

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

PRESS BRIEFING WITH PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON SALVADOR PANELO
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ALVIN BALTAZAR/RP: Magandang umaga MPC; welcome sa ating regular press briefing with Chief President Legal Counsel and Spokesperson Atty. Salvador Panelo. Secretary magandang umaga.

SEC. PANELO: Good morning MPC.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: Nasa Davao pa po si Presidente at may balak po ba siyang pumunta doon sa mga lugar na apektado ng lindol o magkaroon kaya ng situationer briefing sa kanya doon?

SEC. PANELO: Ang alam ko nandoon pa siya.

TUESDAY NIU/DZBB: Iyong pag-visit sir doon sa areas affected?

SEC. PANELO: Wala pa siyang sinasabi.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, paki kuwento lang iyong... nasaan si Presidente when the earthquake struck and how is it?

SEC. PANELO: When the quake hit Davao, the President was having his hair cut, nagpapagupit. That's what the First Lady said.

Q: In his house?

SEC. PANELO: In his house, together with daughter Kitty and Honeylet Avençena; the First Lady was on her way home at that time. She was saying that the car she was riding was swaying. But they were unhurt.

ROSE COZ/UNTV: Sir, hindi pa po kayo nag-release ng statement regarding sa NPA attack last Friday sa Samar. Ano po ang reaksiyon ng Pangulo at matutuloy pa ba iyong binabalak na peace talks?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi namin napag-usapan the night before. We'll issue a statement.

ROSE COZ/UNTV: Pero ano po ang reaksiyon ng Palasyo dahil may mga nadamay pong sibilyan, may pulis na namatay, meron pong senior citizen na namatay?

SEC. PANELO: Eh siyempre ayaw natin iyon. Iyong mga NPAs kung gusto talaga nilang makipag-usap eh dapat tigilan na nila iyong ginagawa nila. Kasi when you do that, your sincerity is in question with respect to peace talks.

ROSE COZ/UNTV: So sa tingin n'yo sir iyong pangyayari na iyon makaka-apekto po doon sa napipinto sana na muling pagbubukas noon pong formal peace negotiations?

SEC. PANELO: Let us see, how it will affect the proposed peace talks.

REYMUND TINAZA/BOMBO RADYO: Sir, di ba nagdeklara na ng unilateral ceasefire this holiday iyong CPP-NPA. So talagang nanindigan ba kayo with the recommendation of Defense Secretary Lorenzana not to declare a counter unilateral ceasefire?

SEC. PANELO: The AFP and the... well, Secretary Año, I think both of them are against it. And usually the President defers to whatever recommendation those people on the ground give him.

REYMUND TINAZA/BOMBO RADYO: So this recent development of the ambush, so the more na hindi na talaga kailangan ng pagdeklara ng ceasefire—

SEC. PANELO: As I said, let's see how the President will take it. I'll ask him.

REYMUND TINAZA/BOMBO RADYO: From your end, sir?

SEC. PANELO: I'll ask him.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Sec, reaksiyon lang kay Vice President Leni Robredo sabi niya—

SEC. PANELO: Kala ko Solita Monsod.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Kailangan ng daw ng mahinahon, calmer approach in pushing for better water concession agreement. Sabi niya kapag hindi natin dinnaan sa mas mahinahon ng usapin ang dami nitong collateral damage?

SEC. PANELO: Siguro ang advice natin kay VP Leni, wag mo nang pasukin iyong hindi mo alam.

HENRY URI/DZRH: What does it mean?

SEC. PANELO: It means, I don't think she knows anything about it. The President has made a stand and the stand appears to be very effective. She should know that.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, comment po. Si Vice deferred the release of her ICAD report in deference to—Vice President Robredo, sir, hindi muna ulit nilabas iyong ICAD report niya because there's a Davao quake and...

SEC. PANELO: What's taking her so long? As the President said, 'bring it on, whatever you want to come out with.' Mahirap kasi pag wala ka naman talagang ilalabas at nag-iisip ka pa kung ano ang ilalabas mo, eh talagang matagal.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, when you say nag-iisip pa ng ilalabas, what do you mean?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi nga natin alam kung ano ba iyong sinasabi niyang natuklasan niya. Parang umatras nga siya doon, parang hindi naman... may natuklasan, ang sabi niya, 'ilalabas ko iyong mga rekomendasyon ko.' But earlier, sinasabi niya na, 'natatakot ba kayo kung ano iyong mga matutuklasan ko.' And then sabi niya, 'ilalabas ko kung ano ang mga natuklasan ko.' Ang gulo niya.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Sir, ang dahilan po ni VP Robredo is para hindi raw po mawala iyong focus ng publiko sa pagtulong sa mga apektado ng lindol. Do you think, sir, it's just an excuse—

SEC. PANELO: Anong focus? Focus ng?

