Rodrigo Duterte Philippine President

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*"Duterte" redirects here. For others with the surname, see*[*Duterte (surname)*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duterte_%28surname%29)*.*

*"DU30" redirects here. For his presidential campaign which used "DU30" as his stylized campaign name, see*[*Rodrigo Duterte presidential campaign, 2016*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodrigo_Duterte_presidential_campaign%2C_2016)*.*

*In this*[*Philippine name*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_name)*, the*[*middle name*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_name)*or maternal*[*family name*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surname)*is*Roa*and the surname or paternal family name is*Duterte*.*

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| **Rodrigo Duterte** |
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| **16th**[**President of the Philippines**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_Philippines) |
| [**Incumbent**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incumbent) |
| **Assumed office**June 30, 2016 |
| **Vice President** | [Leni Robredo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leni_Robredo) |
| **Preceded by** | [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III) |
| [**Mayor of Davao City**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayor_of_Davao_City) |
| **In office**June 30, 2013 – June 30, 2016 |
| **Vice Mayor** | [Paolo Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paolo_Duterte) |
| **Preceded by** | [Sara Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) |
| **Succeeded by** | Sara Duterte |
| **In office**June 30, 2001 – June 30, 2010 |
| **Vice Mayor** | Luis BonguyanSara Duterte |
| **Preceded by** | Benjamin de Guzman |
| **Succeeded by** | Sara Duterte |
| **In office**February 2, 1988 – March 19, 1998 |
| **Vice Mayor** | Dominador Zuño (Acting)Luis BonguyanBenjamin de Guzman |
| **Preceded by** | Jacinto Rubillar |
| **Succeeded by** | Benjamin de Guzman |
| [**Vice Mayor of Davao City**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayor_of_Davao_City#Vice_Mayor_of_Davao_City) |
| **In office**June 30, 2010 – June 30, 2013 |
| **Mayor** | [Sara Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) |
| **Preceded by** | [Sara Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) |
| **Succeeded by** | [Paolo Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paolo_Duterte) |
| **In office**May 2, 1986 – November 27, 1987Officer in Charge |
| **Mayor** | Zafiro Respicio |
| **Preceded by** | Cornelio Maskariño |
| **Succeeded by** | Gilbert Abellera |
| **Member of the**[**Philippine House of Representatives**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Representatives_of_the_Philippines)**from**[**Davao City**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_City)**'s**[**1st**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislative_districts_of_Davao_City#1st_District)**district** |
| **In office**June 30, 1998 – June 30, 2001 |
| **Preceded by** | [Prospero Nograles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prospero_Nograles) |
| **Succeeded by** | [Prospero Nograles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prospero_Nograles) |
| **Personal details** |
| **Born** | Rodrigo Roa DuterteMarch 28, 1945 (age 72)[Maasin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasin), [Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Philippine_Republic) |
| **Political party** | [PDP-Laban](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PDP%E2%80%93Laban) (2001-present) |
| **Other politicalaffiliations** | Kabataang Makabayan (1970s)[Laban ng Makabayang Masang Pilipino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laban_ng_Makabayang_Masang_Pilipino) (1998-2001)[Hugpong sa Tawong Lungsod](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugpong_sa_Tawong_Lungsod)(2011–present) |
| **Spouse(s)** | [Elizabeth Zimmerman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Zimmerman) (m. 1973;ann. 2000) |
| **Domestic partner** | [Honeylet Avanceña](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honeylet_Avance%C3%B1a) |
| **Children** | 4, including [Paolo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paolo_Duterte) and [Sara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) |
| **Parents** | [Vicente Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicente_Duterte)[Soledad Roa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soledad_Duterte) |
| **Residence** | [Bahay Pagbabago](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1ang_Palace#Buildings)  |
| [**Alma mater**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alma_mater) | [Lyceum of the Philippines University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyceum_of_the_Philippines_University)[San Beda College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Beda_College) |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Website** | [Official website](http://president.gov.ph/) |

**Rodrigo** "**Rody**" **Roa Duterte** (Tagalog: [[roˈdɾigo dʊˈtɛrtɛ]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/Tagalog); born March 28, 1945), also known as **Digong**, is a [Filipino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filipinos) [lawyer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawyer) and politician who is the [16th](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_Philippines) and current President. He is the first [Mindanaoan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindanao) to hold the office. At 71 years old, Duterte is the [oldest person to assume the Philippine presidency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_Philippines_by_longevity); the record was previously held by [Sergio Osmeña](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergio_Osme%C3%B1a) at the age of 65.

Duterte studied [political science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_science) at the [Lyceum of the Philippines University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyceum_of_the_Philippines_University), graduating in 1968, before obtaining a [law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law) degree from [San Beda College of Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Beda_College_of_Law) in 1972. He then worked as a lawyer and was a prosecutor for [Davao City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_City), a [highly urbanized city](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cities_of_the_Philippines#Legal_classification) on [Mindanao island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindanao), before becoming [vice mayor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_Mayor_of_Davao_City) and, subsequently, [mayor of the city](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayor_of_Davao_City) in the wake of the [Philippine Revolution of 1986](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People_Power_Revolution). Duterte was among the longest-serving mayors in the [Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), serving seven terms and totaling more than 22 years in office.

Duterte's political success has been aided by his vocal support for the [extrajudicial killing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extrajudicial_killing) of [drug users](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drug_user) and other criminals. Human rights groups have documented over 1,400 killings allegedly by [death squads](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_squad) operating in Davao between 1998 and May 2016; the victims were mainly drug users, petty criminals and [street children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children_in_the_Philippines). A 2009 report by the Philippine [Commission on Human Rights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commission_on_Human_Rights_%28Philippines%29) confirmed the "systematic practice of extrajudicial killings" by the [Davao Death Squad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_Death_Squad). Duterte has alternately confirmed and denied his involvement. The [Office of the Ombudsman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ombudsman_of_the_Philippines) closed an investigation in January 2016 stating that they found no evidence that the Davao Death Squad exists, and no evidence to connect the police or Duterte with the killings. The case has since been reopened. Duterte has repeatedly confirmed that he personally killed three kidnapping suspects at a police checkpoint while Mayor of Davao in 1988.

On May 9, 2016, Duterte won the [Philippine presidential election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_presidential_election%2C_2016) with 39.01% of the votes, defeating four other candidates, namely [Mar Roxas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar_Roxas) of the [Liberal Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberal_Party_%28Philippines%29)(23.4%), [Sen. Grace Poe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grace_Poe) of the [Nationalist People's Coalition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalist_People%27s_Coalition) (21.6%), former vice president [Jejomar Binay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jejomar_Binay) of the [United Nationalist Alliance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nationalist_Alliance) (12.9%), and the late [Sen. Miriam Defensor - Santiago](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miriam_Defensor_Santiago) of the [People's Reform Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Reform_Party) (3%). During his campaign, he promised to reduce crime by killing tens of thousands of criminals. His domestic policy has focused on combating the [illegal drug trade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illegal_drug_trade_in_the_Philippines) by unleashing a [deadly crackdown](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Drug_War) on the suspected sale and use of drugs. According to the [Philippine National Police](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_National_Police) the death total passed 7,000 in January 2017, after which the police stopped publishing data. Following criticism from [United Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) human rights experts that extrajudicial killings had increased since his election, he [threatened to withdraw the Philippines from the UN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Withdrawal_from_the_United_Nations#Philippine_withdrawal) and form a new organization with China and African nations. He has also declared his intention to pursue an "independent foreign policy", and sought to distance the Philippines from the United States and European nations and pursue closer ties with China and Russia.

