

**PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE'S SPEECH DURING THE CEREMONIAL
SIGNING OF THE 2018 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT (GAA) AND TAX
REFORM FOR ACCELERATION AND INCLUSION (TRAIN)**

Rizal Hall, Malacañan Palace

December 19, 2017

Kindly sit down. Salamat for the courtesy.

Mahaba 'to.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III, and the members of the Senate; Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, and members of the House of Representatives; Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, and members of the Cabinet present; Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III; Budget and Management Secretary Benjamin Diokno; Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto; House Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas; Senator Loren Legarda, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance; Senator Juan Edgardo Angara, Chairperson of the Senate Committee of the Ways and Means; Representative Karlo Alexei Nograles, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations; Representative Dakila Carlo Cua, Chairperson of the House Committee on Ways and Means; Representative Mylene Garcia-Albano, the 2nd district of Davao City; officials of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines; leaders from the business sector of the Philippines; development partners from the international community and civil society; fellow workers in government; my countrymen.

Two laws that I signed today are the fulfillment of my campaign promise to institute genuine fiscal reform that will be felt by every Filipino. Through the bold and decisive efforts of our economic managers, we were able to design and craft a spending and tax plan embodied by the 2018 General Appropriations Act and the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion Act or TRAIN. The implementation of these laws will serve as our national, initial step towards cutting the poverty rate at 14 percent and making the Philippines an upper middle class by 2022. Hindi kaya ito apurado? [laughter]

I commend the [DBM's] timely submission of the draft and budget and the determination of the leadership of both houses of Congress, especially the Appropriations and Finance committee for ensuring the careful scrutiny and prompt approval of the budget.

The 2018 GAA, which is 12 percent higher than last year's budget, will primarily support infrastructure development and free education in state universities and colleges, universal health care, free irrigation, and the maintenance of peace and order across the country. This will also fulfill my campaign promise of doubling the basic pay of our soldiers and police officers, which will take effect on the very first day of 2018. (applause)

Let me emphasize that this budget is a credible budget and I ensure everyone that this will be supported by the comprehensive tax reform program embodied by the TRAIN, subject to several line vetoes, which shall be discussed separately in my veto message.

The timely passage of TRAIN is indeed a milestone for the Department of Finance and our congressional leadership, especially the Ways and Means Committees of both houses, who gave their full support for this measure after numerous hearings and hundreds of public consultation nationwide.

This is the administration's biggest Christmas gift to the Filipino people as 99 percent of the taxpayers would benefit from a simpler, fairer, and more efficient tax system. One of the TRAIN's most significant breakthroughs is that beginning January 1st, 2018, those earning below P250,000 will be exempt from income tax. (applause) And I thank all of you.

The law also addresses long and overdue corrections in our tax laws and introduces a more progressive tax system where the rich and the poor contribute to give better services to our people.

Revenues from the TRAIN will fund our priority projects to ensure a quality education, including free tuition in state universities and colleges, equally, quality health care, social protection and conditional cash transfers, improved infrastructures to the Build, Build, Build program and the reconstruction of Marawi.

This is just an initial part of our gains under the comprehensive tax reform programs as Congress has passed two-thirds of the expected revenues from the Package 1 of TRAIN.

I thank Congress again for its commitment to pass the balance by the first quarter of next year. I am directing the Department of Finance to ensure the effective implementation of Package 1 of TRAIN and to immediately submit to Congress Package 2, which deals with corporate income tax early next year, which will complement the revenues of TRAIN. [applause]

The passage of 2018 GAA and TRAIN is not just a victory for the legislative and executive branches of government, it is a victory for our people.

It is my sincere hope that these measures will not just chart our spending and tax agenda in the coming years but will also embody a new hope for the Filipino. Ito yung ano, may I be given about siguro, 20 minutes with your time? Kung meron pa ako, kung wala na, senyas ka lang Chiz at I will—

This concerns the country and I have decided to end the talks with the rebels. I don't think that we will be able to reach an agreement even for 100 years. The way that they are behaving and I don't know if Bebot Bello has any idea of how to proceed forward. Pero kasi ako, nakikita ko and even in my communications with them. It boils down to

one thing and apparently, they really would want to have a coalition government. Wala akong problema diyan, except that as I have said before in many of my statements previously, I cannot give to them or share with them sovereignty which is not my own. It is not mine to give. Ang mahirap kasi nito, if— tingin ko, in a scale of 1 to 10, tapos mag-abot tayo ng bandang seven or eight and yung mga fundamentals nandoon pa rin. Then, parang I'll be boxed in a corner and I'd have to do the explaining to the Filipino why is it so. So hindi ko talaga makita kasi papunta talaga tayo sa coalition.

