

**Presidential Communications Operations Office  
Presidential News Desk**

**Speech of  
President Rodrigo Roa Duterte  
during the arrival ceremony for COVID-19 vaccines (Sinopharm)**

[20 August 2021]

Kindly sit down.

Secretary Duque... IATF Chair and Health Secretary Francisco Duque III; National Task Force Against COVID-19 Chair and National Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana; NTF Chief Implementer and Vaccine Czar Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr.; and the most important personality here China's Ambassador to the Philippines His Excellency Huang Xilian; Senator Bong Go, Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography; Cabinet Secretary Karlo Alexei Nograles; NTF Against COVID-19 Vice Chair and Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año; Presidential Spokesperson Herminio Harry Roque Jr.; TESDA Director Secretary Isidro Lapeña; fellow workers in government; ladies and gentlemen.

My fellow Filipinos, we welcome the arrival of an additional 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines from SinoPharm, donated by the People's Republic of China.

We are receiving these life-saving vaccines with much gratitude and high hopes as we continue our fight against COVID-19 and its variants.

My deepest gratitude goes to China for the various COVID-19 assistance extended in the past, including the donation of vital medical supplies and equipment and the provision of technical support on COVID-19 response.

These initiatives are indeed a testament of the goodwill of the Chinese Government and the deep strong relations between the Philippines and China.

These additional doses will definitely boost our efforts to ramp up our vaccination rollout and allow us to achieve herd immunity soon.

However, let us not forget that it is still up to us to finally put an end to this pandemic. These vaccines will only work if we take them.

I encourage all Filipinos to get inoculated once your turn comes. Do not waste precious time as every single day is a risk for you and your loved ones.

I likewise thank all the Filipino frontliners [here] and abroad for the sacrifices they have made since the beginning of this pandemic. We are truly grateful for your selflessness in caring for the sick during these challenging times.

Be assured that we in government will do our best to protect and incentivize you for your hard work. We will always be by your side, ready to help in any way we can.

I thank Vaccine Czar Carlito Galvez Jr., the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases, the Department of Health, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and their institutional partners for securing a steady vaccine supply to the country.

I enjoin these agencies to ensure the safe and effective distribution and rollout of these vaccines, amidst the spread of COVID-19 variants.

As we continue to vaccinate our population, I urge you to keep observing our minimum public health standards even after you have been vaccinated.

Remember to wear masks, wash hands, observe social distancing and stay home whenever you can. We cannot afford to be complacent, especially with the presence of the Delta variant.

As President, I assure you that we are exerting all efforts and will continue to use all available resources to end this pandemic. Join us in our collaborative action in beating this pandemic through vaccination and the strict observance of health protocols.

With your support, I am certain that we will see better and brighter days ahead and emerge stronger as one nation.

Before I end, may I request the His Excellency Ambassador Huang Xilian to convey to President Xi Jinping my deepest gratitude and many, many thanks for China's attitude to us, that even though in these challenging times of geopolitics, Philippines will stay neutral and remain true to what we have guaranteed China at least during my term. Daghang salamat. *[applause]*

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