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IMPLEMENTING THE 2009 POLITICAL DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION: THE PHILIPPINE ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY (PADS)

62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotics and Drugs
MINISTERIAL SEGMENT
Vienna, 14 March 2019

Philippine President Duterte was elected by a landslide vote / on the explicit campaign promise / to destroy the drug trade. // Big numbers do not make right / but they confer political legitimacy. // Pursuant to this democratic policy, / we have conducted 128,000 police operations / where 331 police were killed and 397 wounded. // We arrested 200,600 drug dealers, / filed 139,400 cases in court,¹ / and froze \$106 million dollars worth of illegal drug assets.² // We seized \$499 million dollars worth of drugs and lab equipment / including 3,400 kilos of crystal meth. // 301 drug dens and laboratories were dismantled, / cleared 11,000 barangays out of 21,974 of drugs, / and rescued 2,016 minors.³ // This zero tolerance policy inspired / more than 1.4 million drug users and pushers / to turn themselves in for rehabilitation in facilities in part provided by China. // The result: 30% decrease in crime. //

There have been shocking abuses; / not many but one is too much. // They were not collateral damage inflicted on innocents to get at the enemy; / but morally repulsive cases of reckless disregard for basic rights and fundamental decencies by rogue cops. // But abuses are no reason to stop the war on drugs. // Rather are they calls to do it better: / to address impunity and ensure accountability; / to consider a clinical approach in addition to the current surgery. // And the police have responded: / 8% of the force disciplined and / 362 police dismissed. // Investigation and prosecution are ongoing; / there have been convictions. // Human rights officers now join all police operations. //

¹ Speech of PDG Oscar D. Albayade, Chief, Philippine National Police, Diplomatic Briefing on Peace and Security, 11 February 2019 (Figures as of December 2018) and Real Numbers (as of July 2018).

² Presentation of Anti-Money Laundering Council, Rehabinasyon: 1st National Anti-Drugs Summit, 3-4 February 2019.

³ Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), Data on Real Numbers on Drug Operations as of 31 January 2019.

With the war on drugs / the Philippines renews its commitment / to the state responsibility to protect, / first and foremost the law-abiding against the lawless / by any means / efficient to achieve the defining purpose and expense of a state: / defense of nation; / extinction of threats to public welfare and safety. // To that responsibility my President has made an iron, unwavering and total commitment. //

We did not pull our war on drugs out of thin air. // We have had a National Anti-Drug Plan of Action for years; / we just gave it a sharper edge, / a longer blade, / and a wider swing. // Ours is a whole of nation approach — we throw everything at the drug trade / but firmly anchored on UN drug conventions,⁴ / the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action,⁵ / the 2016 UNGASS Outcome,⁶ / the ASEAN Work Plan against Illicit Drugs,⁷ / and our national development plan which has no place above ground for the drug trade. //

At its core are **drug supply reduction** – / stemming the massive flow of illicit drugs; / and **drug demand reduction** through community-based rehabilitation / and the widest preventive programs — a strategy of enforcement, rehabilitation, reintegration. //

It must be so. / Our enemies command vast resources and many allies; / including a section of international opinion. // The Chinese, / African and / Mexican-Sinaloa Drug Cartels, / and now the Colombian cartel / operate in our country. // Flooding a country with drugs is a highly successful form of asymmetric warfare / as the British demonstrated / when they brought China to its knees with opium. // Modern terrorism is waged for the drug trade / and fueled by it. // Drug money enabled the taking of Marawi by ISIS. //

We are told to ease off, / to legalize drugs as some European states have done. / The Philippines would consider this option / if it was the size of a sardine can with its small content. // But we are a nation of 110 million inhabitants / and thousands of miles

⁴ The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

⁵ Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem.

⁶ UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem.

⁷ ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025.

of coastline — anywhere along which meth is dropped in sealed garbage bags / to be picked up by complicit local government units. // And we do not face the anodyne Atlantic Ocean / but the bustling South China Sea, / within spitting distance of major meth manufacturers in the Asian mainland. //

The Philippine war on drugs has braved withering criticism — indeed an international public relations war is being waged / against the war on drugs; / pardon us for suspecting a material motivation. // Hand in hand with this vilification campaign, / European NGOs fund another war — against our society and national security. // EU funding continues / for the widely detested, / nowhere supported, / and foredoomed communist insurgency / composed of the last dregs of the New Khmer Rouge, as US intelligence branded them in the late 80s. // Communists had a chance to be part of a real freedom struggle / but they rejected as not in their style / the peaceful Philippine people power revolution / whose victory ignited the liberation of the Soviet Bloc / and spelled the doom of every Cold War fascist dictatorship in the Free World. // In this endeavor, EU NGOs support a cause unquestionably lethal / but totally unredeemed by any prospect of success. // Their generous contributions promise at best the prospect of a small and ragged parade / under a cracked marble arch / to the strains of a broken Hallelujah. // As always, the Philippines fights its battles alone; / it needs no help; / it fears no opposition from any quarter; / but it wouldn't mind / a little understanding. //

Thank you.