... If you think that you can run the country better than the elected one, go ahead. That's not my — it's the problem of the Filipino people.

Talaga sa Cabinet na — na tsk... Kaya abutan ako ng topak, magbaba dito ako ngayon. Bahala na kayo diyan. I'm going home.

One estimate pegs economic losses at P3.5 billion a day due to traffic congestion in Metro Manila. So meantime, I reiterate my directive, my request, my pleadings to the MMDA and all concerned local officials in Metro Manila, and all other cities, to undertake immediate action to ensure the speedy and smooth flow of vehicular traffic. Reclaim all public roads that are being used for private ends. *Marami diyan.*

And again, I asked Secretary Año to see to it that this is enforced. If there is a mayor or a governor, or *kung ano kang — sino kang demonyo ka, i-suspend mo*, Sir Año. Give him time and if he cannot — if he is not up to it, then *pagpahingain mo na lang. Suspend mo na. Wala talagang — wala tayong magawa.*

They just keep on pleasing their own constituents just because they are constituents — a leader. *Ganun kayo eh.* The only way to do it... Anyway, me, I have no problem. Me, I am an *inutil* official. Me, I cannot run anymore. Me, after six years I might lose my head. *Wala na ako.* I... No more challenges in politics. No more mountains to climb. I will just do my duty.

And most of my Cabinet members are actually military men. You know why? *Gusto ninyong malaman?* Do not be embarrassed. *Atin-atin na lang ito. Huwag mo na silang pansinin, 'yang mga ano diyan. Parang nag meeting-meeting lang tayo dito. 'Yung parang nagpulung-pulong lang. Do not mind them. Eh kung tignan kasi ninyo mahiya kayo.*

Kasi ganito 'yan, my penchant for military men. I want to ingratiate myself to them? What? I was elected by the people, not by the military,

not by the police. But to — why do I have this I said — this predisposed of... *Kasi utusan sila madali. Kasi 'pag sinabi mong walang corruption, walang corruption. Kaya lang ang military and just like any organization, 'pag ang top diyan general o ang commander-in-chief corrupt, ku-corrupt 'yan lahat.*

Pero kung sabihin mo na matino ka, they will follow. So Boracay I sent Cimat. Sabi ko, "Puntahan mo nga doon." Is General Cimat here, si Roy? Ah yeah.

Itong si Roy nakilala ko ito sa Mindanao. Hindi ko man 'yan kilala. Mindanao... Na-mayor kasi ako 23 years. So all of them passed by Mindanao, kilala ko. 'Pag inutusan mo, kaagad. And they know that I will not give illegal orders for them to implement. Alam nila abugado ako. Sabi ko sundin lang ako ninyo.

Kaya I was surprised when I ordered Cimat to go there — to Boracay, Sir Frank. Alam mo ang ginawa niya? The next day lumabas siya roon sa Daily Mirror. Naglalakad siya doon sa beach, naka-t-shirt ng blue at 'yung mata niya nandoon sa dalawang Caucasian na nag...

*"G***** it, Cimat. Akala ko ba inutusan kita?" "Yes, sir." "O bakit ka nagpalakad-lakad diyan sa beach tinitignan mo 'yung naka-bikini na dalawang puti?" "Sir, napadaan lang ako sir." Sabi ko, "Trabahuin mo 'yan ha." And they did it in six months' time. Of course with a... I like Cimat because he mixed his pleasure with work. That is the way how to do it.*

I give you until the last week of the year 'yung sa — September na to do this. Clean the LGUs. Walang mangyari dito.

We shall continue to invest in the countryside through agricultural programs that will increase the productivity and income of our small farmers and fisherfolk. We shall ensure the full implementation of the Rice Tariffication Law, including the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund. This will safeguard the livelihood of small farmers through the provisions of modern farm equipment and machineries, seeds and credit, and extension services.

I also have not forgotten my commitment to uplift the lives - ito - coconut farmers and further develop the coconut industry through the urgent utilization of the Coconut Levy Fund. That is 100 million. Kaya ako very careful until now wala akong nakuha. Look, it is really hard to look for an honest man. I must admit it. Baka ako hindi ko rin kaya. I do not have that well...

Itong coco fund na ito, ito 'yung naiwan noong kay Marcos na levy fund. This is sacred money. This money was taken out of the pockets of the Filipinos arbitrarily. Wala kang magawa noon eh martial law. Ito na 'yan. Kaya itong coco levy fund, kung sabihin mo lang, tama ang Supreme Court. Hindi mo pwedeng maibigay -sabi mo sino. You can no longer trace the truthful owner of the land.

Ang plano ko, kung gusto ninyo, you save the money. You invest the money. Siguro mag-abot 'yan ng mga more than 100 billion. Ilagay na lang ninyo ng ano trust fund for the government. It's about mga five billion. Ayon na lang ang gastusin ninyo to reserve the money. Rather than do it parang sprinkle na ibigay mo sa mga tao. You cannot — sabi ng Supreme Court tama sila — you can no longer trace the genealogy of the owners — the original owners. And sometimes it would fail.