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: Sabi po niya, bakit siya nag-defer doon sa paglalabas ng ICAD report is because para hindi po mawala iyong focus sa pagtulong sa mga apektado ng lindol. Do you think it's just an excuse?

SEC. PANELO: As I said, kung mayroon siyang ilalabas na masama o iregularidad, dapat from the very time of the discovery inilabas na niya iyon. Apparently, wala naman eh.

JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM: So regardless doon sa sinabi niyang excuse dapat sinabi na niya kanina?

SEC. PANELO: Hindi, noon pa. 'Di ba sabi niya may mga natuklasan siya, bakit hindi niya inilabas. Kaya nga hinamon siya ni Presidente 'di ba, "Bring it on." Wala naman.

Akala ko tatanungin ninyo ako, reaksiyon kay Solita Monsod. Mukhang hindi ninyo alam kung ano iyong kay Solita? Alam ninyo ba iyon, kung ano iyon? Ano nga, ano nga? Hindi ninyo naman alam kung ano iyong... apparently, hindi rin kayo nagbabasa ng column niya. Basahin ninyo na muna and then you ask me tomorrow.

NESTOR CORRALES/Inquirer.net: Secretary, just on the SALN of the President. You mentioned that the President is not mandated to release his SALN to whoever wants it. But under the freedom of information executive order of the President orders official to "file and make available for scrutiny their SALN in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations." Just for context, sir, it was Ombudsman Martirez who ordered reporters seeking a copy of the President's SALN to ask Malacañang for a copy of the President's SALN since his office is still finalizing guidelines regarding the release of SALN.

SEC. PANELO: They should wait for the guidelines.

NESTOR CORRALES/Inquirer.net: Will Malacañang release a copy of the SALN of the President?

SEC. PANELO: The law requires them to file their SALN. And the repository of those records is with the Ombudsman. Eh nasa Ombudsman iyon.

NESTOR CORRALES/Inquirer.net: Pero previous presidents, sir, and administrations have released the copies of SALN—

SEC. PANELO: It doesn't mean that he will have to follow. He follows the law. The law says, you file; and he filed.

NESTOR CORRALES/Inquirer.net: So the President will not release a copy of his SALN, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Ipinayl niya na nga eh. Di be creative iyong mga—

NESTOR CORRALES/Inquirer.net: Sir, leaving it to the Ombudsman, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Kasi nga iyon ang repository ng dokumento eh.

INA ANDOLONG/CNN PHILS: Sir, why can't the President just do, let's say, what the Vice President did and just release—

SEC. PANELO: Because he follows the law, that's the answer.

INA ANDOLONG/CNN PHILS: So did the Vice President and other—

SEC. PANELO: The law requires him to file a SALN, and so he filed it. And it's with the Office of the Ombudsman.

INA ANDOLONG/CNN PHILS: But do you see it as something—was it wrong for the Vice President and other previous presidents to just release theirs?

SEC. PANELO: Maybe that's their style. This President's style is different. But he has not transgressed any law.

INA ANDOLONG/CNN PHILS: Okay. Sir, do you have any ... I know it's an independent office, but perhaps can you call on the Ombudsman to just release the President's SALN to those requesting for it?

SEC. PANELO: We do not interfere with any Constitutional body. Let them do their work.

INA ANDOLONG/CNN PHILS: Sir, just for those curious: Is the President hiding anything that's why hindi na lang po niya ilabas from—

SEC. PANELO: If he is hiding anything, he would have not filed any SALN.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, push lang. So it's up to Ombudsman Martinez to release it based on—

SEC. PANELO: Yeah, because that is the job of the Ombudsman, to release.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: And there's no legal impediment ba iyon or legal question because may nabasa ako na parang they're still trying to find a basis to release it. But if—we don't have a law on the FOI, right?, not yet; but we have an executive order that says it should be made available for—

SEC. PANELO: Exactly! That's why he filed it so it's available in the Office of the Ombudsman.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Okay. If the Ombudsman releases it, you don't have any problem with it?

SEC. PANELO: How can there be any problem? That's why he filed it.

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JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Okay. So, bahala na si Ombudsman?

ALVIN BALTAZAR: Thank you, Joseph. Still sa SALN, Rose?

ROSALIE COZ/UNTV: Sir, 'di ba gusto ng Presidente na maging accessible sa publiko 'yung information at hindi sila mahirapan?

SEC. PANELO: Nag-file na nga.