Early life

Duterte was born on March 28, 1945, in [Maasin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maasin). His maternal grandfather was a [Chinese immigrant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_immigrant) from [Xiamen, Fujian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xiamen%2C_Fujian). His father was [Vicente G. Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicente_Duterte) (1911–1968), a [Cebuano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebuano_people) lawyer, and his mother, [Soledad Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soledad_Roa-Duterte) ([née](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%A9e) Roa; 1916–2012), was a school teacher from [Cabadbaran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabadbaran), [Agusan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agusan_del_Norte) and a civic leader of Marana descent. Duterte's father was mayor of [Danao, Cebu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danao%2C_Cebu), and subsequently the provincial governor of (the then-undivided) [Davao province](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_%28province%29). Rodrigo's cousin Ronald was mayor of [Cebu City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebu_City) from 1983 to 1986. Ronald's father, Ramon Duterte, also held the position from 1957 to 1959. The Dutertes consider the Cebu-based families of the Durano and the Almendras clan as relatives. Duterte also has relatives from the Roa clan in Leyte through his mother's side. Duterte's family lived in Maasin, and in his father's hometown in Danao, until he was four years old. The Dutertes initially moved to [Mindanao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindanao) in 1948 but still went back and forth to the Visayas until 1949. They finally settled in the [Davao Region](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_Region) in 1950. Vicente worked as a lawyer engaged in private practice. Soledad worked as a teacher until 1952 when Vicente entered politics.

**Education**

Duterte went to Laboon Elementary School in Maasin, for a year. He spent his remaining elementary days at the Santa Ana Elementary School in [Davao City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_City), where he graduated in 1956. He finished his secondary education in the High School Department of the then Holy Cross College of Digos (now [Cor Jesu College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cor_Jesu_College)) in today's city of [Digos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digos) in the now defunct [Davao province](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_%28province%29), after being expelled twice from previous schools, including one in [Ateneo de Davao University (AdDU) High School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ateneo_de_Davao_University#High_School) due to misconduct. He graduated in 1968 with a [Bachelor of Arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachelor_of_Arts) degree in [political science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_science) at the [Lyceum of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyceum_of_the_Philippines_University) in Manila. He obtained a law degree from [San Beda College of Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Beda_College_of_Law) in 1972. In the same year, he passed the bar exam. Duterte eventually became Special Counsel at the City Prosecution Office in Davao City from 1977–79, Fourth Assistant City Prosecutor from 1979–81, Third Assistant City Prosecutor from 1981–83, and Second Assistant City Prosecutor from 1983–86.

**Abuse**

Duterte has said that he was [sexually abused by a priest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church_sexual_abuse_cases) when he was a minor. After he was challenged by the [Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Bishops%27_Conference_of_the_Philippines) (CBCP) and AdDU officials to name the priest and file a case against him, Duterte then revealed the priest's name as Fr. Mark Falvey, SJ (d. 1975). The [Jesuits of the Society of Jesus in the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society_of_Jesus) confirmed that according to press reports in the United States, in May 2007, the Society of Jesus agreed to a tentative payout of USD16 million to settle claims that Falvey sexually abused at least nine children in [Los Angeles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles) from 1959 to 1975. Accusations against Falvey began in 2002 and he was never charged with a crime. Additionally in May 2008, the [Diocese of Sacramento](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Sacramento) paid $100,000 settlement to a person allegedly raped and molested by Mark's brother, Fr. Arthur Falvey. However, it was not clearly indicated in the report if Mark Falvey was assigned at the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Davao. When asked why he didn't complain when the abuse supposedly happened, Duterte claimed that he was too young to complain about the priest's abuse and was intimidated by authorities at that time. He also stated that he never disclosed that information after he was expelled and moved to a different high school and especially not to his family.

**Shooting of student at law school**

Duterte stated at a rally in April 2016 that he shot a fellow student who had bullied him about his Visayan origin as well as other students of the same ethnicity, while at San Beda law college. He said "But the truth is, I'm used to shooting people. When we were about to graduate from San Beda, I shot a person." Duterte said that he shot the student in a corridor at the college when the said student called him names again. He later told a reporter that the student survived, but refused to answer any further questions about the incident.

Mayor of Davao City

*See also:*[*1989 Davao hostage crisis*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1989_Davao_hostage_crisis)

Duterte (left) with President [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III) during a meeting with local government unit leaders in Davao City in 2013

After the 1986 [People Power Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People_Power_Revolution), Duterte was appointed officer-in-charge vice mayor by president [Corazon Aquino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corazon_Aquino). In 1988, he ran for mayor and won, serving until 1998. He set a precedent by designating deputy mayors that represented the [Lumad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lumad_peoples) and [Moro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_people) peoples in the city government, which was later copied in other parts of the Philippines. In 1998, because he was term-limited to run again for mayor, he ran for the House of Representatives and won as Congressman of the 1st District of Davao City (under the [Laban ng Makabayang Masang Pilipino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laban_ng_Makabayang_Masang_Pilipino) coalition). In 2001, he ran again for mayor in Davao and was again elected for his fourth term. He was re-elected in 2004 and in 2007.

In 2013, Davao City sent rescue and medical teams to [Tacloban](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tacloban) to give aid to the victims of [Typhoon Haiyan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typhoon_Haiyan_%28Yolanda%29), locally known in the country as Typhoon Yolanda. Financial assistance was also given to [Bohol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bohol) and [Cebu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebu_province) for the earthquake victims.

In 2010, he was elected vice mayor, succeeding his daughter, [Sara Duterte-Carpio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte-Carpio), who was elected as mayor. He has been offered the [Interior Secretary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_the_Interior_and_Local_Government_%28Philippines%29) post 4 times, by presidents [Fidel V. Ramos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidel_V._Ramos), [Joseph Ejercito Estrada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Ejercito_Estrada), [Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Macapagal-Arroyo), and [Benigno S. Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_S._Aquino_III) but rejected all of them.

Duterte also passed the city's Women Development Code, which aims "to uphold the rights of women and the belief in their worth and dignity as human beings". Duterte banned swimsuit competitions in beauty pageants in Davao City. Duterte also gained prominence for supporting the first-ever [Gawad Kalinga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gawad_Kalinga) Village inside a jail facility which is only located in Davao City. It is a home-type jail with ten cottages built inside the compound, which now serve as home for women inmates.

**Law and order**

Davao has the highest murder rate and the second highest rape rate in the country, according to official police data for the years 2010 to 2015. Nevertheless, Duterte claims that the city is one of the world's safest, a narrative that gained currency in the national media, creating a widespread public perception that has been a significant factor in establishing support for his [nationwide drug policy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Drug_War).

[Prostitution in the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostitution_in_the_Philippines) is illegal. In Davao, by city ordinance, police ensure that prostitutes have a valid health card, but do not arrest them. In 2010, the Philippine Child Protection Unit stated that Davao was one of the top five areas for [child prostitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_prostitution) and [sex tourism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_tourism) in the Philippines. Jeanette Ampog, the executive director of [Talikala](http://talikala.net/), a Davao-based [NGO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NGO) that helps prostitutes, said in October 2016 that child prostitution had sharply increased over the past two years. She said that children were cheaper and more marketable.

