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PRESS BRIEFING OF PRESS SECRETARY TRIXIE CRUZ-ANGELES
AUGUST 2, 2022 (1:13 P.M. – 1:46 P.M.)

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Magandang hapon.

Bago po ang lahat, mag-announce lang po tayo ng appointments. Sa DSWD, may mga undersecretary po na nag-oath taking kanina: Jericho Francis Limjoco-Javier; Maria Salome Perez Navarro; Denise Florence Bernos-Bragas; Vilma Batuhan Cabrera; Charles Frederick Toralba-Co; Antonio Sy Crisanto, Jr.; Eduardo Mabasa Punay; Rowena Niña Orbon-Taduran; and, Allan Autencio Tanjusay. Okay. Kasi maraming nagtanong kaninang umaga.

Sa araw na ito, binabati ko po muna kayo ng maligayang Buwan ng Wika.

Doon sa SONA ng ating Pangulo, may tatlong punto na mahalagang gusto naming talakayin sana.

Ang pagbabalik-eskuwela/face-to-face, ang sinabi niya na wala na pong magiging lockdowns at ang pag-encourage niya, paghihikayat niya doon sa pagba-vaccine at boosters natin. Mahalaga ngayon na hinaharap natin ang pagbabalik-eskuwela ng August 22 kung kaya't hatid namin sa inyo ngayong araw na ito, dalawang opisyal na maaaring talakayin ang mga paghahanda ng ating gobyerno ukol sa pagbabalik-eskuwela; mauuna po si Attorney Michael T. Poa, siya po ang Tagapagsalita ng Department of Education.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you po, Press Secretary Trixie Cruz-Angeles. Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat 'no.

So tuloy na tuloy na po ang ating pagbubukas o pagbabalik-eskwela sa August 22, 2022. Kaya nga po ang Department of Education, tuluy-tuloy rin ang pakikipag-ugnayan natin sa iba't ibang ahensiya sa gobyerno pati na rin sa ating mga lokal na pamahalaan para po masigurado natin ang ligtas na pagbabalik-eskuwela ng ating mga learners.

This is not without challenges po 'no, because COVID is very much still here. That's why doon po sa usapin ng vaccination, the Vice President and Secretary for Education has given explicit instructions doon sa ating mga regional offices na makipag-coordinate po sa regional offices ng DOH para po matulungan tayo ng DOH at makapag-rollout tayo ng counselling for the unvaccinated at pati po mobile vaccination doon sa papayag na magpabakuna na.

Tapos po maliban diyan, kailan lang nakaramdam din po tayo ng napakalakas na lindol. So ito pong lindol ay sumira ng libu-libong ari-arian at yumanig din sa buhay ng kapwa nating mga Pilipino lalung-lalo na sa bandang Abra at mga kalapit na lalawigan. We are doing all we can po but we really need your help. That's why yesterday, nilunsad na po natin ang ating Brigada Eskwela for this year with the hopes that this time around, lalo pong uusbong pa ang diwa ng

bayanihan para magtulungan po tayo ‘no. Ituloy po natin ang ‘Brigada’ para po maisulong natin ang kabataan na handa para sa kaniyang kinabukasan.

Maraming salamat po.

DR. ONG-LIM: Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat. Sa ngalan po ng Technical Advisory Group ng Department of Health, nagpapasalamat po ako sa pagkakataon na makapagbigay ng kaunting paalala para sa ating mga magulang na naghahanda na rin sa back-to-school.

So nabanggit po ng ating Spokesperson from the Department of Education na tuloy na tuloy na po ang pasukan, so I’m sure marami po sa mga families na ngayon ay medyo naninibago kasi dalawang taon na rin tayong hindi nag-face-to-face-classes.

So I think the critical things to remember are, number one, iyong pag-iwas natin sa pagkakahawa sa COVID ay nakasalalay sa dalawang major categories: Unang-una, iyong ating behavioral components o ano ba ang kaya nating gawin para makaiwas sa pagkakahawa which is still the minimum public health standards – medyo nakakasawa nang marinig pero ito pa rin ang napakahalagang component.

