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**STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE CONDEMNATION OF
SEIZED SMUGGLED ELECTRONIC VAPES**

[Delivered at the OCOM Ground, Bureau of Customs, South Harbor, Port Area, City of Manila |
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Thank you, Secretary Ralph Recto, for your introduction. *[Please, sit down.]*

Well, we just came here today to highlight the efforts of our Bureau of Customs, our Department of Finance, our Department of Trade and Industry on our efforts to try and curtail the smuggling, which has become very, very rampant – of these vape products – and their sale, most disturbingly, to minors.

I am happy to be able to report to the country that the levels at which we have been able to find these smuggled goods and to eventually destroy them has increased steadily over the last year and a half.

I think sa 2023, ang nahuli natin mga three point something billion yata ang halaga. Nag-doble 'yun last year. And just from October to – from January to March, we are well on our way also to achieving even more seizures of these illegal vapes.

Why is it so important that we do this? One, of course, because it is illegal. They have smuggled this in without any permits, any kind of documentation, at ipinagbibili na nga dito sa Pilipinas.

And the very serious problem that accompanies that na walang documentation, na walang inspeksyon, dahil eh 'yung iba rito na ininspeksyon natin ay nahanapan – may lason na nakapasok doon sa liquid na ginagamit na pang-vape.

Kaya't lalong-lalo na nakakabahala dahil kung titingnan natin 'yung packaging – 'yung packaging talagang para sa bata. Kaya ang target market nila bata.

So, unang-una tuturuan – gusto nilang turuan ma-addict ang mga bata sa vape. Tapos delikado pa 'yung vape dahil may lason ngang nakikita na isinasama. Kasi hindi natin naman malaman, hindi natin naiinspeksyon, smuggled nga. Hindi natin mainspeksyon. Hindi natin alam kung saan galing.

We do not know about the manufacturing process that they go through before they come here. So, hindi natin malaman kung ito ba'y safe o hindi.

Kaya't 'yan ang nagiging malaking problema sa atin. Kaya naman I congratulate all our people here in the Bureau of Customs, the Department of Finance. I think the BIR is also working hard to do the same thing. Nagse-seizure sila, mga warehouse naman ang kanilang naipapasok.

So, patuloy nating gagawin ito and I just wanted to highlight the efforts and the dangers that – the efforts that we are doing and the dangers that accompany these smuggled vapes far and beyond the loss and revenue to the government. More important to us are the health issues that these smuggled vapes are raised.

So, again, thank you all very much. Congratulations. Keep up the good work. *[applause]* And we are beginning to see success to all of your efforts.

Maraming salamat.

Congratulations.

Keep it going. Tuloy-tuloy tayo.

Thank you. *[applause]*

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