

ASSUMPTION SPEECH
MGEN EMMANUEL T BAUTISTA AFP
54th Commanding General, Philippine Army

I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY HONORING THE GOD ALMIGHTY, THANKING HIM FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD THE PHILIPPINE ARMY AND IMPLOING HIS DIVINE GUIDANCE AS I CARRY OUT MY DUTIES.

LET ME ALSO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY DESIGNATION AS CGPA, MOST ESPECIALLY HIS EXCELLENCY, BENIGNO S AQUINO III, PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF ALL ARMED FORCES; THE HONORABLE VOLTAIRE T GAZMIN, SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE; GEN EDUARDO OBAN, THE CHIEF OF STAFF AFP; AND ALL OTHERS WHO BELIEVED IN ME, SUPPORTED ME AND PRAYED FOR ME.

TO GENERAL ORTIZ, MY IMMEDIATE COMMANDER, THANK YOU SIR FOR YOUR GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT. YOU HAVE DONE A LOT FOR THE ARMY. WE SHALL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOU SIR AS OUR HERO.

TO MY PREVIOUS COMMANDERS AND SUPERIORS; TO MY MENTORS AND CLASSMATES; TO MY COLLEAGUES AND SUBORDINATES; TO THE SCHOOLS WHERE I CAME FROM NAMELY MARIST SCHOOL, THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY ACADEMY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES; MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY, MOST SPECIALLY MY MOTHER GLORIA; AND ALL OTHERS WHO HAVE SHAPED ME TO WHAT I AM NOW, I THANK YOU ALL.

ALLOW ME ALSO TO PAY TRIBUTE TO MY LATE FATHER, BGEN TEODULFO S BAUTISTA, A SOLDIER OF PEACE, WHO'S LEGACY IS MY SOURCE OF INSPIRATION. HE DID NOT LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO BE CGPA BUT HIS SON NOW STANDS BEFORE YOU IN HIS STEAD. HE DID NOT SEE THE DAWN OF PEACE, BUT HIS SON WILL CARRY ON THE TORCH.

I AM EXTREMELY HONORED TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNATED AS THE 54th COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE PHILIPPINE ARMY. THE PHILIPPINE ARMY HAS A GLORIOUS HISTORY WHICH DATES BACK TO THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY OF ANDRES BONIFACIO AFTER WHOM THIS CAMP IS NAMED AFTER. THEN AND THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, THE ARMY HAS ALWAYS FOUGHT FOR THE FILIPINO PEOPLE, WINNING FOR THE FILIPINOS INDEPENDENCE AND DEFENDING THIS COUNTRY FROM VARIOUS THREATS. TODAY, THE ARMY CARRIES ON THIS TRADITION IN ITS EFFORTS TO WIN THE PEACE FOR THE FILIPINO PEOPLE.

THE PHILIPPINE ARMY HAS GONE A LONG WAY IN ITS GROWTH AS AN ORGANIZATION. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO BUILD UPON OUR GAINS AND THE LEGACIES OF PREVIOUS ARMY COMMANDERS TO FURTHER BRING THE ARMY TO GREATER HEIGHTS.

I SHALL LEAD THE ARMY GUIDED BY TWO STRATEGIC PRECEPTS: IN THE CONDUCT OF OUR OPERATIONS, BY THE INTERNAL PEACE AND SECURITY PLAN BAYANIHAN AND; IN STEERING THE ARMY, BY THE ARMY TRANSFORMATION ROADMAP OR ATR.

IPSP BAYANIHAN IS OUR BLUEPRINT FOR WINNING THE PEACE. THE ROAD TO PEACE IS LONG AND DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITIES AND CHALLENGES, WE SHOULD REMAIN FOCUSED ON THE OBJECTIVE. WE HAVE TO PUSH ON. THE PHILIPPINE ARMY REMAINS FULLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE PEACE PROCESS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO REACH OUT TO OUR BROTHERS TO CHOOSE THE PEACEFUL PATH AND THOSE WHO DO SO MERIT OUR UNWAVERING SUPPORT. BUT FOR THOSE WHO INSIST IN USING ARMS TO THREATEN THE SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF OUR PEOPLE, WE WILL APPLY LEGITIMATE FORCE. YES, WE WILL SEEK JUSTICE AGAINST THOSE WHO COMMIT ATROCITIES THROUGH APPROPRIATE, CALIBRATED AND

FOCUSED RESPONSE WITHOUT NECESSARILY JEOPARDIZING THE PEACE PROCESS AND WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND RULE OF LAW. AFTER ALL, THE USE OF LEGITIMATE FORCE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF ACHIEVING PEACE AND SECURITY IS WITHIN THE AMBIT OF IPSP BAYANIHAN.

WE HAVE MADE A LOT OF STRIDES UNDER BAYANIHAN SINCE WE IMPLEMENTED IT LAST JANUARY. LET US SUSTAIN OUR MOMENTUM BY GAINING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF IT, BY BEING MORE CONSCIENTIOUS IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION, BY GIVING IT MORE IMPETUS AND BY SUPERVISING IT MORE KEENLY TO MAKE SURE THAT IT IS IMPLEMENTED DOWN THE LINE. WE HAVE TO TRANSLATE BAYANIHAN, OUR NATIONAL STRATEGY, TO THE OPERATIONAL AND TACTICAL LEVEL - HOW IT IS IMPLEMENTED ON THE GROUND.