Through the support of Duterte, the City Council amended ordinance No. 1627, Series of 1994, to impose a prohibition on selling, serving, drinking and consuming alcoholic beverages from 01:00 until 08:00 each morning. Executive Order No. 39 was signed by Duterte, reducing the speed limits for all kinds of motor vehicles within the territorial jurisdiction of Davao City in the interest of public safety and order. Duterte also signed Executive Order No. 04, Series of 2013 to impose an order creating the implementing of rules and regulations for the new comprehensive anti-smoking ordinance no. 0367-12, Series of 2012. Davao City’s Firecracker was also implemented with ordinance No. 060-02/1406-02, Series of 2002 by the City Council through the support of Duterte.

Another known accomplishment was that the City Government of Davao was able to acquire 10 more ambulances for [central 911](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/9-1-1) intended for medical emergencies and 42 new mobile patrol vehicles and motorcycles for the Davao City Police Office (the first and only 9-1-1 [emergency telephone number](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emergency_telephone_number) in [Asia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia) which is also free of charge). Duterte, through Executive Order No. 24, ordered all shopping malls and commercial centers to install, operate and maintain high end and high definition closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras at all entrance and exit points of their premises

**Davao Death Squad**

*Further information:*[*Philippine Drug War § Senate committee*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Drug_War#Senate_committee)

We're the ninth safest city. How do you think I did it? How did I reach that title among the world’s safest cities? Kill them all [criminals].

— *Duterte, May 15, 2015*

Duterte, who has been dubbed "The Punisher" by [*Time*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_%28magazine%29) magazine, has been linked by human rights groups such as [Amnesty International](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amnesty_International) and [Human Rights Watch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Rights_Watch) to [extrajudicial killings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extrajudicial_killing) of over 1,400 alleged criminals and [street children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children_in_the_Philippines) by [vigilante](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigilante) [death squads](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_squad). In the April 2009 UN General Assembly of the Human Rights Council, the UN report (Eleventh Session Agenda item 3, par 21) said, "The Mayor of Davao City has done nothing to prevent these killings, and his public comments suggest that he is, in fact, supportive." Human Rights Watch reported that in 2001–2002, Duterte appeared on local television and radio and announced the names of "criminals", some of whom were later executed. In July 2005 at a crime summit at the [Manila Hotel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manila_Hotel), Duterte said, "Summary execution of criminals remains the most effective way to crush kidnapping and illegal drugs".

Duterte has denied responsibility for the extrajudicial killings. He has also frequently announced his support for them. According to Reuters, "Duterte's loud approval for hundreds of execution-style killings of drug users and criminals over nearly two decades helped propel him to the highest office of a crime-weary land." In 2009 Duterte said: "If you are doing an illegal activity in my city, if you are a criminal or part of a syndicate that preys on the innocent people of the city, for as long as I am the mayor, you are a legitimate target of assassination." In 2015, Duterte confirmed his links to extrajudicial killings in Davao, and warned that, if elected president, he may kill up to 100,000 criminals. After the said confirmation, Duterte challenged human rights officials to file a case against him if they could provide evidence to his links with vigilante groups.

**Federalism advocacy**

*Main article:*[*Federalism in the Philippines*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federalism_in_the_Philippines)

In September 2014, Duterte and former mayors and governors, calling themselves the Mindanao Council of Leaders, advocated for a federalist government. A month later, Duterte attended an event sponsored by the Federal Movement for a Better Philippines in [Cebu City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebu_City). In December 2014, Duterte held a summit entitled Mindanawons Forging Unity Toward a Federal System of Government.

2016 presidential campaign

*Main article:*[*Philippine presidential election, 2016*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_presidential_election%2C_2016)

*See also:*[*Rodrigo Duterte presidential campaign, 2016*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodrigo_Duterte_presidential_campaign%2C_2016)

Duterte and Cayetano in a motorcade in [Valenzuela](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valenzuela%2C_Metro_Manila), March 10, 2016

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|  | **This section needs expansion**. You can help by [adding to it](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Rodrigo_Duterte&action=edit&section=). *(November 2016)* |

Duterte–Cayetano 2016 campaign logo

As early as the first quarter of 2015, Duterte made hints to the media of his intention to run for president in the 2016 elections. However, he denied these plans numerous times amidst clamor from his supporters for him to run.

In January, Duterte said he would abolish Congress if he chose to run for President and was elected. On November 21, in a private gathering with fraternity brothers from [San Beda College of Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Beda_College_of_Law), Duterte formally announced his presidential bid and also finally accepted [Alan Peter Cayetano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Peter_Cayetano)'s offer to be his running mate, and named his daughter, [Sara Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte), as his substitute for Mayor.

In his campaign, he said he would introduce a federal parliamentary form of government. He also promised to kill tens of thousands of criminals and eradicate crime in six months.

**Constitutional reform**

Rodrigo Duterte campaigned for [decentralization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decentralization) and a shift to federal government during the 2016 presidential election. In an October 2014 forum organized by *Federal Movement for a Better Philippines* in [Cebu City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebu_City) prior to joining the presidential race, the then mayor of Davao City called for the creation of two federal states for [Moro people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_people) as a solution to the problems besetting [Mindanao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindanao). Mayor Duterte said that [Nur Misuari](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nur_Misuari) and his [Moro National Liberation Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_National_Liberation_Front) don't see eye-to-eye with the [Moro Islamic Liberation Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_Islamic_Liberation_Front) which the administration of President [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III) had inked a peace deal with. He also said that the "template of the [Bangsamoro Basic Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangsamoro_Basic_Law) is federal," but what is granted to the Bangsamoro should also be granted to other Moro groups and other regions in the country. In a dialogue with the [Makati Business Club](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Makati_Business_Club) prior to the elections, Duterte said he is open to "toning down the Constitution" in order to accommodate more foreign investors to the Philippines. He also said he is open to up to 70 percent foreign ownership of businesses in the country and foreign lease of lands up to 60 years, but will "leave it to Congress to decide."

**Rape comments**

*Further information:*[*Rodrigo Duterte presidential campaign, 2016 § Rape of an Australian missionary*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodrigo_Duterte_presidential_campaign%2C_2016#Rape_of_an_Australian_missionary)

At a campaign rally on April 12, 2016, Duterte told supporters that, as Mayor, he thought he "should have been first" to rape Jacqueline Hamill, an Australian missionary who was [gang-raped](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gang-rape) and killed during the [1989 Davao hostage crisis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1989_Davao_hostage_crisis). He recalled examining her corpse:

When the bodies were brought out, they were wrapped. I looked at her face, son of a bitch, she looks like a beautiful American actress. Son of a bitch, what a waste. What came to my mind was, they raped her, they lined up. Was I angry because she was raped? Yes, that's one thing. But she was so beautiful, I think the mayor should have been first. What a waste.

After being condemned for his comments, Duterte later apologized for the incident and acknowledged the comment as a "bad remark" saying he regretted his "gutter language" but would not apologize for being misinterpreted. He insists though that the remark was not a "joke" as reported by some media outlets, saying that he stated it in a narrative. He further said that he was not apologizing for stating the remark reasoning that he made the remark out of "utter anger" when he recalled the events. He threatened to sever diplomatic ties with the US and Australia, if elected, after their ambassadors criticized his comments.

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His daughter [Sara Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) subsequently announced on social media that she was a [rape victim](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape_victim), but would still vote for her father. He said that he doubted her story, jokingly referring to her as a "drama queen".

**Human rights**

In a campaign speech on April 27 to business leaders, he said his presidency would be "a bloody one", but that he would issue "a thousand pardons a day" to police and soldiers accused of human rights abuses, and would also issue a presidential pardon to himself for mass murder at the end of his six-year term.

