

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**MEDIA INTERVIEW BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.**

[15 January 2022]

**Q:** Hi sir. Magandang hapon po.

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.:** Yeah, I think it's afternoon.

**Q:** Okay sir, sabi ng DFA, ipakikilala niyo raw po ang sovereign wealth fund sa World Economic Forum. How would you do it sir?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Well, no, simply because in general pare-pareho naman 'yung ginagawa natin dito sa mga trips. We talk about the Philippines, what the situation is as an investment destination. Now, as added to that. Mayroon na tayong pwedeng pag-usapan na sovereign wealth fund.

So sasabihin ko exactly what's happened that we are forming a sovereign wealth fund for investments in the --- for big investments in the basic areas such as agri, energy, digitalization, climate change, 'yun ganon pa rin.

But the point being is that now there is a social --- there is a wealth fund.

**Q:** Sir, the other day, nag-oath na si Secretary Año. Bakit po kayo nagpalit ng National Security Adviser? At bakit po si Secretary Año ang pinili ninyo?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Well, first, si Secretary Carlos, I think she found it --- she found that position to be a little bit political. Kasi hindi talaga siya sanay sa ganon at she is an academic, a retired academic.

So she decided to help. I think she will be in the research...

**PCO SECRETARY CHELOY VELICARIA-GARAFIL:** Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Yeah, which the Speaker is building up so she can be there and she can be a consultant.

Why Secretary --- why Ed Año? Because he has a long, long, long experience in intelligence. Before he became Chief of Staff, before he became group commander. He was ISAFP. So sanay na sanay 'yun and he's well-known and he knows all of the operatives in the intelligence community.

**Q:** Sir, bakit po na-reappoint si General Centino as AFP Chief and DND Galvez sir?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Kasi nira-rationalize namin 'yung seniority. Kasi 'yung --- Andy Centino has four stars and Bob Bacarro had three stars. So kailangan natin ayusin kasi magkakagulo doon sa baba.

So there were some comments that were made: "Paano 'yan pag nag-extend-extend kami naman dito sa lower ranks, wala na kaming pag-asa?"

Hindi naman tama 'yun. So malo-low morale sila. So tiningnan namin, "What do you want us to do?" Nagtanong kami sa military and I said ayusin namin 'yung seniority and that's what we've done.

**Q:** How about Defense Secretary sir?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Si?

**Q:** Galvez po.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Well, 'yan isa pa. Very, very experienced and in fact as soon as he took his oath, he was already --- he knew already what to do. Nag-command conference na siya. So I think he'll slide into that position really easily. Yeah, no problem.

**Q:** Mr. President, hi sir. Good morning. Sir, have you scheduled or are you willing to set up a phone call meeting with President Zelensky of Ukraine as requested by their embassy?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Well, there was talk of it a few months --- a couple of months ago pero hindi na --- wala ng napag-usapan. That's why nagulat kami when the special envoy came out and said na hindi pa sinasagot. Sinagot namin but we didn't get it --- we couldn't get it scheduled.

I have no problem with talking to President Zelensky, especially now that mainit na ang giyera doon sa kanila. So of course we are --- again on the side of peace and that remains the same.

But any expressions of support that he might feel is needed, we are happy to provide it.

**Q:** Mr. President, will the Philippine government indicate its support for their 10-point peace plan as proposed by Ukraine, which seeks to ensure that Russia respects its territorial integrity and withdrawal of its troops? I think 'yun po ata 'yung hinihingi nila.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** That's not for us to decide. Those details are for --- should there be talks Ukraine and --- between Ukraine and Russia, sila mag-uusap tungkol diyan. We support any effort towards peace, anything basta't matigil ang patayan, matigil ang giyera. 'Yun na muna. Tapos kung papaano nila gagawin, what will they do with the territories that have changed stance, et cetera. That is really clearly between the two countries.

**Q:** Are you thinking of long-term measures to address high...

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** To?

**Q:** Address agricultural prices, onions et cetera. Sa agri, mga...

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Well, we were forced now again to import. What we --- the thing that we have to do is that... I've been having such a --- I'll be very candid with you. Ang hirap malaman kasi depende kung sinong kausap mo whether or not we need to import. May nagsasabi, onion hindi kailangan mag-import.

Papaano naman hindi tayo kailangan mag-import? Tingnan mo 'yung production ng Pilipinas, tingnan mo 'yung demand malayo talaga. Sinubukan natin na makuha lahat ng mga smuggled pero kulang pa rin kasi hindi rin natin nagamit 'yung smuggled. So talagang we are forced to import. So that's what we are doing. But...

