

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
News and Information Bureau

**MALACAÑANG PRESS BRIEFING HOSTED BY MS. DAPHNE OSEÑA-PAEZ
WITH DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) UNDERSECRETARY EDUARDO DE
VEGA AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) ASEC. MICO CLAVANO
NOVEMBER 20, 2024 [12:40 A.M. – 1:16 P.M.]**

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Magandang hapon, Malacañang Press Corps, and welcome sa ating press briefing ngayong araw, November 20.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. confirmed this morning that Mary Jane Veloso is coming home. Mary Jane Veloso has been in prison in Indonesia since 2010 for drug trafficking.

In his statement, President Marcos said that this agreement was reached after over a decade of diplomacy and consultations with the Indonesian government. He thanked President Prabowo Subianto and the Indonesian government for this goodwill.

And to give us more details about this, we have with us today Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Eduardo de Vega and Department of Justice Assistant Secretary Mico Clavano. Good afternoon. Go ahead, Usec.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Good afternoon. As mentioned, our President announced this. And the situation actually is that our governments are discussing the terms of this transfer in Indonesia and discussed this with us through our ambassador in Jakarta weeks ago through the Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Law, Human Rights, Immigration and Corrections His Excellency Yusril Ihza Mahendra who had mentioned that Indonesia is formulating a policy of transfer of foreign persons to their host countries. In fact, Philippines is not the only country which has been requesting this.

So because of that, our Department of Justice, and we are represented here by the DOJ, sent the formal request and what we just need now is to sit down with Indonesia as to the details. Our friends in Indonesia have always been a strong supporter of the Philippines.

The very fact that Miss Veloso is still alive this very day is a tribute to the work that our government has been doing for over a decade, but also to the warm ties of friendship and cooperation between the Philippines and Indonesia, and we are very grateful for this.

Indonesia itself has a law which will take effect on 2026 about what in effect would be if not necessarily the abolition of death penalty but some sort of informal non-implementation of the death penalty except in certain cases.

So, originally among the things we've been asking from Indonesia was a commutation of her sentence. But now with the new administration, which obviously the new administration of President Prabowo, wants to open new chapter its relations with foreign countries including the Philippines, now we may even get a transfer.

So just a matter of the details, I cannot give you confirmation as to when she'll be home, what are the conditions for her to be detained here except eventually the goal would be not just for her to be transferred but for the President to be able to issue clemency – our President.

So, the DOJ is here to explain the legal basis for this given that we do not have a transfer of sentence/persons with Indonesia. May I clarify also, the Indonesians are aware and part of the reason why she has been kept alive and not executed is that we are prosecuting the illegal traffickers so that those who are responsible for bringing her to Indonesia—there is a pending case in the RTC of Nueva Ecija and an important aspect of that case is that precisely her statement is needed and it will be very helpful if instead of getting a deposition from Indonesia if she were here.

So, the bottom line is once she's here we are at least assured that there'll be no death penalty, we do not issue the death penalty. We do not have the death penalty and we would under principles of international humanitarian law have some right to refuse if the Indonesians would request her back but that's precisely a sign that they are not interested to execute Miss Veloso and we thank them for that.

Last thing, there are a lot of speculations as to what was the return or what was the condition. The Indonesians have not requested any payback, any quid pro quo for this. May I clarify: This is not in return for anything! Of course, from ASEAN we know about debt of gratitude and that similarly they may request something for us in the future, but right now they are not asking anything in return for this arrangement. It is just a matter of them...of their devising and still a work in progress for Indonesia their official policy of the transfer.

So when she gets here, if she gets here and when she gets here, she will not immediately be released – it means, we will commit to detain her until such time that we have mutual agreement that she could be given clemency. But at least, she would be here.

So, thank you again, Indonesia. And it's just a gesture of the strong leadership of our President, his friendship with the new President of Indonesia and the commitment of the Philippine government for our overseas nationals. Salamat po.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Thank you. From DOJ would you like to...

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: I would just like to support the statements of Usec. De Vega in trying to fill in the details of the case of Mary Jane Veloso both in Indonesia and here in the Philippines.