**Election to the Presidency**

On May 30, 2016, the [16th Congress of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/16th_Congress_of_the_Philippines) proclaimed Duterte as the [President-elect of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_Philippines) after he topped the [official count](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congressional_canvass_for_the_Philippine_presidential_election%2C_2016) by the [Congress of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congress_of_the_Philippines) for the [2016 presidential election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_presidential_election%2C_2016) with 16,601,997 votes, 6.6 million more than his closest rival, [Mar Roxas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar_Roxas). [Camarine Sur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camarines_Sur) representative [Leni Robredo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leni_Robredo) on the other hand, was proclaimed as the [Vice President-elect of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vice_President_of_the_Philippines) with 14,418,817 votes, narrowly defeating Senator [Bongbong Marcos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bongbong_Marcos) by 263,473 votes.

Presidency

*Main article:*[*Presidency of Rodrigo Duterte*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidency_of_Rodrigo_Duterte)

*See also:*[*Presidential transition of Rodrigo Duterte*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidential_transition_of_Rodrigo_Duterte)*and*[*Inauguration of Rodrigo Duterte*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inauguration_of_Rodrigo_Duterte)

|  |
| --- |
| Presidential styles of**Rodrigo Roa Duterte**  |
|  |
| [**Reference style**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Style_%28manner_of_address%29) | President Duterte |
| **Spoken style** | Your President |
| **Alternative style** | Mr. President, President Mayor |

The Presidency of Rodrigo Duterte began at noon on June 30, 2016, when he became the [16th](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Philippine_Presidents#List_of_Presidents) [President of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_Philippines), succeeding [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III).

At the age of 71, Duterte became the oldest person ever elected to the presidency. Duterte is also the first local chief executive to get elected straight to the Office of the President, the second [Cebuano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebuano_people) to become president (after [Sergio Osmeña](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergio_Osme%C3%B1a)), the third [Cebuano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cebuano_language)-speaking president (after Osmeña and [Carlos P. Garcia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_P._Garcia)), the first [Visayan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visayans) from [Mindanao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindanao) and the fourth Visayan overall (after Osmeña, [Manuel Roxas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel_Roxas) and Garcia).

President-elect Duterte (left) and outgoing President [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III)at [Malacañang Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1ang_Palace) on inauguration day, June 30, 2016

Duterte takes his [oath of office](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_presidential_inauguration#Oath_of_Office) as the 16th President of the Philippines before Associate Justice [Bienvenido L. Reyes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bienvenido_L._Reyes) at [Malacañang Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1ang_Palace) while his children look on, June 30, 2016.

A [Pulse Asia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulse_Asia) survey conducted from July 2–8 showed that Duterte had a trust rating of 91%, the highest of the six presidents since the [Marcos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_Marcos) dictatorship (the previous highest was Duterte's predecessor, [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III) with 87%). One year after taking office his trust rating was 81%.Shortly after his inauguration on June 30, Duterte held his first Cabinet meeting to lay out their first agenda, which included the country's [disaster risk reduction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disaster_risk_reduction) management, decongesting the [Ninoy Aquino International Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ninoy_Aquino_International_Airport) in Manila, the country's main gateway, and expressed his ideas and concerns regarding the [territorial disputes in the South China Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territorial_disputes_in_the_South_China_Sea) prior to the announcement of the verdict of the [Philippines' arbitration case against China](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines_v._China) over the issue, which the Philippines later won. Four days later, on July 4, Duterte issued his first [executive order](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_order) entitled "Reengineering the Office of the President Towards Greater Responsiveness to the Attainment of Development Goals", allowing his [Cabinet Secretary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabinet_Secretary_%28Philippines%29), [Leoncio Evasco, Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leoncio_Evasco%2C_Jr.), to supervise over several agencies that focus on [poverty reduction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_reduction). On July 23, Duterte signed Executive Order No. 2 also known as the [Freedom of Information Order](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_Information_Order_%28Philippines%29).

Duterte is greeted by [overseas Filipinos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overseas_Filipinos) during his official visit to Vietnam, September 2016

On August 1, 2016, Duterte launched a 24-hour complaint office accessible to the public through a nationwide complaint hotline, [8888](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8888_%28Philippines%29), while also changing the country's [emergency telephone number](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emergency_telephone_number) from 1-1-7 to [9-1-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/9-1-1_%28Philippines%29), which was first instituted in Davao City.

On August 7, Duterte approved the [burial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burial_of_Ferdinand_Marcos) of former President [Ferdinand Marcos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_Marcos) at the [Heroes' Cemetery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heroes%27_Cemetery) in [Taguig](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taguig) scheduled for October 18, saying that Marcos is qualified for the burial at the cemetery due to him being a "former president and a soldier". The decision was vehemently opposed, due to "the brutal, oppressive and corrupt nature of Marcos's two-decade regime." An online petition which received over 30,000 signatures stated:

Burying Ferdinand E Marcos alongside our nation's heroes who fought for our freedom is an affront to the thousands of lives tortured and murdered during his reign. Laying him to rest at the Heroes' Cemetery is a disdainful act that will send a message to the future of our nation—our children—that the world we live in rewards forceful and violent hands.

Duterte visits a victim of the Davao City bombing at the [Southern Philippines Medical Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Philippines_Medical_Center), September 3, 2016

Following the [September 2 bombing in Davao City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_Davao_City_bombing) that killed 14 people in the city's central business district, on September 3 Duterte declared a "state of lawlessness," and on the following day issued [Proclamation No. 55](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proclamation_No._55) to officially declare a "[state of national emergency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_emergency) on account of lawless violence in Mindanao". The [Armed Forces of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed_Forces_of_the_Philippines) (AFP) and the [Philippine National Police](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_National_Police) (PNP) were ordered to "suppress all forms of lawless violence in Mindanao" and to "prevent lawless violence from spreading and escalating elsewhere". Executive Secretary [Salvador Medialdea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Medialdea) said that the declaration "does not specify the imposition of curfews" and would remain in force indefinitely. He explained: "The recent incidents, the escape of terrorists from prisons, the beheadings, then eventually what happened in Davao. That was the basis."

In December 2016, Duterte was ranked 70th on [*Forbes*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forbes) [list of The World's Most Powerful People](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forbes_list_of_The_World%27s_Most_Powerful_People). On December 7, Duterte signed [Executive Order No. 10](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Executive_Order_10) creating a consultative committee to review the 1987 [Constitution of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_the_Philippines). Duterte signed [Executive Order 26](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Executive_Order_26) imposing a smoking ban in public places on May 16, 2017. In the same month, the Duterte administration began to implement the [Anti-Distracted Driving Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Distracted_Driving_Act_%28Philippines%29). During his presidential campaign and transition, Duterte called for the reimposition of [capital punishment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_punishment_in_the_Philippines) in the country to execute criminals involved in "heinous" crimes, such as [illegal drug trade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illegal_drug_trade), insisting on [hanging](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanging).

While adjusting to working and residing at the [Malacañang Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1ang_Palace), Duterte divides his workweek between Manila and Davao City by spending three days in each city, utilizing the [Malacañang of the South](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1ang_of_the_South) while in Davao.

**Domestic policy**

**Anti-drug campaign**

*Main article:*[*Philippine Drug War*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Drug_War)

Duterte presents a chart which he claims, illustrates a drug trade network of drug syndicates, on July 7, 2016.