I will not act on that until I find the money. Wala pa akong nakuha. I have yet — I have yet to look for the money. Hanggang ngayon naghahanap ako. Wala akong makita. Kasi malaki ito and if you assign a corrupt idiot there... Kaya ang gusto ko o baka nagustuhan rin ninyo, i-deposito ko na lang. Let it remain as a remembrance to the people who lost their ah — at that time. Tapos 'yung 5 billion, 'yon 'yung to the improvement sa replanting sa coconut.

Five billion, that's a big money. Pero kung ibigay mo, let it sprinkler, walang mangyayari. 'Yung taga-bigay kukuha 'yan — 'yung pupunta. That's why itong Land Bank na ito, 'pag hindi ito na... You know, you are called Land Bank but you are now the number one commercial bank in the Philippines.

What the heck is happening to you? You are supposed to finance agricultural enterprises and endeavors. Bakit wala? Why can't you just buy a few wagons or whatever? Go to the countryside and ask the people if there are cooperatives, tulungan ninyo to form one.

'Pag wala, eh tignan ninyo na maibigay ninyo for replanting to revive the coconut industry. Pahiramin ninyo ng pera plus the money — 'nung sabi ko of the coconut levy. That is sacred money. Land Bank should go back to land. Why are you mired in so many commercial transactions? Bumalik kayo where you were created for and that is to help the farmers. Ilang administration na wala? You better decide on that, I will give you until the end of July to give me a plan or else I will ask Congress to reconfigure you what-not. Wala eh, wala kayong...

I'm asking now Congress, '*pag wala sila* — if there is no viable plan for that for the farmers and it is just all commercial transactions, might as well abolish it and give the money to the congressmen for their development funds. *O mas makatulong pa. Diretso eh. Ayaw ninyo? O ayaw daw nila*, Sir Frank. *Huwag mo na lang galawin*.

I once again urge both Houses of Congress to pass a more responsive version of the bill establishing the Coconut Farmers' Trust Fund to ensure the accelerated utilization of coco levy funds for the well-being and empowerment of the coconut farmers.

We recognize the urgent need to ensure the sustainability and availability of resources and the development of alternative ones. In this regard, I trust that Secretary Cusi shall fast-track also the development of renewable energy sources, and reduce dependence on the traditional energy sources such as coal.

Finally, sustaining our gains entails a national security posture capable of defending the country from external and internal security threats. Defense Secretary Lorenzana, together with the gallant men and women of the armed forces, is at the forefront of this fight.

We expect support for legislative initiatives aimed at strengthening defense-related systems such as the proposed National Defense Act, the Unified Military and Uniformed Personnel Separation, Retirement, and Pension Bill, and the revival of the mandatory ROTC in Grades 11 and 12. Very important.

Alam mo 'pag mag giyera-giyera, 10 out of 10 hindi marunong maghawak ng baril to defend even his father and mother and brothers and sisters. Itong mga bata ngayon, they are bereft of the patriotism and the love of country. Balik sila dito.

I think a military training would be good for everybody. *Kung hindi sige lang — sa shabu, mamaya namatay, krrrkkk.* "Duterte: Extra-judicial killing. Report to the ICC." Ah okay. If you can provide me with a good comfortable cell, heated during winter time, I want to go — and an air-conditioned during hot weather. And a conjugal visits, unlimited, para we can understand each other.

We are aware of the fact that there are times in AFP and PNP personnel, while in the performance of their duties, get unjustly sued. Providing them with free legal assistance to help and boost their morale.

My fellow citizens, to borrow the words of Churchill — akin 'to, this is mine: We are now entering a period of consequences. The consequences of what we did and did not do but should have done during my first half of my term. I assume full responsibility for that. As President, I cannot pass the blame to anybody. So it's on me.

Though we cannot change the past, we will not squander the future. I will push harder in the pursuit of programs that we have started, but always within the parameters of the law. I will not merely coast along or while away my time during the remaining years of my administration. It ain't my style. But I will not stop until I reach the finish line. Then and only then shall I call it a day.

Our goal for the next three years is clear: a comfortable life for everybody, all Filipinos. We have made significant strides and accomplished signal milestones as a nation in the past three years. This momentum must continue with greater fervor in the next three years and beyond.

I dream of glowing days ahead for every Filipino. I dream of a Philippines better than the one I grew up with.

This is my pledge and commitment for just three years, if I can. If I cannot, I'm sorry. But I shall continue to comply with my constitutional duty to serve and protect the Filipino, until the last day of my term.

God Bless the Filipino. God Bless the Philippines. Thank you very much!

ADJOURNMENT OF JOINT SESSION

Thereafter, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives declared the joint session adjourned.

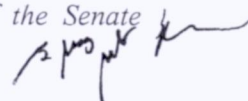
It was 6:49 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.



ATTY. MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA

Secretary of the Senate



Approved on July 23, 2019