And you know, this is a country, which is run by a Constitution. And people just really want their officials to exercise the power— elected, hindi appointed.

So you can have the sovereignty in matters pertaining to Congress, to the Executive department, and to the Judiciary. But these are people who were appointed by the elected officials. And this is something which is hard to explain to everybody na as I have said, you might elect a son of a bitch. But the problem is, if he's the choice of the people, wala tayong magawa. That is how this democracy run. And that is how it is until now. If it is not running, if it's not running perfect, then there are other remedies, but a very servitus one. So wala tayo dito.

I do not think that I would ever have the time to just sleep on it, ponder on it, and think of what will be the next move.

Itong dito sa MI, MN. It would do us well to really pursue talks with well-meaning [inaudible] functions of the Moro people in Mindanao. Kasi the other option is I do not even want to imagine how it would evolve itself before the public. Itong mga 'to, matagal na naghihintay and they have been very patient.

Ako, I salute Nur for just being there, keeping quiet. Tapos sinasabi niya kung ano ang sabi ni— “Mayor, how we proceed with the— Someday, if it does not start now.” Medyo nagpapasensya na (inaudible) his sources.

Si Murad naman, in so many times, of present and past, he would want to see me on a regular basis and talk about the progress of the BBL. I do not think that it will hurdle constitutional— binabasa ko paulit-ulit, the constitutional barriers. Pero pag hindi natin maibigay yan, kindly help me think of ways how to do it. Kasi, I said, the other choice is, if they'd go to war, it opens the floodgate of Mindanao to everybody else. You know, your enemy is my friend.

And maybe now, ISIS is not acceptable to them. And as a matter of fact, they are there fighting right today. Pero kung magka-giyera-giyera talaga 'to and they demand for something that is to correct also the historical injustice committed against them, pag hindi natin ibinigay, mukhang malabo talaga at magkagulo.

Ako, I'm just telling you, I'm not even warning you. You just observe how things are presenting itself before the horizon of Philippine politics. Sinasabi ko lang na we can ill afford fighting so many fronts. Nandiyan yung NPA, nandiyan yung secessionist ng—

the Moro of Mindanao, and the ISIS. That alone will eat a lot of our resources and keep us busy and thereby in the process, we're losing lives, innocent lives.

Those are the— andito man si Jun. Tingnan mo daw Jun paano gawain itong NPA, talagang— But one thing that we are sure, they no longer have the second echelons of leadership. Wala na. Puro ito brigands and ang balita ko nga sa countryside, in Davao, they go around. Umaabuso talaga itong kaibigan mo, Bot. Pati— I'll be forced to take harsh measures. Pati yung mga babae, yang mga buntis, hinihipo ng mga walang hiya eh. They're into undisciplined, reduced to brigandage almost. So one of these days, I'll— the military is there in the other room waiting.

It could be something like, "I do what you do to me." Mahirap yan, sila lang ang— they get the upper hand because they can do anything without— sans the restraint of any conventional.

Well, if they are the losing end, they'd always say, "Geneva." Geneva is a passé. And yet, kung tayo, we are hailed by almost everybody, wala namang kabase-base.

Now, if we are really into extrajudicial killing, I just lost something like one seriously wounded, one policeman last night sa Pasig. And I've been telling and I would like to give a copy to you now para maintindihan lang rin tayo.

Ito ba „yung isang page ng— yung nandito?

I got this from the INCB. It's the International Narcotics Control Board. It's worldwide and it's entitled: Precursors in the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. It bears the logo. Basahin lang, nandito talaga ito lahat para kung— yung mga human rights, kung magsalita sila, maintindihan mo rin.

Kaya nandito po. Nine minutes na ako. Meron pa akong— 'di, para magkaintindihan tayo. At least alam ninyo. Kasi papatayin ko talaga itong mga (expletive) 'to eh. [laughter]

You know, if you destroy my nation, wala akong ano niyo. Cannabis, it's poppy. It is grown from an organic thing. Ito namang organic is not really so virulent or vicious. You start with being in stupor pero wala ditong sinasabi na they go about running wild and killing people. Meron pa ito, cannabis, then the next is heroin, ecstasy. Ecstasy, kasi ito sa iniinom ng mga sa wild parties ng mga nag-o-orgy. Kasama diyan yung— kayo siguro, yung iba diyan.

Tablets or pills are sold as ecstasy may contain other potentially dangerous substances, which can vary widely in strength and... Wala naman sinabi na— heroin— users risk overdosing on heroin, which can lead to coma and to death in respiratory.

Alam mo, kung basahin mo pa, LSD, it refers only to the damage of the person. Yung ano dito, the characterization of the drug. Methamphetamine, ang shabu, it's

outstanding, then it says, “Methamphetamine use sometimes triggers aggressive, violent and bizarre behavior.”