Duterte delivering his [first State of the Nation Address](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_State_of_the_Nation_Address_%28Philippines%29) at the Batasang Pambansa with [Senate President](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_Senate_of_the_Philippines) [Aquilino Pimentel III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquilino_Pimentel_III) and [House Speaker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speaker_of_the_Philippine_House_of_Representatives) [Pantaleon Alvarez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pantaleon_Alvarez) on July 25, 2016

After his inauguration, Duterte spoke to journalists in [Tondo, Manila](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tondo%2C_Manila), where he urged Filipino citizens to voluntarily kill drug pushers and addicts. A day after his inauguration, Duterte requested for the [New People's Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_People%27s_Army), the armed wing of the [Communist Party of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Party_of_the_Philippines), to "disarm and arrest" drug lords.

On July 5, 2016, Duterte revealed the names of five police officials who were allegedly involved in illegal drug trade. On July 7, during a press conference, Duterte presented a chart identifying three Chinese nationals who serve as [drug lords](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drug_lord) in the Philippines.

Duterte speaking with [PNP](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_National_Police) Police Director General [Ronald Dela Rosa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Dela_Rosa) in the [Malacañan Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1an_Palace) on August 16, 2016.

The [*Philippine Daily Inquirer*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Daily_Inquirer) published a "kill list". [Ifugao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ifugao) Representative Teddy Baguilat urged the [Philippine House of Representatives](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_House_of_Representatives) to investigate the "spate of extrajudicial killings and/or summary executions of suspected violators of laws on illegal drugs and other suspected criminals". Senator and former [Justice Secretary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_Justice_%28Philippines%29) [Leila de Lima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leila_de_Lima) urged Duterte's administration to cease the extrajudicial killings and said that she would file a resolution for the [Philippine Senate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Senate) to conduct an investigation. The militant group [Bagong Alyansang Makabayan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bagong_Alyansang_Makabayan) also asked Duterte to investigate the increasing number of extrajudicial killings. The Duterte administration demanded critics to provide evidence.

Duterte has justified the drug war by claiming that the Philippines was becoming a "[narco-state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narco-state)". According to the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Office_on_Drugs_and_Crime), the prevalence of drug use in the country is lower than the global average. Duterte has dismissed human rights concerns by [dehumanizing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dehumanization) drug users, stating in August 2016: "Crime against humanity? In the first place, I'd like to be frank with you. Are they humans? What is your definition of a human being?" In the first three months of Duterte's term in office, according to police figures, over 3,000 killings were attributed to his nationwide anti-drug campaign. More than half were attributed to vigilantes. At the beginning of October, a senior police officer told [*The Guardian*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Guardian) that 10 "special ops" official police death squads had been operating, and that he had personally been involved in killing 87 suspects. He described how the corpses were dumped at the roadside ("salvage" victims), or had their heads wrapped in masking tape with a cardboard placard labelling them as a drug offender, so that the killing would not be investigated. The chairman of the [Commission on Human Rights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commission_on_Human_Rights_%28Philippines%29), [Chito Gascon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chito_Gascon), was quoted in the report: "I am not surprised, I have heard of this." The [Philippine National Police](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_National_Police) declined to comment. The report stated: "although *the Guardian* can verify the policeman's rank and his service history, there is no independent, official confirmation for the allegations of state complicity and police coordination in mass murder."

**Mindanao insurgency**

*Further information:*[*Bangsamoro peace process*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangsamoro_peace_process)*and*[*Moro conflict*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_conflict)

Duterte welcomes Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad following his release from [Abu Sayyaf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Sayyaf) captivity.

Nur Misuari's wife Tarhata Misuari received help from Duterte when he interceded on their behalf after the [events of Zamboanga.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zamboanga_City_crisis) Duterte has said that Moro dignity is what the MILF and MNLF are struggling for, and that they are not terrorists. He acknowledged that the Moros were subjected to wrongdoing, historical and in territory.

Duterte was endorsed in the election by [Moro National Liberation Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_National_Liberation_Front) (MNLF) leader Nur Misuari due to his background in Mindanao. [Jesus Dureza](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Dureza) was his second choice. Other Muslims also supported Duterte and denounced Roxas, the Aquino supported pick.

During the Mindanao Hariraya [Eid al-Fitr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eid_al-Fitr) 2016 convention in Davao City on July 8, 2016, Duterte vowed to address the Moro conflict and bring peace in Mindanao, assuring the Filipino community that "something will change" before the end of his term. He said that the [Moro Islamic Liberation Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_Islamic_Liberation_Front) (MILF) and the [Moro National Liberation Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_National_Liberation_Front)(MNLF) both support his proposal for [federalism in the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federalism_in_the_Philippines), which he says is the only solution to the Bangsamoro peace process. Duterte said that if the proposal for the country's shift to federalism fails or is not desired by the Filipino people, he will vow to pass the [Bangsamoro Basic Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangsamoro_Basic_Law), which would establish the [Bangsamoro Autonomous Region](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangsamoro_%28political_entity%29). He also added that the Basic Law should benefit both MILF and MNLF, saying he is willing to negotiate with both secessionists to initiate a "reconfiguration" of territory.

A crowd of Muslims were attending the speech by Duterte where he accused America of bringing terrorism to themselves, saying that terrorism is not the result of the Middle East. He railed against the actions undertaken in the Middle East by the USA. Duterte blamed the war on Mindanao on colonialist Christianity being brought to the Philippines in 1521 by Ferdinand Magellan, saying there was peace before that and that they were made to fight their "Malay brother" by Christians.

Duterte meeting with [MNLF](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_National_Liberation_Front) chairman, founder and former ARMM Governor [Nur Misuari](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nur_Misuari), November 3, 2016

The [Bud Dajo Massacre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moro_Crater_Massacre) inflicted upon the Moros was mentioned by President Duterte to criticize the United States and its President [Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama).[]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodrigo_Duterte#cite_note-124) The massacre was cited a second time by Duterte in criticizing America while calling for the exit of American troops.

On November 6, 2016, Duterte signed an executive order to expand the [Bangsamoro Transition Commission](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangsamoro_Transition_Commission) to 21 members from 15, in which 11 will be decided by the MILF and 10 will be nominated by the government. The commission was formed in December 2013 and is tasked to draft the Bangsamoro Basic Law in accordance with the Framework

The MNLF and MILF both count some of Duterte's relatives in their ranks. Criminals were treated ruthlessly by Duterte while the MILF, MNLF and NPA have received sympathetic treatment from him. Duterte attacked terrorists and criminals and said there would be no ceasefire for them, while other groups like the MNLF, MILF and NPA all received a ceasefire from Duterte over the December holiday in 2016.

On May 23, 2017, Duterte signed [Proclamation No. 216](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proclamation_No._216) declaring a 60-day [martial law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martial_law) in Mindanao following [clashes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marawi_crisis) between the AFP and the [Maute group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maute_group) in [Marawi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marawi), [Lanao del Sur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lanao_del_Sur). He said that the implementation is similar to [Proclamation No. 1081](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proclamation_No._1081) and expressed the possibility of extending the scope of the martial law nationwide if deemed necessary.

