PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK
Ref: Dir. Robertzon F. Ramirez

SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE VISIT TO THE SOUTHERN LUZON COMMAND

[Delivered at the Covered Court of the Southern Luzon Command, Camp General Guillermo Nakar in Lucena City | 29 November 2024]

Maraming salamat sa ating Kalihim ng Department of National Defense, Secretary Gilbert Teodoro. *[Please take your seats.]*

First of all, I would like to congratulate the awardees at 'yung ating – the decorations that we have just given the gold crosses, silver crosses, and the bronze cross for their good work. Because we all know – alam naman natin na sa… Siguro sa buhay natin hindi pa tayo nakakita kagaya ng nangyari sa atin sa nakaraang ilang linggo na anim na bagyo ang dumaan sa atin sa 23 araw, 23 days anim na bagyo.

Mabuti naman kung 'yung mga Signal No. 1 lang pero hindi. Ang talagang – ang nangyari dahil nga sa climate change – I'm sure naririnig naman ninyo lahat 'yan – and ito ang nangyari.

Kaya't ang performance ng SOLCOM, both in the AFP and of course our police, first responders, lahat kayo ay marami kayong… Kaya't ang maipagmamalaki natin compared sa ibang lugar -- at ito ay sinasabi ko 'yung mga mayayaman na bansa kagaya ng Amerika, kagaya ng nasa Europa -- mas maganda ang performance natin when it comes to minimizing casualties at ang response.

Tayo ngayon sa Pilipinas ang kinikilala na kabisado, alam na alam ang gagawin kapag may dumating na disaster na ganyan. Unfortunately, we have too much experience kaya tayo natuto.

But I'm glad that we are performing. That recognition is because of your good work that you have done. So, congratulations for that [unclear]... *[applause]*

I just had a briefing from your Commander, General Palafox, on the general situation in the area of operation of the SOLCOM. And ang pinakamalaking pagbabago na nakikita natin ay ngayon ang SOLCOM kasama na sa trabaho ng SOLCOM ay ang territorial defense.

At again, nakakatiyak naman ako na nababalitaan ninyo ang mga pangyayari at parang pabigat nang pabigat ang nagiging hamon sa atin. Kaya't kailangan natin ang trabaho natin ay ipagpatuloy na maging mapayapa ang ating mga isla, ang ating mga sovereign territory sa maritime territory.

And now that has become part of the mission of the Southern Luzon Command. Whereas before, it was only with the internal threats that we were having to deal with.

But now because of the good work that you have been doing, nakikita naman natin very clear na maraming – malaki ang progress na nangyayari at marami sa mga CTG ay na-neutralize na, both vertical and horizontal organizations.

Kaya't sana patuloy ang inyong success rate dahil so far maganda ang performance. Ang iniisip na ngayon natin how do we transition [unclear] so that they can – you can use more resources for the territorial security aspect of your new mission.

But the way we will do that is that kailangan we have to bring the level of activity by the communist terrorist groups --- we have to bring down that level of activity to the point where it is possible for the AFP to hand over the duties of the internal treat because it is now a law enforcement operation.

So, maliwanag naman hindi law enforcement operation ang ginagawa ng AFP but kung minsan gano'n na nga ang nangyayari because we have to adjust to the circumstances.

But technically, if we can move that along – mayroong tayong schedule para sana masabi natin 'yung mga area na tinitingnan pa natin that masasabi na insurgency-free na at mababawasan na ang load sa ating mga sundalo at maililipat na sa duties ng PNP.

Kaya't the reason that we arrived at this point is because as I said, maganda 'yung inyong success rate sa pag-dismantle, sa pag-neutralize sa mga personalities, sa pag-dismantle ng mga communist terrorist organizations, lahat ng mga grupo.

So, ipagpatuloy natin 'yung inyong ginagawa. Keep up the good work.

And we will get to that point where we can say that we can already transition fully or at least the majority of our resources can transition already to the defense of our territory.

But altogether, I was surprised when I was one time looking at my schedule that I am always here in Southern Luzon.

So, in the past few --- unfortunately because of the typhoon. Pero sayang sana mas magandang dahilan pero kaya't nandiyan… Ngunit hindi pa ako nakarating sa kampo ng Camp Nakar.

And I said… So, now I insisted to come here so that I can meet with the personnel, the officers, the men and women of all those who are stationed here.

So, I'm very happy to be able to see this and I'm even happier to be able to note that your successes --- maganda ang inyong performance sa inyong trabaho. Keep up the good work and, we, in the civilian government, are completely behind you.

Huwag kayong nalilinlang sa mga nangyayari. Let's stay focused. Pare-pareho tayo.

Ako, ganoon ang isip, pagka marami -- maingay ang nangyayari, iniisip ko lagi: ano ba talaga trabaho ko? Trabaho ko ba'y makipag-away diyan? Trabaho ko makipagdebate diyan sa mga walang kwentang bagay?

Hindi. Ang trabaho ko ay pagandahin ang Pilipinas. Kayo naman, may mission din kayo.

Kaya't huwag ninyo --- pagka medyo naguguluhan kayo, isipin lang ninyo, alalahanin niyo: what is my mission? What is my mission? Your mission is to defend the people and the Republic --- the people of the Republic of the Philippines and the state of the Republic of the Philippines.

Basta’t maliwanag sa pag-iisip natin. We have the same mission. I do it for the civilian end, kayo sa military police end. Pero pareho ang mission natin.

Let’s keep that mission clear in our mind. And kung nadi-distract tayo -- siyempre maraming sigaw, maraming ingay --- ‘pag nadi-distract tayo at sabi papaano na ito? Madali iyan, madali ang sagot diyan: Ano ba ang mission ko? Iyon, ‘yun ang tutuparin ko.

Keep up the good work. Well done. Congratulations. *[applause]*

--- END ---