At siyempre, hindi mawawala sa ating pinapaalala iyong tungkol sa pagbabakuna. So kung tayo ay nagpabakuna, nasa katawan na natin iyong depensa para malabanan na ang sakit at dagdagan pa natin ito nang ating pagsunod sa masking, ventilation, physical distancing and time of interaction. Malaking bagay na lahat ng ito ay magtulong-tulong para makaiwas tayo sa pagkakahawa sa COVID even as we resume face-to-face classes.

Maraming salamat.

VANZ FERNANDEZ/POLICE FILES: For the Department of Education, please. So far in the upcoming school year 2022 up to 2023 where face-to-face is to be expected, how much of the student population turned out to enroll for the upcoming school year and did the DepEd see a rise in the number of enrollees this school year because of the return of somewhat normal class conditions?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you, ma’am. Thank you for that question. So for the first question po, how many actually enrolled this year. Tuluy-tuloy pa rin po ang ating enrollment although the turnout is significantly higher than that of the previous years. As of today po, we already have 13.152 million enrollees or enrolled learners ‘no.

As to the turnout, noong first pa lang po napansin na natin that this was significantly higher because noong first day pa lang ng enrollment, nakapagtala po tayo ng 3.3 million as compared to last year’s first day enrollment na nasa 222,000 lang po. So it does appear from the trend that our learners are excited to go back to in-person classes na po, simply because marami din po sa ating mga learners na in previous years, wala rin po sigurong access sa remote learning like gadgets or internet po. Thank you po.

Could you repeat your second question? I’m sorry.

VANZ FERNANDEZ/POLICE FILES: Sir, the second question is: Did the DepEd see a rise in the number of enrollees in this school year because of the return of somewhat normal class conditions?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes, ma'am.

VANZ FERNANDEZ/POLICE FILES: Yes, you have answered that 'no. Pero can you try to elaborate pa kasi mayroong mga iba na, let's say ayaw magpabakuna and then hindi pa, let's say, wala pa silang booster – will you accept them also?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes, ma'am. We have a non-discriminatory policy at the Department of Education – meaning for both teaching/non-teaching personnel, as well as our learners themselves – we will not discriminate 'no. Hindi po tayo magdi-discriminate; wala pong separate guidelines for those that are vaccinated and those that are unvaccinated, so voluntary pa rin po ang pananaw natin sa vaccination.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Usec, nabanggit kahapon ni VP at Secretary Sara Duterte na 18 billion ang kailangan natin para maisaayos ang mga sira pa ring mga paaralan and may dumagdag pa na 1.4 billion na nasira naman from last week's earthquake. Question number one: Mayroon po ba tayong pondo para rito? And, pangalawa: Realistically, how many of these classrooms can we repair in time for school opening next month?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you, sir. I just wanted to correct, I'm not an Undersecretary, I'm the Spokesperson of DepEd but I occupy the title of Director IV for their Public Affairs Service.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Okay. Sorry, I stand corrected.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes. Thank you, sir.

Iyong numbers po ng ano 'no ... doon sa mga kailangan nating budget para maisagawa iyong mga nasirang eskuwela, so basically doon po sa mga—kasi we're not just counting the earthquake, pati po noong ... iyong immediate lang po – 2021 to early 2022 – iyong mga Typhoon Odette and Agaton ready amounted to 16 billion. We add pa po the, now still increasing number kasi day-by-day po, iyong sa earthquake natin nagpapalit po iyong number of schools na may damage. Right now, we are at 1.4 to 1.7 billion I think it's the latest number but that's unverified so we'll stick with 1.480 'no billion. So in total, talagang nasa 18 billion po iyong kakailanganin natin.

Now, can we put them up in time? What we are looking at now po from the Department of Education side is quick intervention. So, what does that mean? Nandoon po tayo sa pagtatayo ng mga temporary learning spaces natin. So, ito po iyong spaces made out of light materials; pero may bubong po ito, para safe naman po mag-aral ang ating mga learners.

How long does it take to put up temporary learning spaces? Yesterday, I was informed that the fastest will be around three days po, nagagawa nila iyan. Secondly, we're also looking at

available spaces. So, we're coordinating with the LGUs, the barangays kung mayroon pong mahahanap na mga lugar na hindi naman po nagagamit sa ngayon, baka puwedeng gamitin ng ating learners.

