

Presidential Communications Operations Office  
News and Information Bureau

**PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON AND  
CHIEF PRESIDENTIAL LEGAL COUNSEL SECRETARY SALVADOR PANELO  
FEBRUARY 27, 2020 (2:37 – 2:48 P.M.)**

**TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR:** [recording starts]...state of calamity sa CALABARZON. Sir ano ‘yung magiging procedure sa pagtanggap ng international humanitarian assistance?

**SEC. PANELO:** Mayroong established protocols na roon eh, so they will just follow the protocols already established sa lahat ng mga declared calamities.

**TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR:** So, akala ko kaya ng gobyerno natin na mag-institute ng mga rehabilitation efforts, why are we asking for help from outside, other countries?

**SEC. PANELO:** Wala namang masama din na humingi ng tulong para mas lalong mahusay iyong ating pagtulong sa mga nangangailangan.

**TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR:** Sir, at this point may nag-signify na po bang bansa para tumulong sa mga—?

**SEC. PANELO:** Ah hindi ko pa alam iyon. I will have to ask the heads of agencies.

**VIRGIL LOPEZ/GMA NEWS ONLINE:** Sir, kasi iyong eruption happened January 12 pa ‘di ba, and then the issuance of the proclamation I think Feb. 21. Is it not too late or masyado bang late na nag-issue ng declaration—

**SEC. PANELO:** There can never be too late in any declaration with respect to calamities. ‘Pag may calamity siyempre ang tagal niyan, you cannot be late.

**ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBN NEWS.COM:** Hi, sir. Sir, can I just clarify the President’s remarks last night? Sabi niya kasi sir, “There cannot be a total travel ban and you do not allow anybody to enter. You are going to lockdown the entire Philippines for that.” Was he referring only na hindi tayo puwede na mag-total travel ban on South Korea?

**SEC. PANELO:** Hindi, ibig niyang sabihin sa... may ibang bansa.

**ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBN NEWS.COM:** Ah... So it’s not specific to South Korea, sir?

**SEC. PANELO:** No.

**ARIANNE MEREZ/ABS-CBN NEWS.COM:** Okay sir, thank you.

**SAM MEDENILLA/BUSINESS MIRROR:** Sir, going back lang po doon sa Taal eruption. May local government units na po ba na humingi ng additional funding from the national government dahil medyo naubos na iyong kanilang calamity fund?

**SEC. PANELO:** I will have to ask the DILG.

**SAM MEDENILLA/BUSINESS MIRROR:** Thank you po.

**TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR:** Sir, do you update on the request of the President for the approval of the 30 billion supplemental budget para sa Taal?

**SEC. PANELO:** Wala pa. I have not received any info on that.

**TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR:** Sir, is there an appeal from you or from Malacañang for Congress to speed up the supplemental budget? The approval...

**SEC. PANELO:** You don't have to appeal to them, they know their jobs.

**TINA MENDEZ/PHILIPPINE STAR:** So they are—are they doing their jobs properly considering na magre-recess na and this is an urgent matter which—hindi raw nag-move pa sa committee level?

**SEC. PANELO:** Well, the presumption is they do their job. Until such time that they are not doing their job, then we will appeal to them.

**HENRY URI/DZRH:** Secretary, aware na ba ang Presidente dito sa nangyayari ngayon sa House of Representative, kasi mayroon pong binabanggit si Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano that Congressman Allan Lord Velasco is planning a coup against him?

**SEC. PANELO:** One of the Congressmen there has disputed that claim. He says he has not heard of that. Congressman Raul Delmar. Maybe that is only the perception of Speaker Alan Cayetano.

**HENRY URI/DZRH:** Opo, pero ito po ay malinaw naman na mayroon na silang term sharing na pinag-usapan sa harap ng Pangulo, hindi po ba?

**SEC. PANELO:** Yeah, exactly.

**HENRY URI/DZRH:** So, ano ang advise ng Palasyo?

**SEC. PANELO:** So, since there has been an agreement, then, since Speaker Cayetano said he would comply with the agreement, I don't think there is a problem. What he was saying is that, with respect to his leadership, he said – relative to the hearing of franchises –he said if you are in agreement with my position, then that's good. If you are not, then maybe there is a need for change of leadership and he doesn't mind. That was what he said.

**HENRY URI/DZRH:** And since, iyong dalawa ho ni Congressman Velasco and Speaker Cayetano ay nagkasundo sa harap mismo ng Pangulo ng kanilang term sharing, ano ang advice ng Palasyo dito sa dalawang ito ngayon?

**SEC. PANELO:** Wala, walang advice ang Pangulo. Kung ano iyong pinagkasunduan nila, di sila ang dapat na mag-resolve noon. Ang tingin ko kay Speaker Cayetano, he was more challenging the members of the Congress – If you are not satisfied with me, di gawin ninyo ang gusto ninyo. Parang ganoon ang dating sa akin nung statement niya eh, in other words, “If you are disagreeing with my style of leadership, di palitan ninyo ako.” Eh mukha namang hindi, hindi kuntento, mukhang satisfied naman iyong mga miyembro from what I gather.

