

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**MEDIA INTERVIEW OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
FOLLOWING THE CONFERMENT OF THE ORDER OF NATIONAL
SCIENTIST ON DR. EMIL Q. JAVIER**

[Rizal Hall, Malacañan Palace, Manila | 07 January 2020]

Q: Sir, good afternoon. Good afternoon. Happy New Year. Sir, can we have a few more details po doon sa sinabi sa amin ni Secretary Panelo kanina na meron na pong bagong kontrata for the water concessionaires?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: No, there is no contract. What we are ready to give to the parties, the distributors, is a draft which we would like to be enforced instead of the old one, which we think is not good for the Filipino.

Q: Sir, draft po? When are we ---

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Draft lang po.

Q: Draft pa lang po. So when are we going to finalize it and give it to the companies, sir.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, I'm sure that one of the --- one or two of the Cabinet, I cannot mention their names, are working at it.

Q: Sir, last question on this subject. If they do not accept, sir, 'yung...

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: That's not my problem. I said that is not my problem. I have this draft, it's either you accept it or not. You do not accept it? Then there is no contract.

For after all, as I have said right at the beginning when I saw the contract, I said this document is null and void from the beginning because it has so many provisions that would infringe into the penal laws of the Philippines, particularly the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Q: Sir, what will happen now to water distribution if they do not accept?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well --- then I will have to operate the distribution system.

It's either they accept with no guarantee that they will not be prosecuted or if they do not accept it then I will nationalize the water system and prosecute them for plunder or estafa on a large scale.

Q: Sir, do you have a timeframe for the --- for the companies to decide?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: No. I am not hurrying them up. But I am not paying anything. Forget... If I were the distributors, forget about that 7 million arbitral award.

I am not going to pay any --- anything, not single cent. Wala namang value siguro 'yang centavos, pero wala silang makuha sa akin.

Q: Mr. President, also on the presscon of Secretary Salvador Panelo may binanggit po siya na you have a message daw po to Iranian government regarding po sa mga OFWs natin sa bansang Iran?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, I have sent Secretary Mamasan. He is a Maranao. He is my... He's a Cabinet member. He's my fraternity brother. I trust him.

I've sent him to both Tehran and in Baghdad, if he can make it, to talk to the leaders about the plight of the Filipino workers. That is all there is to it.

Just to get the assurance that my countrymen will have the egress just in case hell breaks loose in that --- Middle East.

Q: Opo. Mr. President may we also clarify that you have mentioned last night daw that kung masasaktan ang --- may masasaktang mga OFWs sa bansang Iran, you might be siding with America. Is it true?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: No, I would not like it. I --- just a projection. I might send more than just a special envoy to do the talking.

Kung may masasaktan, then we'll just have to move physically not only verbal. What it would consist of, I cannot, as of now, tell you. But we have asked the Department of the Defense to study on how they would make their way out. And I have asked also the Department of Finance to reserve a certain amount for that exigency if it ever comes.

Q: Opo. So clarification lang po the statement that you will be siding with any nation kung may masasaktan po sa mga Filipino natin ---

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Yes.

Q: --- is not accurate?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, I suppose that there are so many... It's a multiracial 'yang nandiyan eh --- workers and all. Arabs of different persuasion both in --- mga Sunni, Shiite and you have the workers and you have the Americans there stationed.

I hope that they would do everything to assure the safety --- that no Filipino gets hurt. Because kung sabi mo may masaktan o may mga casualty, then I would not like it. Then I have to rethink my position.

Q: Mr. President, what's your opinion on Vice President Leni Robredo calling your drug campaign a failure?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Wow. She has been there how many days? Seventeen?

Q: Eighteen.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Eighteen days. You know, I hate to say this but how many voters are there in the Philippines?

And you just do away with the 200,000 plus that she got as a majority over Marcos. It was really a mistake. With a slim margin and you talk big.

You know, for all of these years she has done nothing. She is a colossal blunder. Colossal blunder. Blunder.

Q: What about her recommendations, Mr. President, for example to transfer the chairmanship of ICAD to Dangerous Drugs Board? Sinabi po niya 'yon sa press conference.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Saan ko ilipat?

Q: From PDEA ilipat po sa Dangerous Drugs Board 'yung chairmanship po ng ICAD. Are you in favor of that?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: If ever, kung sakali lang, kung maging presidente siya, gawain niya 'yan.

She does not lecture on me. I do not have the slightest --- you know. As a lawyer lecturing on me, well, she should revisit her record I suggest.

Q: Mayor?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Ma'am.

Q: In case po mag-escalate 'yung violence sa Middle East ---

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: 'Yan ang masakit kung... Ngayon ma'am --- diyan ako hindi nakatulog talaga. Totoo lang. I was trying to...

Well, I was with two others and we were trying to shoot the breeze last night. Natulog ako siguro mga alas --- alas-singko na, alas-sais.

We were drinking coffee and just discussing how we would do it. Just... Well, the plan is of the military. We're just reviewing it.

So there's a Plan A, Plan B, and the worst scenario case. Puputok talaga. And they begin using high explosives.

Q: I-invoke po ba o i-enforce natin 'yung provisions ng Enhanced Defense Cooperation?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: No, it applies only sa Philippines if there is an attack. And besides, the Armed Forces of the United States must get the permission from the... It's not automatic.