So, April of 2010 she was caught and convicted for drug trafficking. She was sentenced to be executed supposedly on April 29, 2015. As mentioned already by Usec. De Vega, the government's efforts and collaboration and also the filing of local case here in the Philippines has effectively delayed the execution of Mary Jane Veloso.

The cases filed here are qualified trafficking in persons, illegal recruitment and estafa where she stands as a very crucial witness. And that is the reason why we entered into several dialogues with the Indonesian government to get her testimony via deposition.

And so, this has been going on for more than a decade and we have reached this point where the Indonesian government has been gracious enough to issue this policy of repatriating certain foreign nationals, certain detainees in Indonesia back to their home country.

The process that we have to go through, as also mentioned by Usec. De Vega, was the Indonesian government asked or requested that the Department of Justice through the Secretary write a letter of request requesting for the transfer or repatriation of Miss Mary Jane Veloso back to the Philippines which we have already accomplished.

And we, again, thanked the Indonesian government for this act of grace. We also attribute this to the good relations and the good friendship which our President has with the Indonesian government and specifically President Prabowo.

So, if there are any questions ...

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Thank you. Okay, let's start with Pia Gutierrez, ABS-CBN.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ABS-CBN: So, ang next po nating step is for DOJ to sit down with Indonesian authorities. So, sino po ang pupunta doon to negotiate? When will that happen, sir? And what kind of scenario are we expecting to have?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: We are currently awaiting the response of the Indonesian government.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Formal response.

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: The formal response of the Indonesian government to our formal request as well for the repatriation of Mary Jane Veloso. This is an example of a detainee moving from one criminal justice system in one jurisdiction to another because precisely the reason why we are coordinating with the Coordinating Ministry of Law, Human Rights, Immigration, Corrections is because from one correctional facility, she will be transferred to another correctional facility here in our own jurisdiction.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Magandang hapon po. Sir, ano iyong magiging scenario pagdating dito ni Mary Jane Veloso? Saan siya idi-detain?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Pag-uusapan pa iyan. Of course, we'd like to think and I will turn over to DOJ there that she will not be detained here along with those convicted of heinous crimes. There's an option which the Asec will explain as to saan ma-detain. But for sure, she will be detained in accordance with our discussion, and the bottom line is at least she's here. Asec.?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Yes, so that is a discussion that is still being made in the Department of Justice as to where she could be detained. The Secretary has already given instructions to the National Bureau of Investigation, if ever and when Mary Jane Veloso would be coming home to pick her up and bring her to the detention center that will be decided upon. But we are looking at the Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong as a possible facility that she could be transferred to.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: There is something else that ...another benefit of her being here, aside from what it means that there will be no more death penalty is that she's here and, of course, she'll be visited by her family easier but also, sometimes she's being brought to the hospital in Indonesia. Every so often because she has some body spasm or something, and it's better for her to be here where Filipino doctors, of course, will be able to take care of her. So that's another advantage for being here.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: So hospital arrest is not in the ...?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: You know we could always discuss that. But she's not that ill, I mean, to be in a hospital. I have an idea why you thought of hospital arrest, but I won't go there.

MARICEL HALILI/TV5: Sir, pahabol lang. I understand na wala pa tayong specific date kung kailan babalik si Mary Jane Veloso. But what are the chances na makakauwi siya in time for Christmas?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Well, our President spoke, and there must be a reason for his optimism. Remember, he's friends with the president—I will not speculate or give a time because we don't want na mabuliyaso ito, you know, talks with Indonesia. They do know we want her as soon as possible, on Christmas.