And then sa sugar ganun din, same thing. We are forced to import but in sugar we did it a slightly different way. We will maintain from now on in sugar a two-month buffer stock para hindi na magkaroon ng masyadong speculation sa presyo ng sugar. So that people will know hindi tayo magkaka-shortage dahil lagi tayong mayroon two-month na buffer stock which I will maintain.

Then, of course, two other sides to this. The smuggling, 'yun talaga kailangan pa nating ano --- kailangan talagang i-solve 'yun. Masyadong laganap ang smuggling dito sa Pilipinas kahit na ano ini-smuggle eh. So we have to really look into that and we have some very good ideas.

We see what the other people are doing in other countries and we can use some of the strategies that they are using. I think the digitalization of the Bureau of Customs is going to be an important, important part of that.

And then of course, the most important facet of this whole problem is production. We have to go back to the sugar industry. We have to go back to the onion growers and help them para magkaroon tayo ng production, hindi na tayo kailangan mag-import. Diyan tayo naipit eh. Nasanay tayo masyado sa import. So import lang tayo nang import hindi natin inaayos 'yung production side.

Kaya nung tinamaan tayo ng pandemya, ramdam na ramdam natin. Same thing like now, when we lost supply from abroad or when we take supplies from abroad, 'yung inflationary forces doon nadadala rito sa Pilipinas.

Kaya't 'yun ang tinitingnan talaga namin, ang taas ng inflation. So we'll have to bring that down for the rest of the year. And I think it will. I think it will come down.

**Q:** May balak po ba kayong mag-appoint ng full-time Agri Secretary?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** When this is fixed, when we have the systems in place, yes, yes.

**Q:** Tapos 'yung sa ibang post, Department of Health, OPAPP tsaka ang hinihintay ng...

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Well, [OPAPRU], of course the now --- Galvez, Charlie Galvez will certainly be important. We're asking him to make a short list for [OPAPRU]. Because we're --- especially now that the Bangsamoro is in transition. Mayroon pang --- we're redefining the relationship.

For example, between BARMM and the local governments. So that's something that we still --- that's why it's very critical that we have a good person in [OPAPRU] who can continue with the work that Charlie Galvez did.

**Q:** Hi sir. Sir, before she stepped down, si Secretary Clarita Carlos said that the Philippine government is studying the proposal daw of the Chinese government for a partnership with fishing villages to achieve a modus vivendi in the South China Sea? Among klaseng partnership 'yun?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Actually, I don't know how the word partnership was started to be used. It's really an agreement that you will --- that China will not stop our fishermen from fishing. That's it. That's it, very simple.

Huwag nila --- they will continue to allow our fishermen to fish in the fishing grounds that they have been to, they have used for many generations. That's it. It's that simple.

**Q:** Mr. President, among your scheduled engagements or activities at the World Economic Forum, which are you most looking forward to or excited in terms of actually conveying your --- the message of the Philippines in terms of your plans for the economy?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** May format ngayon 'yung World Economic Forum eh. Parang ginagawa nila pareho siguro nung ginawa sa APEC where together with Dr. Klaus Schwab, we sat and nagtanong ang audience --- we made a short speech and then magtanong ang audience: Ano ba ang sitwasyon doon sa inyo? Ano ba sa tingin mo? What's happening? What's going to happen next? Et cetera, et cetera.

That I think will give us... Kasi kung titingnan mo 'yung mga prepared speeches, maliliit lang, five minutes lang eh. But I think that kind of forum, that kind of format will be --- give us a better opportunity to expand and expound on the things that we are doing in the Philippines.

So actually every stage of that --- sometimes... I've been kasi to Davos several times before. Sometimes, the best deals are done outside of the forum. In fact, many --- I'll even say baka most of the best deals are done informally.

Magkikita 'yung dalawa, "mag-usap nga tayo dito." They go to the one side. Tawag sa --- in diplomatic phraseology they call it pull away. You know, they just pull somebody away, "usap tayo."

So we will have a lot of those because there are certain businessmen who our own business group want to engage. So siguro magpapatulong sila sa atin. Maybe the secretary or me myself. I'll say, "samahan mo ako para kausapin natin ito."

And I think that's where a lot of --- besides the forum, the fora, a lot of work will be done on the sidelines, as usual, it's really --- that's really often how it happens.

**Q:** Thank you sir.

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