Q: Sir, is --- there is a provision that would allow US troops to go to agreed locations in the Philippines in case kailangan nila ng stage point or jumping-off point going to other areas?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: A transit?

Q: Opo, sir, pag-gas ganyan.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, they have the bases. We will continue to... There's Visiting --- Visiting ---

Q: --- Forces Agreement.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: --- Forces Agreement. We will continue to respect it in transit.

But to use the Philippines as a launching pad for --- to fly the missiles and the rockets, I do not think that... I have to stop them.

Q: Refueling of their ---

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Yes, I said that's normal. We allow ships of --- the gray ships of other nations to park here and get some --- 'yung provisionings nila.

Q: How about allowing Philippine troops to join US?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Out of the question. Out of the question. Unless the national interest would demand it and it will be decided not by me, but me and Congress.

Q: Sis, is that the reason why you are asking a special session of Congress?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: A what?

Q: Special session po ng Congress.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Yes.

Q: Powers to?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, I said there's money but you know you cannot spend it. It has to be budgeted.

Only Congress can order the National Treasury to set aside a certain amount and that is not enough.

That is not --- no reason really for you to spend it. You have to get the permission from Congress to use the money.

Okay na?

Q: Sir, good afternoon po. Balik tayo sa water, during your Cabinet meeting last night, pwede ho ba namin malaman 'yung kung ano 'yung magiging contents po nung bagong kontrata?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: No, no. I... I have to --- well, for respeto naman, I would allow them to review it first and give their comments.

Q: So definitely wala na doon 'yung mga onerous --- onerous na mga ano, sir?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: As sure as the sun will rise in the east every morning, the onerous provisions will have its sunset.

Q: Last sir, 'yung sa mga owners po doon sa mga may kinalaman sa kontrata, sir, kanina nabanggit ni Secretary Panelo regardless kung pumir -- - ah pumayag po 'yung mga owners doon sa bagong kontrata na ipe-present sa kanila, sir, continues rin po 'yung --- itutuloy po rin 'yung ano 'yung pagsasampa ng kaso, sir? Tama po ba? Comment lang, sir.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Well, I cannot stop anyone, especially a Filipino and a consumer of water, to file any case to what --- damages or anything. That's the worry of the concessionaires. It's not my worry actually.

Wala akong pakialam diyan. I leave it to anybody's choice to run after or not to run after. Me? I said I am proposing a new contract. You accept it. And if it's to your liking, sign it. If you don't, then there is no water, I will order the military to takeover and I will nationalize the water, issue, and then I will file the corresponding charges.

It's clearly any --- you ask any lawyer --- it's clearly, clearly large scale or maybe plunder.

Q: Thank you, sir. Thank you, sir. Thank you, thank you.

Q: Wala pa po tayong PNP chief? PNP chief.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Not at this time. I have ordered Secretary Año to make the corrections.

You know, historically --- historically, the police, the PNP, has always been a problem for any administration. Alam ninyo 'yan.

And I think that with the remaining --- remaining two years, if I can just fix a third of what's bogging the PNP, and that is corruption.

Q: So meaning, sir, for the remaining years in your term wala na kayong i-a-appoint na PNP chief? Is that what you're saying?

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: No, they should have a --- they should have a commander. I said, if I appoint one from them, from their --- from their ranks, he would not be able to solve the problem.

He would have to need to go to court and do this and do that. I... I have given Secretary Año the blanket authority to get rid of corruption. And it is on his shoulder the future of how the police would behave in the coming years --- na kay Año 'yan.

Q: Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Siya, hindi man siya nagtanong. Ayaw mong magtanong, ma'am?

Q: Sir, how's your health, sir? Kasi 'di ba 'yung mga --- meron po kayong event in the --- last week I think na hindi napuntahan.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Saan, ma'am?

Q: Under the weather daw kayo. 'Yung sa Davao, sir. 'Yung sa Davao po, sir.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: If the weather will not allow it, which I --- it --- a low ceiling cloud, paano ko maglipad? 'Di diretso ka sa bukid.

You know, itong helicopter man is visual. But sometimes I force them to take off especially if I want to go home. And I do not want to rest on any other place. Pinipilit ko sila na mag-take off kami even in total darkness.

But sometimes, if you cannot really see your way in and out of where you are going, and then if they say that it's not good to fly there this time --- it's all --- so it's all clouds, you...

You know, when you're inside a cloud, you'd --- and there's turbulence, 'yung makita mo 'pag eroplano 'pag dumadaan ng clouds gumaganun, 'pag nasa --- if you are in a thick of a cloud, nawala ka, there's no way that you can go out safely.

Kaya 'yung mga --- noon mga sa Malacañan nag-crash eh. Because inside the clouds, hindi mo alam kung naka --- naka --- you are on your side or naka --- naka-upside down ka na.

Q: So it's not because of the health condition, sir? Masama daw po kasi 'yung pakiramdam ninyo.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Masama ang loob ko, ma'am, hindi ang pakiramdam.

Well, I said, I'm --- I'm 74. Most of our Cabinet members are also at my age, ka-batch ko pa, classmate ko pa, kababata ko.

'Pag natumba ako, tumba lahat 'yan. Sigurado 'yan. Hindi lang ako. Maliga -- maligaya si Leni.

Q: Thank you, sir.

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