**HENRY URI/DZRH:** Hindi ho ba makikialam ang Pangulo, again, dito sa kanilang..?

**SEC. PANELO:** As usual, the President does not, unless you ask him to intercede in their behalf.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** Sir, last Tuesday sa Malacañang Park nandoon si Representative Lord Alan Velasco. Would you know, if there was a meeting with the President that time?

**SEC. PANELO:** No, I have no idea, wala ako doon eh.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** Okay, and then you also mentioned about the term sharing. If in case mangyari or mag-succeed ang ouster plot ahead of the term sharing agreement, meaning, hindi pa tapos iyong dapat na term ni Speaker Cayetano, what will the President do?

**SEC. PANELO:** First, you assume that there is an ouster plot, members of Congress are saying there is none.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** But Speaker Cayetano is saying otherwise.

**SEC. PANELO:** Hindi, di ba iyong sinabi ko iyong context. Parang siya mismo ang nagsasabi, kung ayaw ninyo sa akin, di mag-change leadership tayo.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** But sa part po ni President, if in case there is an ouster plot and it succeeds before the term sharing, how will the President accept it?

**SEC. PANELO:** Again, the President does not interfere, paulit-ulit na nating sinasabi. That’s the internal affair of the Congress, hindi siya makikialam diyan. Unless you ask him to settle whatever rift they have, if there is any.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** In terms of performance of Speaker Cayetano, is the President still happy and satisfied with him as the Speaker?

**SEC. PANELO:** He has not complained. I have not heard him any remark.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** So, that's safe to say he has satisfied with how he has handling Congress.

**SEC. PANELO:** You can make your own conclusions.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** But as the Spokesperson of the President?

**SEC. PANELO:** I am just telling you exactly, I didn't hear anything from him.

**JOYCE BALANCIO/DZMM:** So, he satisfied.

**SEC. PANELO:** I don't know, I didn't hear anything from him. So you make your own conclusion on that.

**IAN CRUZ/GMA7:** Kahapon po nasabi ng Pangulo na pinapatawad na niya ang ABS-CBN doon sa kanilang paghingi ng apology and sabi ng ABS-CBN today grateful and humbled daw po sila sa acceptance ng Pangulo doon sa kanilang apology. At makikipag-coordinate daw po sila sa President's office in relation doon sa guidance on donating the refunds sa charitable institution. Nakipag-ugnayan na po ba nag ABS-CBN?

**SEC. PANELO:** In the first place, there is no need for guidance, the President has already given them blanket authority – just donate ito to your favorite charitable organization. So, there is no need for guidance. In other words, binigay na nga sa kanila iyong discretion to choose.

**TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS:** Last night the President said that – part of his speech – he mentioned that you might as well choose, we can be a territory of the Americans or we can be a province of China. We are just wondering, sir where did the option of becoming the province of China come from?

**SEC. PANELO:** He said exactly what. How did he say that?

**TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS:** Well, he said that, kapag hindi natin kaya, we no business being.

**SEC. PANELO:** Kapag hindi ano?

**TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS:** Kapag hindi natin kaya, in reference to the VFA agreement, our partnership with the US. Kapag hindi natin kaya, we have no business being a republic, you might as well choose, we can be a territory of the Americans or we can be province of China.

**SEC. PANELO:** That is what he has been saying, sinasabi niya. With respect to the criticism na kapag wala na nag VFA papano na tayo kapag may kalaban tayo. The response of the President was “sino ba ang kalaban natin, wala naman tayong kalaban.” And then he added this statement, he said, ang kalaban lang natin ay ang komunista, mga NPA at mga rebeldeng Muslim, mga

terrorista. And then he said, kung hindi natin kayang supilin ito then we have no business being a government. Iyon!

**TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS:** But, sir iyong option na maging territory ng US, then versus being a province of China, where did that option come from?

**SEC. PANELO:** Ano lang niya iyon, sinasabi niya, kung hindi natin kayang maging gobyerno, di magpa-colonized na lang tayo – iyon ang ibig niyang sabihin.

**TRICIAH TERADA/CNN PHILS:** Pero bakit po may China, sir. I mean why the two options?

**SEC. PANELO:** For that matter, whether China or any other country, iyon ang ibig niyang sabihin. Ano lang iyon, parang reference niya lang. But he refers to---that was the general statement. Kumbaga kantiyaw iyon sa sarili nating bansa. Kung hindi natin kaya eh, huwag na tayong magkaroon ng gobyerno. Iyon ang ibig niyang sabihin!

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Source: PCOO-NIB (News and Information Bureau-Data Processing Center)