By the way, I'd like to thank the family and the lawyers as well because from the beginning, it was the Indonesian media which published this, they had asked us not to talk about it but they released it. And the family, through their lawyers, reacted that they were very positive about this. Instead of saying, well, ibabalik dito pero nakakulong pa rin eh di pareho rin – no, they're welcoming it. So we hope to even do better than that and, eventually, get her to be issued clemency by our President. We'll work on it. Thank you.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Go ahead, Eden.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Sir, can we safely say now na ligtas na po siya sa death row, sa kaniyang pag-uwi?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Nothing is one hundred percent 'no. Pero the fact that Indonesia is talking to us about transferring is the most powerful indication that they have no intent to execute her. And obviously, once she's here, she is completely ligtas. Even if she remains in Indonesia and we hope no, we hope we have success in our negotiation. Even if she remains there, when we reach January 1, 2026, she'll be safe also from death penalty because of the Indonesian law. But let's not talk about that; let's talk about her being here as soon as possible.

But we can say, for all intents and purposes, she's safe. She is, well, most likely not be executed. But the Indonesians are saying that she is still serving sentence – that has to be clear.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Kay Asec. Clavano po. Nabanggit ninyo iyong kasong pending sa Nueva Ecija RTC, at isa iyon sa dahilan sabi ninyo po kaya na-delay iyong kaniyang execution before. May haharapin pa rin pong kaso si Mary Jane dito sa Philippine court?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Well, the case that she faced was that one in Indonesia for drug trafficking. The case here, ano lang po siya, testigo lang ho siya, kaya natin ginamit iyon bilang isang negotiating piece, bilang strategy din, legal strategy para patagalin iyong execution ho niya, at gumana naman ho. So pagdating ho niya dito, she will be serving the sentence that was meted in Indonesia. So itutuloy lang po niya iyong sentensiya niya.

And I think, it's worth emphasizing also that the most important aspect of this all is the difference in our laws. There, they allow the death penalty; dito ho, alam naman ho natin lahat na na-abolish po so wala ho tayong death sentence dito.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Hindi na po ba siya ibabalik sa Indonesia? She will stay here na talaga?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: That will be [unclear] when she is transferred, iyon na iyon. And that will be not just for Mary Jane but for the other aliens/foreign nationals that they may detain. But I would like, if possible, DOJ to clarify because baka tanungin ninyo, if she did not commit a crime in the Philippines, what would be the basis without a treaty – wala tayong treaty with Indonesia on transfer of sentence/persons – what would be the basis that we would detain her upon ... on the basis of this agreement. By the way, when we detain her, it's not 'yes' but we're still going to work on the clemency, na Indonesia has given nice indications that they're open to it.

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Thank you for the opportunity, Usec. It's the first time I'm being asked by a fellow panelist.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: I want to be educated myself.

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Well, in this certain scenario, even without a treaty, there is no prohibition between, well, for countries to dialogue with each other and come into mutual agreement. On top of that, there is also a mutual legal assistance treaty between ASEAN countries where there is a widespread sharing of information when it comes to the criminal justice system so that includes investigation, prosecution and even post-conviction activities such as where they will serve their sentence.

So this really does speak to the relationship between the two countries – the Philippines and Indonesia. Kaya natin nakuha ito ay dahil maganda po ang relasyon ng dalawang bansa.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Last question lang po, backgrounder. Mayroon pa po ba tayong mga ibang OFW na nasa death row sa Indonesia? Hindi ho kaya maging way din ito para sila ay umasa rin na baka mailigtas ng ating government?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Si Mary Jane lang po sa Indonesia. Mabuti po—mayroon sa ibang bansa, of course, we're also doing everything we can. There are 59 worldwide. We are doing everything we can for them. As you know, this has long been a policy since 1995, and especially now under the government of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., nagpupursige tayo po.

JEAN MANGALUZ/PHILSTAR: Hi, sir. Just to clarify: We're still undergoing talks for her release, so hindi final na uuwi siya?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: There must be a reason for the President to be this confident. If you mean may written agreement, wala pa iyong sagot. Pero sila mismo ang unang pumunta sa atin to talk about this. So we are extremely confident it will happen. And certainly, our President must be privy of information which would explain his confidence.

So let's just say that we're just going to fine-tune the details. Alam ng Indonesia na, I'd like to take advantage of this, we're assuring them we're not indicating that she's being released. We're not saying, the President did not say she's free but that she is coming home. And that we'll be expecting the final agreements between both countries on her detention. And anything about her liberation will have to be discussed pa.