BAYANIHAN PRESENTS TO OUR PEOPLE A CHOICE BETWEEN CONTINUOUS ARMED STRUGGLE AND PEACE. IT'S BEEN MORE THAN FOUR DECADES THAT WE HAVE BEEN EMBROILED IN CONFLICT. ARMED STRUGGLE IS NOT THE SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS. ON THE CONTRARY, IT HAS BROUGHT A LOT OF SUFFERING AND MISERY TO OUR PEOPLE; SO MANY LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST, SO MANY FUTURES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, NOT ONLY ON BOTH SIDES BUT ALSO THOSE CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE AS WELL. WE HAVE LOST DEAR FRIENDS AND FAMILY. LET THIS BE OUR MOTIVATION TO WIN THE PEACE!

WE KNOW THAT WE CANNOT WIN THE PEACE IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE NECESSARY CAPABILITY. WE SHALL SEEK TO CONTINUOUSLY EMPOWER AND DEVELOP THE PHILIPPINE ARMY THROUGH THE ARMY TRANSFORMATION ROADMAP, WHICH HIGHLIGHTS OUR COMMITMENT TO PURSUE GENUINE TRANSFORMATION FOUNDED ON GOOD GOVERNANCE. IT SEEKS TO TRANSFORM THE PHILIPPINE ARMY INTO A BETTER, MORE RESPONSIVE,

MORE CAPABLE AND MORE PROFESSIONAL ARMY COMMITTED TO ITS MANDATE. IT AIMS TO PROMOTE GOOD GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE; INSTITUTIONALIZE VARIOUS REFORM INITIATIVES; AND PROVIDE A RATIONAL AND LONG-TERM BASIS FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL THRUST OF THE ARMY.

THE ATR IS A GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK TO ATTAIN OUR VISION OF A "WORLD CLASS ARMY THAT IS A SOURCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE". LET ME WALK YOU THRU THAT VISION.

WE ENVISION AN ARMY THAT IS CAPABLE OF PERFORMING ITS MANDATE, IS OWNED AND LOVED BY THE FILIPINO PEOPLE AND IS A SOURCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE.

IN THE NEAR TERM, THE ARMY SHOULD BE ABLE TO WIN THE PEACE RELATIVE TO INTERNAL SECURITY THREATS. TO DO THIS, IT SHOULD UNDERGO A TRANSFORMATION PROCESS IN THE CONTEXT OF SECURITY SECTOR REFORM. THIS SHOULD INVOLVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPABILITIES AND ENHANCING THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE ARMY UNDER FIRM DEMOCRATIC CONTROL. CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT IS TO FURTHER ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF THE ARMY TO MILITARILY DEFEAT ARMED THREAT GROUPS. IT ALSO INCLUDES THE ACQUISITION OF NON-TRADITIONAL SKILLS SUCH AS STAKEHOLDER AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AS WELL AS PEACE BUILDING. PROFESSIONALIZATION, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS FOCUSED ON THREE THINGS. FIRST IS GOOD GOVERNANCE WHERE THE ARMY ADHERES TO BEST PRACTICES AND IS DEVOID OF MALPRACTICES AND CORRUPTION. SECOND IS SHIELDING THE ARMY FROM PARTISAN POLITICS. FINALLY, WE LOOK FORWARD TO AN ARMY THAT ADHERES AND BELIEVES IN HUMAN RIGHTS, INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND RULE OF LAW. WHILE DEVELOPING OUR CAPABILITY MAY TAKE TIME, ACHIEVING A HIGHER LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM CAN TAKE PLACE SOONER.

IN THE MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM, WE ENVISION AN ARMY WHO IS RESPECTED BY ITS NEIGHBORS. BY THIS TIME, THE ARMY HAS NOW REFOCUSSED TO ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE OF DEFENDING THE COUNTRY AND ITS INTEREST. WE WOULD HAVE DEVELOPED A MODICUM OF CAPABILITY FOR PROTECTING OUR INTERESTS. ITS PERSONNEL ARE PROFESSIONALS AND OUR PEOPLE APPRECIATE AND ARE PROUD OF THEIR ARMY.

BY 2028, WE WOULD HAVE ATTAINED A WORLD CLASS ARMY THAT IS A SOURCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE. THAT IS THE ARMY VISION. THAT IS WHERE WE WILL TAKE THIS ARMY TO, AND IN SO DOING; WE HOPE TO BE A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION TO OUR PEOPLE. IN THE SPIRIT OF BAYANIHAN AND THROUGH THE ATR, WE HOPE TO ENCOURAGE OUR PEOPLE TO JOIN US IN OUR DREAMS AND TOGETHER MOVE FORWARD AS A NATION.

AS I STARTED BY IMPLORING DIVINE GUIDANCE OF GOD ALMIGHTY, LET ME CONCLUDE BY SEEKING THE SUPPORT OF ALL MEMBERS OF TEAM ARMY AND ALL OUR STAKEHOLDERS TO INCLUDE THE ENTIRE FILIPINO PEOPLE. TOGETHER, LET US WIN THE PEACE. WE WILL WIN THE PEACE! WE OWE IT TO THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US, WE OWE IT TO OURSELVES, AND WE OWE TO OUR PEOPLE. TOGETHER LET US BUILD AN ARMY THAT WE CAN ALL BE PROUD OF. AFTER ALL, THIS IS YOUR ARMY, OUR ARMY.

MABUHAY ANG HUKBONG KATIHAN NG PILIPINAS! MABUHAY ANG SAMBAYANANG PILIPINO!