As to the reconstruction of the schools, of course, that would definitely take time and we are asking for the necessary budget. We've already asked for P16 billion from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). But, again, the numbers keep on growing pa rin po, so that's why yesterday the Vice President/Secretary of Education said that we are in a sort of a quicksand kasi hindi pa tapos iyong problema from the past, nadadagdagan nang nadadagdagan siya and talagang may budget deficit doon sa pagpapagawa.

So right now, we are focusing po, aside from asking for additional budget from the DBM, we are focusing on quick interventions para po hindi maantala iyong pag-aaral ng ating mga learners.

IVAN MAYRINA/GMA7: Salamat.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you po.

OPS ASEC. DESIGNATE DE VERA: Atty. Poa, Kris Jose from Remate. Good afternoon, ma'am.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Hello, Sir. Sinabi ninyo po ready na po iyong DepEd for the opening of the classes. May nakikita po ba kayong magiging problema in the future para ma-postpone iyong opening ng klase?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Sa ngayon po, talagang desidido tayo at ang direksiyon talaga natin is i-open iyong classes. Just for additional information, just to put things in the proper context 'no, last school year, we were informed that more than 76% of our schools have already implemented in-person or face-to-face and that number gives us confidence na at least karamihan po talaga sa schools [ay] may kakayahan na.

Ang nakikita lang talaga nating problema now is iyong mga naapektuhan nitong lindol at pati na rin po iyong mga schools na hindi pa rin nagagawa simula pa noong Typhoon Odette. So, those are the things we're a bit worried about, but again, we do have plans, we do have a strategy and we're confident na tuluy-tuloy po tayo sa August 22, ma'am.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Wala na pong additional marching order from the President, sir?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Sa ngayon po, I'm not aware 'no but he's very bent on really returning to face-to-face po as we've heard from the SONA. So, iyon po ang mandato na ibinigay sa amin at iyon po talaga iyong ginagawan namin ng paraan at lahat ng efforts namin nandoon nakatutok.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: For DOH lang po.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Hello, ma'am. Good afternoon po.

DR. ONG-LIM: Good afternoon.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Iri-require ninyo po ba iyong mga teachers, iyong mga personnel ng mga schools na mag-antigen weekly or RT-PCR para na rin po sa kaligtasan ng mga estudyante?

DR. ONG-LIM: So, let me also clarify 'no. I'm not with the Department of Health in an official capacity. I'm an external resource person with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

So, I can give you the science behind it but the policy will have to be discussed within the department. So, I would say that hindi naman natin ever naging direction iyong testing before assuming a function. Hindi ba, kahit naman tayo in our private capacity in our office, that was being discouraged kasi kung tutuusin, kung mag-test man tayo, that's only good for that instance. A few minutes from that point kung na-expose man tayo, mayroon tayong nakasalubong na may sakit, puwede na ring hindi valid iyong test na iyon.

So, actually, what I'd like to share also for the public and also for you guys, 'di ba, I'm sure you have families, with kids and they need to go back to school, ano ba ang dapat gawin? Ang dapat na nasa mindset natin actually is papaano ko ba maiiwasan iyong worst case scenario which is ma-expose ako sa isang positive case in the school whether that's a student or a staff member.

So, papaano nga ba? I'm sure alam na alam na natin ito lahat. Unang-una kung bakunado ka, substantially, lower iyong case mo. Pangalawa, if all your interactions happened as mass encounters in a well-ventilated place – sana may physical distancing kung kaya pa – hindi ka maa-identify as a close contact at kung hindi ka maa-identify as a close contact, hindi ka kailangan mag-quarantine.

So, it's a very simple algorithm, but I think people are medyo overwhelmed by the number of things that they think they have to do but in fact iyon lang iyong kailangan mong sundin na steps: How do avoid becoming a close contact? If you can answer that then you'll be fine.

KRIS JOSE/REMATE: Thank you, ma'am.

OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA: Any more questions for Atty. Poa? Rose Novenario?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Good afternoon po, Ma'am Rose.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Good afternoon, sir. Sir, mayroon po bang sapat na health facilities ang mga paaralan katulad po ng school clinic with nurse or health worker bilang paghahanda doon sa face-to-face classes sa panahon ng pandemya?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes, ma'am. Iyan po ang isa sa mga targets ng ating Brigada Eskwela this year. Kailangan nating siguraduhin na kahit iyong mga basic lang po, wala pa nga po tayo doon sa clinic, iyong mga wash basins lang po ng mga schools, siguradong may station sila para maghugas ng mga kamay. Sinisigurado po natin lahat-lahat iyan and we are

coordinating with the LGUs para doon naman po sa mga clinics, health facilities ng ating mga schools.

So, iyan po ang isa sa talagang hangad ng Brigada Eskwela na masigurado iyong minimum health and safety standards ay maipatutupad talaga po natin sa mga schools natin.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Sir, kahit po doon sa mga liblib na lugar – kasi sa mga bulubundukin, may mga remote schools doon – handa rin po ba sila?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Opo. We are coordinating with the regional offices and field offices, in fact, kahapon nagkaroon kami ng special meeting about that. They are supposed to give us data; pinagawa na po ang ating mga regional directors ng matrix para malaman natin kung nasaan ba iyong mga may gaps.

So, kung mayroon tayong mga schools na kulang sa ganiyang health facilities, kulang sa classrooms, ibibigay po sa matrix para po makapag-intervene kaagad ang Department of Education at alam natin kung saan natin ilalagay iyong pondo natin for quick intervention.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Thank you, sir.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you po.

OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA: Atty. Poa, we have a question from Joyce Balancio of ABS-CBN: Nananawagan ang public schools na ginagamit na quarantine facility na kung puwedeng tanggalin na iyong tent sa kanila kasi nag-aalala iyong parents at hindi napapanatag during enrollment. Nakadepende raw sa LGU ang utos pero, will DepEd support removal of quarantine facilities in public schools?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes, sir. In fact, in preparation for the opening of the schools, although we don't have the number right now; in fact, we are asking for the numbers na kung ilan ba talaga iyong schools na ginagamit pa ring quarantine facility. But we are trying to coordinate with the LGUs to make sure na ma-clear out po natin ang mga ito para makapagbalik-eskwela po tayo sa August 22.

OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA: Dennis Jamito?

DENNIS JAMITO/BOMBO RADYO: Sir, Dennis Jamito from Bombo Radyo.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Good afternoon po.

DENNIS JAMITO/BOMBO RADYO: Director, na-check din po ba natin iyong mga teachers natin doon sa kanilang preparations? Kasi, na-check iyong mga schools, na-check iyong mga estudyante, how about iyong mga teachers lalo na iyong nagsasabi na kulang sila sa pahinga tapos weeks na nagsasalita sila. Parang kulang pa iyong kanilang break. So, nagkaroon ba ng pag-uusap pa aside doon sa nakalipas na mga pagkakataon?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: I'm sure sa regional office level po eh ina-assess lahat po iyan 'no. Pero para ma-address po iyong question ninyo sa mga teachers na nagsasabi na kulang pa sa pahinga, we really understand that 'no. I'm sure pagod sila lalo na the past two years kasi nag-iba iyong mode of delivery natin ng ating mga lessons.

But what we're trying to do naman sa Department of Education – kasi kailangan talaga nating ituloy ang pasukan 'no, feeling po kasi namin overworked ang mga teachers natin. Hindi lang dahil sa teaching, iyong teaching kayang-kaya po talaga nila iyan, it's more of the admin tasks na nao-overwork sila kaya sila pagod na pagod – so, we're looking at reducing, utos na po ni Vice President/Secretary Sara Duterte iyan, reducing or eliminating totally iyong admin task nila.

Tapos sa paghahanda naman po nila, we will be rolling out reskilling and upskilling training programs po para sa kanila nang sa ganoon ay handa sila to teach, to go back to teaching.

Sa ngayon kasi, I think they're really overwhelmed with all the administrative tasks the they have to do. So, iyan po ang focus natin sa paghahanda sa kanila, i-reduce natin iyan.

OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA: Eden Santos, Net25?

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Sir, ano po iyong puwedeng gawin ng DepEd if in case po may mga guro, may mga estudyante na mag-positive sa COVID? Kasi alam naman po natin ngayon mahal talaga ang maospital [dahil] sa COVID, iyong mga swab test. Papaano po natin sila matutulungan para naman po ma-ease iyong burden sa kanila in case na sila po ay mag-positive sa COVID – estudyante po at saka mga teachers?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes. Sa ganiyan po, of course, sa atin mayroon tayo sa DO No. 34, hindi na nila kailangang pumasok obviously kapag ganiyang nag-positive. But I think doon sa pagtulong sa kanila, we will have to coordinate talaga po with the LGU and PhilHealth 'no, para matulungan po sila lalo na iyong mga teachers, sa PhilHealth po tayo.

But kami naman po, ang utos talaga ng Vice President lalung-lalo na sa COVID is that makikipag-ugnayan kami sa DOH, tulad ng sinabi ko kanina, para sa counseling at para sa vaccination para iyong risk nila na makakuha ng COVID ay maibsan at mabawasan din po.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: So, in case po na mag-positive sila sa COVID sa panahon ng kanilang pagganap ng tungkulin sa paaralan nila ay wala pong sasagutin iyong DepEd sa anumang tulong na maibibigay, bukod doon sa PhilHealth at saka po iyong binabanggit ninyo kanina?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Sa amin naman po kasi sa benefits nila bilang empleyado po ng DepEd, they will have their leaves and their allowances. But, in terms iyong makakatulong talaga, unfortunately, we will have to relay this to the PhilHealth and also to the local government units, para matulungan din po sila.

EDEN SANTOS/NET25: Ano po iyong magiging guidelines ng DepEd para doon sa mga teachers, mga teaching and non-teaching personnel po, kagaya ng sinabi ni Ma'am na hindi naman talaga – kung science ang pagbabatayan – iyong antigen testing is not accurate the whole

day or what. Magpapatupad po ba tayo ng weekly antigen test sa mga teacher at saka sa mga estudyante?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Sa ngayon po, wala pa tayong ganiyang guidelines. Wala po akong information kung magro-rollout tayo ng ganiyang guidelines. Sa ngayon po, talagang ang ino-observe lang po natin ayon sa DO #34 is iyong minimum health and safety standards. Kasi nga po kung tutuusin, tama po si Doc. Ong ‘no, na iyong antigen test is really just as good as that moment that you take it.

ACE ROMERO/PHIL. STAR: Director, itanong ko lang kung magdi-deploy ng mobile vaccination sites sa mga schools, mayroon kasing initial proposals about that, so matutuloy ba iyon?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes, sir. Pero hindi po, DepEd. Actually, it’s good that you asked that question, kasi may lumabas po na article, that DepEd will be rolling out mobile vaccination. The clearer answer to that is that, DepEd will coordinate with the Department of Health at sila po iyong magro-roll out. Kumbaga hihingi po kami ng tulong sa Department of Health, para po doon sa pagkatapos nating mag-counseling – kasi gusto nating regular iyong counseling doon sa mga unvaccinated, hinihikayat po talaga natin na magpa-vaccinate – once, pumayag po sila, we will ask help from the DOH para po mag-rollout tayo ng mobile vaccination para sa kanilang convenience rin po.

ACE ROMERO/PHIL. STAR: So, nationwide. Lahat po ba ng paaralan, magkakaroon ng ganoon?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes po. That is the aim. That’s why it’s the regional offices talking to their counterpart regional DOH offices din po.

ACE ROMERO/PHIL. STAR: Salamat po.

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Thank you po.

MICHELLE GUILLANG/DAILY TRIBUNE: Good afternoon, Director. I’m Michelle from Daily Tribune. Since you have mentioned that Vice President Sara Duterte asked DepEd to reduce the administrative task of our overworked teachers, so what is the DepEd planning to do with the administrative task that has to be accomplished? Is the DepEd hiring more employees to accomplish this?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Yes, ma’am. That is the only solution to that, really ‘no. We will be hiring non-teaching staff to complement and supplement the workload of the current teachers to enable the teachers to really just focus on teaching and learning.

