

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

News and Information Bureau

**MALACAÑANG PRESS BRIEFING
OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY LUCAS BERSAMIN**

June 3, 2025 [4:21 P.M – 4:39 P.M.]

PCO SEC. RUIZ: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us this press conference. We're going to be joined again by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin. He will be joined by Undersecretary Al-Azree J. Mohammadsali. Yes, another round of announcement regarding the ongoing reorganization of the Cabinet.

Please welcome, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Good afternoon, Malacañang Press Corps.

The President has given authority or instructions for me to make some announcements that are very relevant to our ongoing performance evaluation of the various offices and agencies of the Executive branch.

Let me first announce the people whose resignations have been accepted – take note of this, ha. Those whose resignations have been accepted are the following: Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer Meynardo Sabili of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor; Mr. Terence C. Calatrava, Presidential Assistant for the Visayas; and, Mr. Almarim C. Tillah, Presidential Assistant on Muslim Affairs. Terminated is Mr. Meynardo M. Espineli, Presidential Adviser for Special Concerns.

Now, as far as new appointments are concerned, I have to announce that today, the President has appointed Attorney Francis Edralin Lim as the incoming chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Commission. He will take over the incumbent Chairman Emilio Aquino whose term will expire on June 5, 2025.

Attorney Lim is a distinguished member of the legal and financial communities. He has an extensive background in corporate and securities law. He previously served as the president and chief executive officer of the Philippine Stock Exchange, and is a senior partner at ACCRALAW. Attorney Lim is also a

former trustee and president of the Shareholders' Association of the Philippines. He has contributed significantly to investor protection and market transparency through both his professional work and his academic involvement. He brings to this office, decades of experience in corporate law, governance and capital market's regulation. His leadership is expected to strengthen investor confidence and further promote transparency, innovation and inclusive growth in the Philippine financial sector.

At this time, we would like to tell the people that the President is deliberating on his first historic appointment to the Supreme Court. We received the list from the JBC only recently, and he is poised to make his first appointment in that court. We cannot make any announcements yet on who his choice will be.

The next part of this announcement will dwell on which of the Cabinet secretaries and high officials will be retained. This has come to be important to us because we have to clear the uncertainties in many agencies and offices. So, please pay attention to this. The resignations of the following have been declined by the President, that means they will continue to serve in their respective offices: Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr.; DAR Secretary Conrado M. Estrella III; DepEd Secretary Juan Edgardo M. Angara; TESDA Secretary Jose Francisco Benitez; DOLE Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma; DSWD Secretary Rexlon Gatchalian; DOH Secretary Teodoro Herbosa; DMW Secretary Hans Leo Caddac; DOST Secretary Renato Solidum Jr.; DOT Secretary Maria Christina Frasco; DICT Secretary Henry Rhoel Aguda; DOTr Secretary Vivencio B. Dizon II; DPWH Secretary Manuel Bonoan; Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Juan Ponce Enrile; PMS Secretary Elaine T. Masukat; MMDA Chairman Romando Artes; MinDA Chairman Leo Tereso Magno; Secretary Antonio G. Cerilles, Presidential Adviser for Mindanao Concerns; BIR Commissioner Romeo D. Lumagui Jr.; Bureau of Customs Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio; Treasurer of the Philippines Sharon P. Almanza.

At this point may I also add a clarification when we made that announcement regarding the forthcoming designation of Secretary of Foreign Affairs Enrique Manalo to be the next Permanent Representative of the Philippines in the United Nations: This will take effect most likely August 1 but because of the necessity for him to be confirmed before going over as Permanent Envoy to the United Nations, the President recognizes the designation to be considered as done only after his confirmation. In the meanwhile he will remain as the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, in the meanwhile because there was a misunderstanding maybe about when he would really stop performing or discharging his duties as secretary.

So, I am now ready to receive your questions. May I just make this additional point: That means that Secretary Manalo's courtesy resignation was declined; he continues to be the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. It's necessary to clarify that because there should be no uncertainty about his status. Okay, I may now accept your questions.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA NEWS: ES good afternoon. With the announcement on the Cabinet secretaries, whose courtesy resignation were declined, it appears that this performance review was not as sweeping as the public may have anticipated?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Well, if you are asking for blood, heavily sticky blood, but you know, we are still undertaking continuing performance evaluations even of those undersecretaries or those lower than the Cabinet rank functionaries. I assure you that this is a very sweeping and thorough evaluation being made by the President and the panel of his choice regarding those who will be continuing, remaining in office and those who will be ultimately ousted.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA NEWS: But at least for the major departments wala pong masyadong movements, so does the President expect changes in how these departments are run with the heads?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Yeah, that is a very good question. All of them who have been retained, including myself, are expected to give fresh attention to the mandates and to give more performance, show more performance in our respective areas. And if you will note, these Secretaries whose resignation have been declined, need to be announced because there have been many speculations that have been going round and they have been the victims of intrigues and harassment from many quarters. That is why we came out today with an announcement of who they are because it's just simple justice to them.