**Communist insurgency**

*Further information:*[*CPP–NPA–NDF rebellion*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CPP%E2%80%93NPA%E2%80%93NDF_rebellion)

In July 2016, Duterte directed his peace process advisor for the CPP–NPA–NDF rebellion, [Silvestre Bello III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silvestre_Bello_III), to lead a government panel in resuming peace talks with the [Communist Party of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Party_of_the_Philippines) (CPP), the New (NPA), and the [National Democratic Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Democratic_Front_%28Philippines%29) (NDF) in [Oslo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oslo), Norway, expressing hope that a [peace treaty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_treaty) between the rebellions would be reached within a year. The first talks began on August 22–26, 2016, in which the parties agreed upon "the affirmation of previously signed agreements, the reconstitution of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees which 'protects the rights of negotiators, consultants, staffers, security and other personnel involved in peace negotiations', and the accelerated progress for negotiations." In February 2017, due to recent attacks and kidnapping of soldiers by members of the NPA despite the imposed ceasefire by the government and the rebel groups, President Duterte cancelled all negotiations with the CPP–NPA–NDF and labeled them a [terrorist group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_designated_terrorist_groups#Philippines). He also ordered the arrest of all NDF negotiators. Military offensive against the group resumed after Duterte's cancellation of ceasefire.

**Foreign policy**

*See also:*[*International presidential trips made by Rodrigo Duterte*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_presidential_trips_made_by_Rodrigo_Duterte)

[International trips](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_presidential_trips_made_by_Rodrigo_Duterte) made by Duterte during his presidency

Duterte joins other [ASEAN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASEAN_Summit) heads of states, holding hands as a symbol of unity in [Vientiane](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vientiane), [Laos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laos), September 7, 2016

The Duterte administration has vowed to pursue an "independent foreign policy" that would reject any meddling by foreign governments, reiterating [Article II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_the_Philippines#Article_2._Declaration_of_Principles_and_State_Policies), Section 7 of the 1987 Constitution which states: "The State shall pursue an independent foreign policy. In its relations with other states the paramount consideration shall be national [sovereignty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereignty), [territorial integrity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territorial_integrity), [national interest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_interest), and the right to [self-determination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-determination)." In September 2016, Duterte said: "We will observe and must insist on the time-honored principle of sovereignty, sovereign equality, non-interference and the commitment of peaceful settlements of dispute that will serve our people and protect the interests of our country."

Duterte made his first international trips as president to [Vientiane](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vientiane), [Laos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laos) and [Jakarta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jakarta), [Indonesia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesia) on September 5–9, 2016.

**China and Russia**

*See also:*[*China–Philippines relations*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%E2%80%93Philippines_relations)*and*[*Philippines–Russia relations*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines%E2%80%93Russia_relations)

Following his inauguration as president, Duterte mentioned his willingness to "reorient" his foreign policy towards China and Russia, particularly in the areas of trade and commerce. During an interview with [Al Jazeera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Jazeera), he expressed his willingness to conduct joint [military exercises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_exercise) with China and Russia. In September, Duterte said that he is considering purchasing military equipment, particularly weaponries and armaments, from China and Russia to strengthen the capabilities of the [Armed Forces of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed_Forces_of_the_Philippines) in addressing insurgency and counter-terrorism, saying that deals between the Philippines and the two countries are already in discussion and that the Chinese and Russian governments have offered the Philippines [soft loans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_loan) that would be payable in 2025.

Duterte handshake with Chinese President [Xi Jinping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xi_Jinping) prior to the bilateral meetings at the [Great Hall of the People](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Hall_of_the_People) in [Beijing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing), October 20, 2016

On October 18–21, 2016, Duterte visited [Beijing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing) to meet with Chinese officials, including [President](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_People%27s_Republic_of_China) [Xi Jinping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xi_Jinping) and [Premier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Premier_of_the_People%27s_Republic_of_China) [Li Keqiang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Li_Keqiang). While announcing his "separation" from the United States in front of Chinese and Filipino businessmen at the Philippines–China Trade and Investment Forum in Beijing on October 20, Duterte also said that he would realign himself with the Chinese ideological flow and that he might also travel to Russia to meet with [President](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_Russia) [Vladimir Putin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Putin) to "tell him that there are three of us against the world – China, Philippines, and Russia."

Duterte meets with Russian President [Vladimir Putin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Putin) during the [APEC summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/APEC_Peru_2016) in [Lima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lima), [Peru](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peru), November 19, 2016

On November 20, 2016, Duterte met with Putin during the sidelines of the [APEC summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/APEC_Peru_2016) in [Lima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lima), [Peru](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peru). Duterte has praised Putin's leadership skills and called him his "idol". Putin also invited Duterte to visit [Moscow](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moscow). Duterte said that he would visit Moscow on May 25, 2017, where a defense cooperation agreement between the Philippines and Russia is expected to be finalized.

During an interview with [RT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RT_%28TV_network%29) in November, Duterte said that the Philippines is "not ready" for [military alliances](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_alliance) with China and Russia due to the [Mutual Defense Treaty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_Defense_Treaty_%28United_States%E2%80%93Philippines%29) signed between the Philippines and the U.S.; however, he clarified that the Philippines could seek stronger diplomatic cooperation with China and Russia, as well as other countries, "to make the world more peaceful." Russian Ambassador to the Philippines Igor Khovaev expounded on Duterte's statement by saying that the Russian government is offering a [strategic partnership](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_partnership) with the Philippines, not a military alliance, and added that Russia does not believe in establishing military alliances with Asia. However, Khovaev explained that the Russian government is open to assisting the Philippines in purchasing [Russian-made weaponry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_modern_Russian_small_arms_and_light_weapons).

On May 1, 2017, following a visit to three [Chinese naval ships](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_active_People%27s_Liberation_Army_Navy_ships) at the [Port of Davao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_of_Davao), Duterte expressed interest in conducting joint military exercises between the Philippine Armed Forces and China's [People's Liberation Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Liberation_Army) in Mindanao, particularly in the [Sulu Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sulu_Sea).

**Territorial disputes**

*Further information:*[*Territorial disputes in the South China Sea*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territorial_disputes_in_the_South_China_Sea)

Duterte meeting with Japanese Prime Minister [Shinzō Abe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shinz%C5%8D_Abe), September 6, 2016

On July 12, 2016, the [Permanent Court of Arbitration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Permanent_Court_of_Arbitration) tribunal in [the Hague](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hague) announced its ruling in favor of the Philippines in [its case](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines_v._China) filed under the [Benigno Aquino III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benigno_Aquino_III) administration in 2013 against China on issues regarding the [South China Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_China_Sea) under the provisions of the [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Convention_on_the_Law_of_the_Sea), including the latter's [nine-dash line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nine-dash_line) claim which the tribunal ruled had no legal basis. Three days after, during a testimonial dinner in [San Juan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Juan%2C_Metro_Manila), Duterte asked former President [Fidel Ramos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidel_Ramos) to lead the Philippine envoy to [Beijing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing) for bilateral negotiations with China over the disputes. Ramos accepted the offer on July 23, but resigned on October 31. During his first [State of the Nation Address](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_the_Nation_Address_%28Philippines%29) on July 25, Duterte said that his administration "strongly affirms and respects" the ruling and would use it as a guide to negotiate for a resolution on the territorial disputes. Duterte prefers to discuss the issue quietly and directly with China and has vowed not to raise the issue before the Association. Duterte said "he would not want to antagonize China" and would want to "maintain good relations with China" to "create an environment where we sit down and talk directly."

On October 12, Duterte declared his intention to terminate joint US–Philippine naval patrols in the South China Sea, which he believes could needlessly antagonize China. His reticent approach with China contrasts with his otherwise "belligerent rhetoric and swaggering persona"; he has received support for some political ads from an anonymous Chinese donor.

On October 20 in Beijing, Duterte and [Chinese President](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_People%27s_Republic_of_China) [Xi Jinping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xi_Jinping) agreed to resume direct talks on the dispute.