ROSALIE COZ/UNTV: Sir, kung dadaan pa sa Ombudsman—

SEC. PANELO: Aba eh 'yun ang batas eh—

ROSALIE COZ/UNTV: —mas mahihirapan ang—

SEC. PANELO: 'Yun nga ang batas, ba't you want—ba't ba pinagpipilitan n'yo? The law says file it! Finile! Oh! It means the Ombudsman they will release; the Ombudsman says, you wait, I'm doing my guidelines. Bakit hindi tayo makapaghintay?

ALVIN BALTAZAR: MPC? Follow-up, Maricel.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Sir, will there be any problem if Malacañang just release the SALN of the President para wala na lang issue?

SEC. PANELO: Kayo lang naman ang gumagawa ng issue eh. As far as the President is concerned, there is no issue. The law requires him to file, I filed! You want to get a copy of it, then ask the Ombudsman.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: For the sake of transparency, sir 'cause previous Administration—

SEC. PANELO: Eh, transparent na nga! When you say transparent, you file.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Uhm.

SEC. PANELO: The law does not require him to produce any copy to anybody who wants it.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: So, the President feels na it's important for the Ombudsman to see the content of the SALN—

SEC. PANELO: It is important to file a SALN, that is what the law requires. He has complied—he has already complied with that.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Okay.

ALVIN BALTAZAR: Thank you, Maricel. Any more follow-up regarding sa SALN or other matters? No more? Joseph.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sir, 'yung sa Congress lang po. May salary increase inaprubahan nila 'yung - for government workers - parang mga eleven thousand ba iyon for salary Grade 1 for government workers. Pero House level pa lang, in tranches naman and if it becomes a law it should start by January 2020. Comment, sir?

SEC. PANELO: Well, if the Congress has passed that then the workers should be happy for that.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Would you encourage the Senate to maybe work also on it and pass it before the year ends?

SEC. PANELO: As we said, the President does not really interfere with any kind of work that a co-equal branch does. Hinahayaan na lang niya 'yun.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: But it's good, 'no? You're giving—

SEC. PANELO: Yeah, that's—the workers should be happy.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Okay. Thank you.

SEC. PANELO: Thank you, Joseph. MPC? Henry? Rose, mic please.

HENRY URI/DZRH: Sec, baka puwede na naming marinig. Ano ba 'yung binabanggit mo kay Winnie Monsod, please?

SEC. PANELO: You have to read the column first. I cannot—

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: [OFF MIC] Poverty data ba 'yan?

SEC. PANELO: You read it. I think it's a Saturday column.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: [OFF MIC] Poverty data?

SEC. PANELO: Basta basahin n'yo.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: [OFF MIC] It's here, sige. I'll read.

HENRY URI/DZRH: But Sec, since you mentioned it why not—

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: [OFF MIC] Must be congratulated?

SEC. PANELO: (laughs)

HENRY URI/DZRH: Why not tell it to us, Secretary?

SEC. PANELO: Basahin n'yo na muna para maganda 'yung discussion natin. 'Tsaka it's not my comment.

ALVIN BALTAZAR: Thank you, sir. Joseph?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Alright. So she's apparently congratulating the President.

SEC. PANELO: Basahin mo muna lahat 'yan.

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Kaya nga, 'eto nga sir.

SEC. PANELO: Ikaw lang naman nagbabasa eh hindi naman—

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: *[reads parts of the column]* The Duterte administration must be congratulated, the latest poverty estimates based on the 2018 family income show that the percentage of families who fall below the poverty threshold fell from 17.9 to 12.9... and then several paragraphs. She concludes, 'Anyway congratulations again Mr. President, may I just remind you that in the Philippine Development Plan your target—So, she's asking about rural poverty issues.

SEC. PANELO: Aren't you surprised with that column?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: What's your opinion?

SEC. PANELO: But I'm asking: Aren't you surprised suddenly this columnist is praising—is heaping praise on the President?

MPC: [OFF MIC] (UNCLEAR)

SEC. PANELO: From the time this President assumed office, she has not said any good word and then suddenly there is praising.

MPC: [OFF MIC] (UNCLEAR)

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Point being?

SEC. PANELO: There must be some reason. Is she laying a predicate?

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: What do you mean by that?

SEC. PANELO: But anyway, the President asked me to give his response to this columnist. He said: tell her I hate being patronized! 'F' you!

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Really may 'F' you? Is that your addition or the President?

SEC. PANELO: That's what is the 'F' you!

JOSEPH MORONG/GMA7: Sige. Okay.

ALVIN BALTAZAR: MPC? Okay na? Okay na tayo? Okay na. Maraming salamat, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and Spokesperson Attorney Salvador Panelo. Maraming salamat, MPC!

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