JEAN MANGALUZ/PHILSTAR: How many years would she be detained here if itutuloy iyong detention niya?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: That is what we're going to discuss. Hopefully, not even one year. Pero, of course, bottom line, at least nandito siya. I mean life imprisonment—well, we can tell you under

a Philippine law, wala tayong death penalty. But even when we say life imprisonment, nobody really stays up to life. This is not like the US or Anglo system where you could be ... depending on the number of crimes you committed, you could actually face a sentence of 180 years. And nobody is going to serve 180 years in jail, and many of them do die in jail. In the Philippines, after a maximum of 40 years can and then, there is also the age, I think, after a certain age, hindi na dapat nakakulong, is that true?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Well, it's more of [inaudible].

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: So, we don't foresee that happening. Indonesia has been very gracious and I don't want to put words in their mouths, but there must be a reason that they are interested in the transfer to us. And I'm pretty sure they know that we are interested naman in her liberation, in her being set free. So, basta wala nang death penalty and we will continue working until she is free.

VALBUENA/DZME: Good afternoon. Sir, do we think that the expected return of Mary Jane Veloso will expedite or will strengthen the local case here in the Philippines?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Well, it's very convenient for us to have a witness at disposal of the prosecution. The reason why this case has taken so long is precisely because the chance or the opportunities to interview or take her testimony has been very scarce. It would entail a lot of costs, a whole team to be in Indonesia, including the judge herself. So, whenever we take her testimony via deposition, the Indonesian government does require a whole team including the judge and the prosecutors to be there as well. So, given the workload of all these government officials and the schedules of the families, it's quite difficult to come up with a common schedule.

So, having her here in the Philippines would be quite convenient and would definitely speed up the process of the case.

VALBUENA/DZME: Once she returned, sir, will we be expecting that she will be physically present in the next court proceedings of the case?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Well, that will, again the DOJ can request that the person of Mary Veloso be brought to the court, but ultimately, the court has to order, has to come out with an order, issue an order to CIW or any other facility where she will be staying to allow her transfer or temporary transfer to the court for the hearing.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: I would like to add what Asec. Clavano said. Indonesians were putting a lot of requirements for the deposition. Kaya hindi natin magawa-gawa, like, in fact If I got it right, they even wanted to also be part of the deposition, tapos may translation pa, may ganon. So, it was kind of very complicated to do that. But, here kapag nandito, you know, there will be processes that will hopefully allow her to testify personally or at least provide her statement before the court.

MAYRINA/GMA7: Usec., Asec., naturally the family of Mary Jane are very happy about this development at ang panawagan nila sa Pangulo, baka naman puwedeng huwag na nating ikulong, idiretso na ninyo sa bahay namin para makasama namin? This is a call by the private lawyer, Atty. Olalia, that the President accord her immediately clemency. Is that even a possibility?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Well, I don't want to say that something is impossible. But part of the deal is that we are going to respect Indonesian laws, so I just don't see for now that she will be flown home and then suddenly we will let her free. In fact, you know, right now, she is not yet here. So, can I ask—we have already, the DFA has already said this in our statement, may we ask you and the Philippine nation to join us in the hope and prayers that this will be successful completely and that she'll be home and then kung hindi right away, as soon as possible ay mapalaya na. But honestly that is not a very realistic, hindi po. But, of course that's a hope, but—kasi kung ganoon po, that's not a transfer. They will have officially acquitted her or released her. That is not what they promised, so ganoon po.

MAYRINA/GMA7: Understood, thank you.

SARGAN/BRIGADA FM: Sir, clarification lang po kung may favor po ba na hiningi ang Indonesia in return? And sa binanggit po ninyo kanina na 59, mayroong 59 na nasa death row worldwide, lahat po ba sila, OFW, sir?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Well, mas madali muna iyong pangalawa. Filipinos, not all are contract workers, if you mean that. For example, we have quite a few in Malaysia on death row because they were part of the invasion, I don't want to use the word invasion when I mentioned Filipinos entering Sabah. But they were part of the forces which entered Sabah and engaged in military activities against Malaysian authorities. So, they are not clearly OFWs. However, lahat iyan ay binibigyan ng proteksiyon ng pamahalaan, lawyers, some of these cases were under appeal. Dinaramdam ko, sometimes may nai-execute, you are aware of even just this year, there have been a handful executed in China for example for drug offenses or in Saudi Arabia. But every single one is being attended to.