When then U.S. Secretary of State-designate [Rex Tillerson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rex_Tillerson) threatened China's positions on the islands, the Philippines said that Tillerson was speaking for the U.S. only in the U.S.'s interest and prerogatives. [Delfin Lorenzana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delfin_Lorenzana), Duterte's Defense Secretary, rejected the possibility of war against China over the islands in the South China Sea.

On April 6, 2017, Duterte ordered the [Armed Forces of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armed_Forces_of_the_Philippines) to occupy and fortify at least nine uninhabited islands in the South China Sea. He announced plans to visit the Philippine-administered [Thitu (Pag-asa) Island](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thitu_Island) during [Independence Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence_Day_%28Philippines%29) and raise a [Philippine flag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_the_Philippines) there. Duterte also ordered the [Philippine Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Navy) to build structures on the [Benham Rise](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benham_Plateau) in order to reassure the Philippines' sovereignty over the undersea region, following the sighting of Chines [survey vessels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Survey_vessel). He also announced plans to rename the Benham Rise to the Philippine Ridge. On April 12, Duterte canceled his plan to visit the Thitu (Pag-asa) Island, citing goodwill and friendship with China. On April 21, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana announced the allocation of ₱1.6 billion to develop the Thitu (Pag-asa) Island, despite rejection from the [Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Foreign_Affairs_of_the_People%27s_Republic_of_China). The development of the island is expected to include the construction of a marine [research center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research_center), beaching facilities, a radio station, an [ice plant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice#Commercial_production), and a [power station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Power_station), as well as the improvement of the Rancudo airstrip runway. On May 16, 2017, Duterte signed an executive order formally renaming the Benham Rise to the Philippine Rise.

**United States**

*See also:*[*Philippines–United States relations*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines%E2%80%93United_States_relations)

On September 12, 2016, Duterte said that he is "not a fan of the Americans" and wants to "reorient" foreign policy with the United States. He requested that [U.S. forces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Armed_Forces) in Mindanao should leave the Philippines, specifically those who are part of the [Operation Enduring Freedom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Enduring_Freedom_%E2%80%93_Philippines), saying that it would "inflame the situation with the [Abu Sayyaf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Sayyaf)." Duterte said on September 13 that he does not plan to cut ties with the United States, but wants to reiterate the administration's pursuit of an "independent foreign policy" in accordance with the Constitution; the administration will continue to honor mutual agreements like the [Visiting Forces Agreement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visiting_Forces_Agreement_%28Philippines_%E2%80%93_United_States%29) and the [Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enhanced_Defense_Cooperation_Agreement). On September 20, Duterte said: "I never said get out of the Philippines, for after all, we need them there in the China Sea. We don't have armaments."

Duterte with U.S. Secretary of State [Rex Tillerson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rex_Tillerson), August 7, 2017

On September 27, Duterte vowed not to allow the U.S. government to interfere with the policies of his administration. He criticized the U.S. government for "lecturing" his administration on [human rights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_rights) amidst their campaign on illegal drugs and said that he will "[cross the Rubicon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crossing_the_Rubicon) with the U.S." Duterte added that he plans to forge "new alliances" with China and Russia in trade and commerce. [U.S. Department of State](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_State) deputy spokesperson Mark Toner responded to Duterte's criticisms by saying that the Philippine–U.S. relations could still remain "strong and unabated" despite Duterte's criticisms. The following day, while addressing the Filipino community in [Hanoi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanoi), Duterte said that the Balikatan [military exercises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_exercise) and the joint naval patrols in the South China Sea between the Philippines and the U.S. in October would be "its last" in order to avoid provoking conflict with China.

On October 5, Duterte accused the U.S. of refusing to sell armaments to the Philippines and said that he would rather purchase armaments from China and Russia. In an attempt to repair relations with the U.S., Duterte's Defense Secretary, [Delfin Lorenzana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delfin_Lorenzana), said Duterte was "misinformed" about the U.S. alliance: "Maybe, the defense ministry and the armed forces were remiss in providing him the correct information."

On October 6, Duterte's then-Foreign Secretary [Perfecto Yasay Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfecto_Yasay_Jr.) denounced the idea of the Philippines being regarded as a "little brown brother" by the U.S. Yasay said that the Philippines had been "failed" by the U.S.

On October 20, while on a trip to [Beijing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beijing), Duterte declared a "separation" from the United States which he stated had lost militarily, socially, and economically, and emphasized a realignment of the Philippines to move closer to China. During a press conference after arriving from Beijing, Duterte clarified that what he meant by "separation" was a "separation of a foreign policy" and not a severance of diplomatic ties, saying that it would not be feasible to cut diplomatic ties with the U.S. due to the large number of [Filipino Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filipino_Americans). U.S. Department of State spokesperson [John Kirby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Kirby_%28admiral%29) responded by saying: "We are going to be seeking an explanation of exactly what the president meant when he talked about separation from the U.S.; it's not clear what that means and all its ramifications." On October 23, [U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assistant_Secretary_of_State_for_East_Asian_and_Pacific_Affairs) [Daniel R. Russel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_R._Russel) traveled to Manila to seek clarification and explanation for Duterte's comments with Philippine officials, including [Foreign Affairs Secretary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_Foreign_Affairs_%28Philippines%29) [Perfecto Yasay Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfecto_Yasay_Jr.) and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

On November 7, Secretary Lorenzana clarified that the joint Balikatan exercises will continue along with the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, but the [Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooperation_Afloat_Readiness_and_Training) [amphibious landing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibious_warfare) exercises between the [Philippine Marine Corps](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Marine_Corps) and the [U.S. Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy) would be discontinued. He specified that bilateral drills on [counter-terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counter-terrorism), [humanitarian response](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanitarian_aid), [special operations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_operations), [engineering projects](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_management), and [civic action](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civic_action_program) will remain, all of which have been approved by Duterte.

Following the [2016 U.S. presidential election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_2016), Presidential Communications Secretary [Martin Andanar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Andanar) offered "warm congratulations" to [Donald Trump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump) on his election victory. He said that Duterte "look[ed] forward to working with the incoming administration for enhanced Philippines-US relations anchored on mutual respect, mutual benefit and shared commitment to democratic ideals and the rule of law." While in [Kuala Lumpur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuala_Lumpur), Duterte personally congratulated Trump by greeting him "[*Mabuhay!*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mabuhay)" and expressed hope that the [Trump administration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidency_of_Donald_Trump) would honor obligations and treaties signed between the Philippines and the U.S. On December 2, Duterte called then President-elect Trump to personally congratulate him once more and invited him to visit the Philippines for the [Twelfth East Asia Summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_East_Asia_Summit) in 2017, while Trump invited Duterte to visit him in [New York City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City) and [Washington, D.C.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington%2C_D.C.) after the former's [inauguration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inauguration_of_Donald_Trump). On April 29, 2017, President Trump called Duterte to inform him of his planned visit to the Philippines in November for the East Asia Summit. Trump also extended an invitation to Duterte to visit him at the [White House](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House). During their call, Duterte urged Trump to show restraint in dealing with [North Korea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Korea) over their [nuclear weapons program](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Korea_and_weapons_of_mass_destruction), warning him that the region could suffer "immensely". Trump also praised Duterte's drug war during the call, telling him "I just wanted to congratulate you because I am hearing of the unbelievable job on the drug problem".