MICHELLE GUILLANG/DAILY TRIBUNE: How many employees are we talking about?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Wala pa pong numbers sa ngayon. Hindi pa po napag-uusapan because what we have right now are general directions, so [unclear] the plan to

implement them as soon as possible. But once we have the exact numbers, we will make a public statement. Because also the DepEd, under the instructions of the Vice President/Secretary of Education, I will have a joint presser, joint presscon with the OVP po weekly po. So, I'm sure, we will give you updates as they come po.

MICHELLE GUILLANG/DAILY TRIBUNE: You also mentioned, sir there will be counseling for unvaccinated teaching personnel and non-teaching personnel as well as for the students. Paano po iyon, paano po itong counseling na ito? Will it be a one-time session?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Actually, that is something that I am sure, the DOH would be in the best position to answer. But the idea is to have regular counseling sessions to, well, finally encourage and convince the unvaccinated to get vaccinated. Kasi ang problema rin natin ngayon is of course, iba iyong religious beliefs, iba po iyon. Pero iyong karamihan kasi, takot lang din sa mga naririnig nila tungkol sa vaccines. So, counseling is targeted towards that na ma-convince po sila, that it's safe to get vaccinated and hopefully they decide to get vaccinated.

MICHELLE GUILLANG/DAILY TRIBUNE: Sir, what do you tell the parents na nakakarinig ng stories na there were, may reported deaths daw, dahil sa children naba-vaccinate?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Ma'am, I think, it's the Department of Health and the counselors themselves who will be in the best position to talk to them. The DepEd will not pretend to be experts in that and we will not be the ones counseling them. But, thank you po.

MICHELLE GUILLANG/DAILY TRIBUNE: Thank you, sir.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Hi, sir. Sir, may plano po ba iyong DepEd na idagdag sa curriculum iyong diskusyon o pagtalakay tungkol sa pandemya, dahil hindi lang naman po siguro ito iyong – I hope not 'no – hindi ito iyong huling makakaranas tayo ng pandemya. Para po mas maunawaan ng mga mag-aaral?

DEPED SPOKESPERSON ATTY. POA: Maganda pong suggestion iyan, ma'am. Right now, wala pa kasing specifics kung ano ang idagdag sa curriculum. But we are currently reviewing po iyong K-to-12; iyong K-to-12, tapos na po siya ng previous admin. We are reviewing the curriculum for [Grade] 11 to 12. But, thank you po for that, we will definitely put that into consideration, ma'am. Maraming Salamat po.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Thank you, sir.

OPS ASEC-DESIGNATE DE VERA: Thank you, Atty. Poa and Dr. Lim.

Secretary Trixie will accept three.

SEC. ANGELES: Ako ay tatanggap lang po ng katanungan kung mayroon po.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Hi, Sec. Good afternoon. Si Atty. Kristina Conti, iyong abogado ng mga victims and survivors po ng Duterte drug war, ang sabi po niya ay isang terrible mistake iyong pasya ni Pangulong Marcos na hindi mag-rejoin the ICC and at the same time, dapat daw pong maging handa ang administrasyon para sa inaasahang political impact nito lalo na po sa international community?

SEC. ANGELES: Normally po, hindi kami nagri-react diyan. Ang hindi natin pagbabalik doon sa ICC ay isyu ng soberenya. At sa kasalukuyan, iniimbestigahan naman po ang mga reklamo ukol doon sa mga namamatay during the drug war. Kung kaya't hindi nangangailangan pang tumugon sa ICC o bumalik ang ating bansa sa Rome Statute.

So, naiintindihan natin na ang mga biktima ay may hinaing, ngunit bukas po ang ating mga hukuman at ang proseso ng hustisya para sa kanilang hinaing.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Ma'am, kaugnay nito, may direktiba ba si President Marcos na pabilisin o madaliin ng mga hukuman iyong kanilang paglilitis or may direktiba ba sa DOJ na madaliin iyong pag-usad ng kaso?