One positive piece of news is that there is now a worldwide trend for the abolition of the death penalty or its de facto, I'm looking for the word, non-implementation; even in Malaysia. That is one positive piece of news. So, ganoon po, 59!

Again, I repeat Indonesia na aside from Veloso. The first question, no, as I mentioned it earlier, they have not asked for quid pro quo or anything, prisoners exchange, nothing po. They have always been gracious to us, recently they helped us with the Alice go case. So, this is a good sign of what we expect under the new presidency in Indonesia, President Prabowo and their friendship with President Bongbong Marcos. They haven't asked for anything. But of course, in the future, if they may, then certainly the Philippines will remember this gesture on the part of Indonesia for our kababayan.

SOBERANO/BOMBO RADYO: Sir, good afternoon. Sir, ano po ang magiging proseso kapag okay na po si Veloso, ibabalik na po siya sa bansa, sino po ang susundo sa kaniya at pagdating po dito, saan po siya ididiretso?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Well, first of all, probably we'll-- first there has to be a team tulad ng nabanggit kanina to discuss formally with Indonesia iyong plano and then eventually there will have to be a team, the DOJ and DFA, we'll have to be there. As for saan, nabanggit but I'll ask to repeat the answer here about kung saan kukunin.

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Pinag-uusapan pa po ng DOJ officials. However, one of the obvious choices would be the CIW, Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong.

SOBERANO/BOMBO RADYO: Hindi po NBI, sir?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: NBI po iyong inatasan ni Secretary para sumundo, para po ligtas po si Mary Jane Veloso, of course, in coordination with the DFA as well.

BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Ambassador, congratulations, sa appointment, sa promotion.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: By the way, we will still see each other, I think, several months to finalize. By the way, you are congratulating me, hindi pa ako nako-confirm ng Commission on Appointments ha, baka magalit iyong mga senator ha. So, the current Ambassador, and we salute her, her name si Junever Mahilum-West. She will be officially retiring on June 3rd. So, it will be after that, maybe at the end of June, early July and I'll be there. So, you'll still see me other around. Let's finish Mary Jane Veloso first.

BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Iyon na nga, sir, isi-segue ko na, Usec. Doon sa usapin ng transfer po, Usec., ano ba talaga ang magiging status ni Mary Jane Veloso, parang a detainee of Indonesian government under the custody of the Philippine government?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: That sounds good. But let's ask the expert lawyer.

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Well, perhaps on a more technical term, the legal custody would be Indonesia because we are asked to respect their laws and jurisprudence, but the physical custody will be with the Philippines. However, the Indonesian government is aware that we do not have the death penalty here, which they respect as well, which is a consideration obviously when they also issued the policy of transferring certain detained individuals back to their own countries. They are aware that not all legal frameworks are the same, they are aware that we have no death penalty here and yet they have still agreed to look into the transfer.

BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: So, Asec., may jurisdiction pa rin talaga ang Indonesian government kay Mary Jane Veloso?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: In a way, because of their legal custody. However, it seems as though, after she has transferred here, it is our legal framework that will be put in place.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: I will add to that. The word I was looking for kanina, moratorium. There is a strengthening worldwide trend for non-imposition or a moratorium on imposition of death penalty. Now, where is that relate to Indonesia? Clearly if they transfer, this is an indication that they know that kahit na may jurisdiction sila, there will be no more execution because we hold the physical custody. So, that's another thing that perhaps internally with the Indonesian society, of course there are those who support Mary Jane, there are human rights organizations in Indonesia who supported her, but there are again, also hardliners.

