

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE OATH TAKING  
CEREMONY OF THE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS OF MEDIA GROUPS**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall of Malacañan Palace | 27 August 2024]

Naninibago ako sa ngayon, nakabarong kayo [laughter]. That's not --- it's not our normal ano --- but never mind, this is an important occasion. So --- well first of all, of course, the newly elected officials and officers of the National Press Club [of the Philippines]; the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas; of course, Malacañang Press Corps; the Malacañang Cameramen Association; and the Presidential Photojournalists Association; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

We witnessed today the oathtaking of the newly elected officers of our esteemed media groups, reaffirming our commitment to the principles and ideals of responsible journalism, one of the foundations of any democracy.

I congratulate the newly elected officers of the NPC of the Philippines, the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, the Malacañang Press Corps, the Malacañang Cameramen Association, and the Presidential Photojournalists Association as you embrace the task of news reporting.

Your courage and passion in championing freedom of speech and expression in our communities echo the aspirations of our people.

In an age when information drives the progress of our society, your dedication to lending [your] expertise to help speak the truth on matters of national importance and promote objectivity in the face of conflicting [views] is invaluable.

I ask that you continue to adhere to the utmost ethical and professional standards of journalism—free from sensationalism, bias, and personal motives.

Help us see and address the weaknesses of our system, [and] continue to uphold our nation's best interests so that our country can continue to flourish.

I trust that you will also make the most of your platforms by amplifying the voices of the marginalized so that they, too, can take part in the building of our nation.

Your persistent efforts have aided us in shaping a more enlightened and empowered citizenry—one that is more [than] capable of joining our pursuit of a stronger Bagong Pilipinas.

So, as you fulfill your mandate, I urge you to remain at the forefront of our efforts in helping our people distinguish truth from misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.

A most important issue as we are facing all kinds of information and it has become harder and harder, especially the proliferation of social media --- it has become harder and harder for the ordinary citizen who does not follow necessarily closely the events that are being reported upon,

and therefore, it's difficult for them to discern what is fake news, what is real news, what is propaganda, what is pure objective information.

Whereas before, journalists, especially --- let's say, let's start with print journalists. Print journalist would not print anything until they have verified, validated with more than one source, never just one single source --- always a second, a third, as many as possible before printing any information, anything in print.

On television --- when tri-media came into play, that's the same thing. Because [unclear] to you -- if a radio, commentator, television commentator possess something that is patently false. They will be taken to task for it and people can check, and people can verify.

And so that is how we develop trusted journalist. When you say when this journalist speaks, totoo 'yan kasi hindi nagsasalita 'yan kung hindi pinag-research nang mabuti, kung hindi pinagisipan, kung hindi nakakaunawa nang mabuti doon sa issue na kanyang pinaguusapan.

Ngayon kahit sino puwedeng mag-post ng kahit na ano under an assumed name, it is for an ordinary person who is too busy with their own lives trying to make a living, trying to feed their families, they do not have time to go back and look at the documents, and research, and say this guy is true, this guy is not true.

And so, that is where our problem now lies. And it is a very, very difficult one.

We have just read the news about the CEO of Telegram being arrested in France. And this brings us again to how do we balance this new technology of social media with the responsibilities of the fourth estate.

And the responsibilities that we do not allow to proliferate harmful posts, harmful information, false and fake information. And that is --- we are battling with this at all times.

However, I remember an interview with a New York Times reporter who is working in the Middle East. And he was asked, what is the relevance of newspapers now? Nobody reads newspapers, they go to the internet --- even if they read your newspapers, it's on a computer.

But there have many, many other sources now. And, I remembered very well his answer, he says, "I have lived here in the Middle East and have reported in the Middle East for the last 25 years. I know the personalities, they know me. I know the evolution of the situation here. And whenever I'm given a press release, I look into it, and I asked many other sources, and say, is this true? Is this correct, is this the right interpretation before I write it down in that paper."