ACE ROMERO/PHIL. STAR: Secretary, iyong mga kalihim po na hindi ninyo nabanggit, we can assume na ongoing pa po iyong performance review sa kanilang performance?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: You are right, yes. That's true.

ACE ROMERO/PHIL. STAR: May we ask for the reasons, why iyong mga nabanggit po ninyo na nauna kanina, eh tinanggap iyong kanilang pagbibitiw?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Well, these are the officers of various ranks – may undersecretary, may secretary, may assistant secretary ang levels. Well, the assessment about them is that they did not perform up to par, that is the assumption. So, we will just leave it at that.

JEAN MANGALUZ/PHIL. STAR. COM: Good afternoon. Are we still assessing the chiefs of the GOCCS?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Yes, you know the chiefs of the GOCCs as I mentioned last time, is that they are subject to the yearly review by the GCG. But their heads of offices, they will surely be assessed by us. So, the annual review by the GCG is mandated by law, the GCG law requires this to happen in the middle of every year, so about now, June. We do not know what the GCG is going to recommend, but on our part, as far as the heads of the GOCCs are concerned, we will surely come up with announcements very soon.

TRISTAN NODALO/NEWSWATCH PLUS: Sir, good afternoon. Sir, just siguro a follow-up lang din, given nga po iyong line-up noong mga hindi po tinanggap na resignation or nag-stay na Cabinet member, may marching order po ba sa kanila iyong Pangulo now that sila iyong magko-continue noong last three years na term?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Well, the President will give individual marching orders to all of them and as of now, it will not be convenient for us to mention what are those marching orders. But definitely, they know that the President demands the highest degree of performance. And those who have not been retained know also where they have failed or where they were short in delivery.

TRISTAN NODALO/NEWSWATCH PLUS: Siguro, sir, message na lang po sa public, na baka isipin nila wala namang nagbago sa line up of Cabinet secretaries. At the very least, iyong marami pong natira na sila rin naman, ano po ang mensahe ninyo, sir, sa publiko?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Well, alam ninyo ito ang gusto kong maintindihan ninyo 'no: The President is a manager, he has his own levels of achievement that he has imposed on each of us in the Cabinet and his expectation are there and it is only the President who can decide if we performed up to par or we delivered on those promises or the expectation that he gave to us, announce to us at the beginning. And, because of these, the President might have probably, most likely determined that most of these whom he retained have performed at par, because otherwise he would surely have fired them. You know, this is not a purge. You must understand that. That's why we went to the courtesy resignation as the means for implementing this reorganization. But you know even if you have been retain now, you will still be expected to make you're—to deliver on your marching orders and these are specific to each of this respective officers or officials of government.

PCO ASEC. VILLARAMA: Maricel Halili, News5.

MARICEL HALILI/ NEWS5: Magandang hapon po, sir. Sir, iyon pong na-mention ninyo kanina na mga officials who be replaced, what are the reasons that the President decided to removed them from the post? Are they involved in particular issues or just failure to meet the expectation of the President?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Good that you asked that because you know these are the Presidential adviser, presidential assistants, there are many of them. And the four whom we have named today were probably those that the President as of now has determined, that they have not delivered on their respective mandates. I will not delve into the details because they are not to be—they are of different categories. But let us assume that the President has good reasons, the best reasons not to continue with their services as of this time.

PCO ASEC. VILLARAMA: Anymore questions? Tristan Nodalo, NewsWatch.

TRISTAN NODALO/ NEWSWATCH: Sir, last na lang po, iyong performance review, sir. Are we going to expect na every year gagawin ito ng Pangulo or depende po sa kaniya?

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: That's a good question also because performance evaluation is ongoing everytime. The President may even terminate or remove any of us; we are at his will. If the performance evaluation is a continuing process, you can be sure that anytime, any who is not performing according to standards of the President will be replaced or relocated, that's what we do sometime.

PCO ASEC. VILLARAMA: If there are no more questions, thank you very much Executive Secretary Lucas P. Bersamin.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BERSAMIN: Thank you.

PCO ASEC. VILLARAMA: Thank you very much, Malacañang Press Corps.

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