SEC. ANGELES: Bahagi po ng ating proseso ang mabilis na paglilitis, lalung-lalo na doon sa mga kriminal na kaso. So, hindi na po kailangang magbigay ng direktiba ang Pangulo. Bahagi na po iyon ng sistema ng hustisya.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: In case po na hindi naging ganoon kabilis iyong sistema ng hustisya?

SEC. ANGELES: Ang magsasabi po kasi niyan, ang hukuman. Kapag ang isyu ay nahaharap na sa mahistrado, sila na po ang maghahatol kung ito ay nasa tamang panahon o proseso o kung naaangkop pa iyong time period para doon sa paglilitis ng kaso.

ROSE NOVENARIO/HATAW: Okay, ma'am. Thank you.

MICHELLE GUILLANG/DAILY TRIBUNE: Good afternoon po, Secretary Trixie. May question po is about the Sabah Case. Members of the Sultanate of Sulu have expressed hope that President Bongbong Marcos's statement during the SONA that he would not relinquish Philippine territory, would include Sabah. They recall that when the President was still a senator, he strongly advocated for the revival of the Philippine sovereignty over Sabah. May we know po, the current position of President Marcos on this, after we know po, a fresh arbitral court granted 14.9 billion dollars in compensation to the heirs of the Sultanate representing Malaysia's unpaid leases.

SEC. ANGELES: From what I understand, the case is in the nature a private claim by the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu with Malaysia. Therefore, it is not an issue of sovereignty or of territory at the moment. However, the President's articulation of his statement about not giving up a square inch of territory will have to be reduced into writing and into specifics. After which, we will announce this to you if they are in any way related to the Sabah claim. At the moment, wala pa pong articulation. So, we will have to wait.

EDEN SUAREZ/NET 25: Ma'am, regarding lang po doon sa 4.1 billion pesos po na special aid na through DSWD's TCT, iyong Targeted Cash Assistance. Ito po ba ay hiwalay na ayuda sa ating mga mahihirap na pamilya bukod doon sa 4Ps? And paano po ito idi-distribute at kailan sisimulan?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Ito ay katanungan po para sa ating Kalihim ng DSWD, so hintayin po natin iyong pagsasaad niya ng kaniyang polisiya ukol dito.

EDEN SUAREZ/NET25: Pero, Ma'am, 'di ho ba ano naman iyon kinonfirm (confirmed) naman ni PBBM na he will continue po iyong ayuda na ito na sinimulan po under the Duterte Administration?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Kung kaya't ang pagsasaad niyan at pagsasabuhay niyan, pag-execute niyan ay nandoon pa rin sa Kalihim ng DSWD. So, hintayin po natin kung mayroon po siyang babaguhin o kung itutuloy nang parehung-pareho lang doon sa dati.

EDEN SUAREZ/NET25: But we have ano iyon pong funds para dito, mayroon na po tayong mapagkukunan ng pondo?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Sa ngayon iyong doon sa natitira, iyon po iyong ginagamit nila.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Secretary, good afternoon po.

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Magandang hapon.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Senator Escudero urged the President to appoint PLLO Secretary para daw ma-avoid na iyong ano the so-called bill vetoing-spree. Any reaction from the Palace?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Mayroon naman pong kinukonsidera para doon, hindi lang po natin ilalabas pa. So, hihintayin po natin; hindi naman naipagkakaila iyan.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: With regards to the appointment, Secretary, any update po regarding doon sa appointment ng mga nasa attached agencies ng DOJ?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Kung mayroon na po?

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Kung mayroon na po doon sa mga attached agencies?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Wala pa po tayong ina-announce.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Salamat po, Sec.

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Maliban lang doon sa acting 'no ng Customs, 'di ba matagal na nating na-announce iyon. So, iyon pa lang po sa ngayon.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: How about the Department of Health, Secretary?

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Natalaga pa lang po na OIC si Usec. Vergeire. So, hihintayin po natin.

ALVIN BALTAZAR/RADYO PILIPINAS: Thank you po, Sec.

SEC. CRUZ-ANGELES: Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat.

OPS ASEC.-DESIGNATE DE VERA: Thank you very much, Malacañang Press Corps.

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