And he said, "the reason that you still need to read the paper is that we are experts at what we do. And we have been honing that expertise over many, many years. With social media, I will use his precise words, "any pimply face sixteen year old sitting in his basement can write a post" and you have no way to verify if it is indeed somebody who has some knowledge, some background on what they are doing, on what they are writing about.

And that is where you come in. That is where the reliable journalist come in. So that we know as the reading public, the watching public --- so we can know that this --- these are the people that we can trust. Because everything that they say is verified. Sometimes it's not --- nothing, nobody is 100 percent right but they do their very, very best to get it right. And that I think is where we stand right now.

I'm not saying that it is in --- there are any magic bullets or easy solutions to this but we must continue to try to provide our public with the proper information because this affects their lives, this affects the decision that they make in their lives. And we have seen how fake news has become... I think it was most prevalent during COVID, when you did not know what anybody was talking about.

And people we're saying --- you know I remember reading this, what you should be doing is doing this, that, and the other thing. And then you would look, who is writing this, I would always look, who is this person writing this? What are their qualifications to write this?

And you would get pathologist. Pathologist don't have to worry about infectious diseases. If they make a mistake, it doesn't matter, their patients are already dead. You have these commentators who have no medical training --- well all of this, this kind of thing.

And that is where we --- that has evolved, it has become even worse since COVID.

So, it is --- but the technology exists and that is why we have to be very, very careful and to be very, very clear what the mission of journalists are. What the true mission of the fourth estate is. That to provide clear information and intelligent, and cogent, and profound analysis. Not just some off the cuff, you know, advice that they just thought up while they are drinking with their friends.

So, these are the issues that we are facing. They are not interested --- these people that post fake news are not interested in providing news, they are interested in getting followers because more followers, more money.

So, you see all the ridiculous situations there were. Kung ano-ano ginagawa basta't may manunood. The worst part is, is that some of these crazy people --- even those who do not disagree with them, follow them. Because their interest is what is this crazy guy saying now.

So, nadadagdagan pa rin. So, they continue becoming crazy because they have more followers that way. And sobriety and common sense, and real and true information therefore becomes even more important than I think it has ever become in our entire history.

The mass, the volume of information is so much because of our technological advances. It is so much that we must play a part in trying to help ordinary readers, citizens to discern what is news, what is propaganda, and what is just outright fakery.

And that is where we stand.

Trust this administration will always remain committed to making the country safe for journalists and media practitioners. So you can practice your --- you can exercise your profession.

We have made strides in holding accountable those who have committed violence on our media personnel and practitioners.

We have filed cases against suspects, [while] our law enforcement agencies continue to work hard to bring other perpetrators to justice.

There is no place for violence against the media in Bagong Pilipinas.

And so, I invite everyone here today to continue strengthening this partnership between the media and the government. It is critical. We need media to be there. Government would not function as well as it does without the media. Because if unfettered, government can go in any direction and we need, once in a while, a watch dog to say, look, look, look, you are going too far this way, you've made a mistake here, and makes us think, make us reexamine what we have done and perhaps take into account what has been said by our media practitioners.

I always say when there are reports and there are people who are critical of my administration, and people say "why do you listen to that? That just put you in the bad mood", I said they might be right, there's a chance that no man --- despite being critical of you, maybe one guy is right. So, listen to everything. Don't shoot the messenger. If they really believe what they're saying then think about it, baka naman tama siya.

And that's why we need you. We need the media. I always consider you partners in government and that the check and balance that you provide is very important.

And so, that is an important role to play --- to secure a very vibrant democracy where discussions are being held at every level on every subject.

So, with your cooperation, we can bring about the Bagong Pilipinas that we envision for ourselves and for our children. Let us continue working together to achieve this goal.

Once again, congratulations to all the new officers!

Mabuhay ang ating mga [mamamahayag]!

Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! *[applause]*

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat at magandang hapon po. *[applause]*

**---END---**