For hardliners, they will know that Indonesia is not surrendering its jurisdiction over the case but that they are already conceding that there will be no execution and that still a major concession. Kaya nagpapasalamat uli tayo sa Indonesia – terima kasih, Indonesia.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/ RADYO PILIPINAS: Usec., habol ko nalang ang isa. Kasi kanina sa interview kay Tatay Cesar Veloso ni Allan Francisco ng PTV, ang sabi ni Mang Cesar, 'di pa daw yata alam ni Mary Jane iyong magandang balita?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Ang pagkaintindi ko, hindi pa rin niya alam. Bakit hindi niya alam? Kasi hindi pa final iyong ano eh, details eh.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: All right, we'll go back to Pia Gutierrez, and we we're about to end the press briefing.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ ABS-CBN: Sir, clarify lang iyong tungkol sa clemency: Once she is transferred here in the Philippines sino ang magbibigay ng clemency, would it be President Marcos or President Prabowo?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: That is to be discussed. But in the talks with Ambassador Jamoralin, they were open to the possible eventual grant of clemency by our own President. There are two options: We will request what she's here for the official release from detention, from the Indonesian criminal procedure system; or another one, they will allow our President to issue the clemency on the basis that she's been here—I'm sorry, she's been in detention for many years, she was a victim as we say, there's this case happening in Nueva Ecija – that is not yet final.

Of course that would be an incredible bonus as well, it's already great that they transferring her. But that is certainly possible, but it will be a President issuing clemency. But before, you know, Indonesia's request before we—we again respect Indonesia's sovereignty and jurisdiction over this case, we will not do anything which will be against their will or much less, against their own laws; but they are open.

PIA GUTIERREZ/ ABS-CBN: Follow up lang po, in case po na hindi si President Marcos, will we initiate request for President Prabowo for clemency?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Tatagalugin ko po, I think araw-araw nag-i-initiate tayo. When I say that, I don't mean literally araw-araw. Pero alam na ng Indonesia that we always raise this, always. And now, mayroon pang bagong Presidente, bagong Pangulo ang Indonesia, a good friend of our President, certainly we will initiate it as soon as possible. And nabanggit na gusto ng family mapalaya na right away, so obviously, we can't do it within 24 hours na dumating siya dito. But hopefully, we don't have to—I mentioned kanina, we don't have to wait years or even one year bago mapalaya siya. We will certainly initiate.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay, Sam Medenilla, final question.

SAM MEDENILLA/BUSINESS MIRROR: For Sir Clavano, i-clarify lang namin sir, kung kailan po ninyo expected ma-complete iyong negotiation doon sa terms ng pag-return?

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: I cannot say that, but it seems that Indonesia wants it—we want it. But Indonesia wants this resolve as soon as possible. So, I certainly hope it won't take up to next year. But ito naman ang request namin, it would help if the media and the public would just allow DFA and DOJ to do our work, kasi baka maging sensitive ang Indonesia na everyday lumalabas sa diyaryo natin ano iyong stage noong talks, parang iyong bases extension agreement parang ganoon.

No, just allow us to do the work. Allow the President to do the work. And then ang maganda, we'll just announce na ayos na. Asec., what do you think?

DOJ ASEC. CLAVANO: Yes, these are things that are very sensitive, especially when you're talking about the difference in laws, the mechanic of the transfer kaya po, tama po iyong panawagan ho ni Usec. de Vega, na sana ho, in the next few days, weeks or hopefully na hindi umabot ng months, makapag-announce na ho kami na pauwi na talaga si Mary Jane Veloso.

DFA USEC. DE VEGA: Just let us talk to him, kasi kapag i-announce ninyo kunwari ganito, mamaya kaunti may sasabihin 'ay mali iyon, na mali iyon' yeah, there will—basta ang importante makarating na siya rito.

MS. OSEÑA-PAEZ: Okay. Thank you so much, Malacañang Press Corps. Thank you, Undersecretary de Vega and Assistant Secretary Clavano. Again, in the words of President Marcos, we are looking forward to welcoming Mary Jane home.

Okay, this concludes our press briefing. Thank you.

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