Kaya sinasabi ko na noon, talagang lumalaban itong— in my experience for 23 years as Mayor. Talagang lumalaban ito. Just like last night, basta shabu. And merong armas talaga yan. I just don’t know why people are disbelieving pag sinasabi ko, “Ito ang totoo.” And I can only cite my personal experience, having been mayor for 23 years in my city.

Now, lahat na yun when I became mayor, magprangka ako sa inyo. Sabi ko sa kanila, “I am not a policeman, I am not a soldier. I’m trying to build this city. Kindly, give me a chance. Pagbigyan niyo ang mga tao.” We have been at it for the communists for almost 50 years. Now, we are entering an era of another 50 years. Then itong, sabi ko, it has been going on and has created a lot of monsters. And huwag mo na lang isali yung kay Bato, Santiago’s figure during his PDEA days, General Santiago. He gave the number “three million.” Eh if you make three million of my country as slaves to a chemical called shabu, magsama talaga loob ko.

And shabu, one of the immediate, on long-term use, shrinks the brain of a person. Kaya yung mga community-based na rehab, hindi talaga uubra yan. Alam ni— ayan si Cora oh. She’s been with us as mayor, ahh— as councilor sa siyudad, then she began to look at the horizon of Davao. Lumipat siya doon, naging mayor, ahh— governor pati congressman. Ngayon, ayaw ng umalis. Pareho kami. Papalit-palit na lang ng position. But ako, I have reached dead end.

We built the first rehab, almost 25 years ago. Ako yung nauna. Hindi ako nagyayabang. Paputok, ako ang nauna. Sigarilyo, ako ang nauna. Eh konting yabang lang naman, kasi ngayon lang eh. This is the first time that I’ve talk about it openly.

Nauna kami sa mga Women’s Code, nauna kami. Discrimination against LGBT and all, nauna kami. Sa Davao kasi, nung pumutok, maraming condo, maraming subdivision. Tapos, sabihin na, “We do not sell condos and lands to Moro people.”

They’re forcing us to craft a law defining discrimination and giving it sanctions. Nauuna kami. Hindi kami nahuli sa Davao. Pero yung experience ko sa shabu, 8 out of 10, babagsak talaga pabalik. And that is really a problem for the country. Wala na kasi akong mga nakitang ibang— kasi pabalik-balik na eh.

And you know what? May I be forgiven by Maggie dela Riva. During our time, ang nire-rape doon, mga— siya, yung magaganda. One is, I do not have the permission but theirs was a public one. Ang nire-rape doon, talagang magaganda, worth going to jail and worth dying for. Kaya nga, electrocuted man yun sila. Well, yun ang kabayaran. But itong— I cannot imagine now, modern times na yung— pati yung one month old na bata.

At you know, just give you an idea, pag may kasama kayo diyan, aling assembly, ayaw kong— he keeps on grinding his teeth in front of you, iyan 'yan. Yung parang kinakain yung ngipin niya. That's why, lahat ng shabu ano, ubos ang ngipin. Talagang sira. Gina-grind nila yan. Wala ng katapusan yan.

So are the sons and daughters of— sa Davao. Mag-normal pero bigla na lang— Wala talaga, you— patay ang Pilipino. Patay ang Pilipino kung ganon.

So when I was fixing Davao, I said: Do not destroy— hindi ako military, hindi ako pulis but do not destroy my city because if you do, I will really kill you. And do not destroy the young, kasi pag— the only assets available to us, mga anak namin. Hindi naman tayo lahat mayaman eh. So ilan ang kikitain natin at the end of our service with government? Pulis, security guard, itong mga sundalo, how much? 700, 800? And they retire at 56. If they get to live 15 years more, saan sila magkuha ng medisina nila? You think, yung 700 today can provide you if you live another 15 years? For the food, the medicine? Who would buy the oxygen? Who will pay for the hospitals? Who will pay for the funeral parlor? And who will bury us? Di yung mga anak natin.

Same with the OFW workers. You read everyday, they are raped there because that's the practice of some tribes there in the Middle East. And sinabi talaga, I was once a congressman, I went there with Dilangalen, Salapuddin. And because may mga Katoliko na babae doon. And I was told by the— yung aide ni King Fahd, "You better talk to your counterpart." Eh ako yung sa law and order ni [inaudible] noon, so I was the one sent. Ayaw ko sabihin, kasi ayaw ko, I do not want to—

Can— could you please, para ito sa ating mga kababayan, hindi ito para sa amin. Could you— can you just— pa-uma ang iyong kuwan ba? Shut it off. Nagasuga naman yan, patayin mo. Alam mo kasi, I do not want to— it's a very unsettling news to people na may mga relative doon. You know, pag— (AUDIO CUT)

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