**Economic performance**

Duterte speaking at the [World Economic Forum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Economic_Forum) in [Phnom Penh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phnom_Penh), [Cambodia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambodia), May 11, 2017

While there were apprehensions early on in Duterte's term about his economic program, particularly in light of his controversial statements against the United States and the European Union, the Philippine economy has continued to expand. The [World Bank](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Bank) has stated that "The Philippine economy remained resilient to global headwinds in 2016" and that "the rapidly growing domestic economy has yielded substantial gains in employment and poverty reduction “At 6.5 percent, the Asian Development Bank's updated 2017 growth projection for the Philippines was higher than Indonesia (5.1%), Malaysia (4.7%), Thailand (3.5%), and Singapore (2.4%). Fitch Research has also stated that they "hold an optimistic view on the Philippine economy over the medium term, and we have upgraded our 2018 growth forecast to 6.3 percent, from 6.1 percent previously." They expect this growth to continue in the short term. The Philippine stock market nearly broke the all-time high of 8,100 in early August 2017. Government spending on infrastructure, otherwise known as it's 'Build, Build, Build' program is helping to spur economic growth which is projected to reach 7.5 percent, topping the government’s initial target of 6.5 percent by 2019.

Early in his term, Duterte's expletive-laden outbursts triggered the biggest exodus from stocks in a year and made the peso Asia's worst performer in September 2016. The Philippine currency is at a seven-year low and rounding out its worst month since May 2010. In the same month, the Philippine peso completed its biggest monthly decline since October 2000 amid the biggest outflow from the nation's stocks in a year. According to the Philippines' Finance Secretary [Carlos Dominguez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_Dominguez), the peso’s slump this year is "mainly due to a deteriorating trade outlook because of rising imports of capital goods, which is normal for a country that is growing very fast." Currency strategists have, however, "predicted a rebound once investors see beyond Duterte’s words."

After 100 days in office, former president [Ramos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidel_V._Ramos), a political ally-mentor of Duterte said that "Duterte has been a huge disappointment and letdown" and "the government was losing badly by prioritizing a war on drugs at the expense of issues like poverty, living costs, foreign investment and jobs". Based on subsequent surveys conducted by the [Social Weather Stations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_Weather_Stations), optimism in the economic prospects under the Duterte administration remains "excellent" with more Filipinos believing that the quality of their lives will improve in the next 12 months. This is supported by polls conducted by [Pulse Asia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulse_Asia) one year after taking office, wherein approval (82%) and trust (81%) ratings for Duterte still remain very high.

Duterte's verbal attacks especially to the US and EU is viewed by many Filipinos as a threat to their jobs especially those working for foreign companies. Mark Williams, chief of Asia economist at Capital Economics, said, "Certainly, investors are worried by some of the things he's saying, he's really unnerved people". The Philippine government, however, expects that employment, especially in BPO industries, will continue to keep on rising.. Despite Duterte's bluster and the messy local politics however, the long-term view for the Philippine economy looks good and has even pessimists conceding that gross domestic product should grow close to 7% over the next three to five years. “Twin catalysts of infrastructure spending and tax reform will drive the market over the next two years,” Dante Tinga, head of research at BDO Nomura in Manila, tells *Barron’s*. “There’s an investment boom under way, which I believe will help in rerating the market over the next 12 months.”

In December, government data revealed that the Philippines' output of nickel ore fell 16 percent in the third quarter from a year earlier, after the country, which is the world's top supplier of the metal, suspended some mines in a clampdown on environmental violations. Production dropped to 19.8 million tons in the nine months to September from 25.97 million tons a year ago, according to the data. According to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, the "Philippine economy is delivering the performance we anticipated, notwithstanding the political noise and a significant terrorist event in Mindanao." Dominguez gave the assessment during the Banyan Tree Leadership Forum of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

**Presidential immunity**

On November 7, 2016, Senator [Leila de Lima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leila_de_Lima), Duterte's chief government critic, filed a Supreme Court writ of [*habeas data*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habeas_data) against Duterte, testing the doctrine of presidential immunity, claiming "The verbal attacks on petitioner's womanhood and threats on her person are not covered by presidential immunity from suit because they are not the official act of a President". The 20-page writ asked, "Can a sitting President wage a personal vendetta against petitioner and use the resources of his powerful office to crucify her as a woman, a human being, and a duly elected senator in violation of her right to privacy in life, liberty and security?" De Lima's counsel, [De La Salle University College of Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_La_Salle_University_College_of_Law) dean [Jose Manuel Diokno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jose_Manuel_Diokno), said "Immunity cannot be used to block this case. There is a blatant violation of the magna carta for women, code of conduct for public officials. We hope the Supreme Court will listen to the plea of Senator de Lima and give consideration to this petition because we believe it is of groundbreaking importance".

Duterte had repeatedly criticized De Lima for an alleged adulterous affair with her driver, and her alleged "propensity for sex". He said in August 2016 that she was an "immoral woman" who had no right to criticize the extrajudicial killings because she had "a very sordid personal and official life". She was subsequently removed from her position chairing a Senate committee investigating the killings, and was then forced to leave her home out of fear for her safety. The writ cited several cases of Duterte admitting that he wanted to drive her to suicide. De Lima demanded to know which foreign country had assisted Duterte in his surveillance of her private conversations, as he had claimed, and how it was carried out.

Presidential spokesperson [Ernesto Abella](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernesto_Abella) said that "Senator Leila de Lima is apparently playing the gender card as a shield against mounting evidence of her ties with high-profile drug lords and the [proliferation of drug trade in the New Bilibid Prison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Bilibid_Prison_drug_trafficking_scandal)". Chief Presidential Legal Counsel [Salvador Panelo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Panelo) said that "the president is immune from suit but even if he is not, the petition has no basis in fact nor in law".

"Pardon given to Rodrigo Duterte for the crime of multiple murder, signed Rodrigo Duterte"

— [*Rodrigo Duterte*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duterte)*to businessmen, 2016 Presidential Campaign*

Duterte had already made light of the fact of his capacity to give presidential pardons, even with presidential immunity, when he vowed to pardon himself the moment he became president during the 2016 campaign.

Controversy and criticism

**Human rights**

In early September 2015, an infamous incident was reported of a tourist being forced to swallow his own cigarette butt in a local bar in Davao City after the tourist refused to comply with the public anti-smoking ordinance of the city. Duterte was personally contacted by the bar owner and went into the bar and forced the tourist to swallow his cigarette butt. Duterte was then met with criticisms especially from the [Commission on Human Rights (CHR)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commission_on_Human_Rights_%28Philippines%29).

Referring to the arrest of a suspected rice smuggler, Duterte spoke out in the state senate saying, "If this guy would go to Davao and starts [sic] to unload (smuggled rice)… I will gladly kill him." For these comments, Duterte was attacked in an editorial in [*The Manila Times*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Manila_Times), which condemned "the mentality of lawlessness and vigilantism." The newspaper argued that this culture of impunity enabled those in power, including officials, "private warlords and businessmen vigilantes" to take retribution against those they felt had acted against their interests: "They kill journalists exposing corruption and human rights activists exposing abusive police and military men." Following Duterte's comments in relation to killing a person suspected of smuggling rice, the office of the President of the Philippines issued a statement saying, "Killing a person is against the law. The President has been firm in the belief that no one is above the law. We must not resort to extralegal methods."

In October 2016, the French newspaper [*Libération*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lib%C3%A9ration) depicted Duterte as a “serial killer president,” pertaining to the spate of drug-related killings in the Philippines. The newspaper report drew condemnation from the Filipino community in France. Presidential Spokesperson [Ernesto Abella](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernesto_Abella) said in a radio interview that the newspaper's presentation of Duterte as a serial killer was "very unfair" and "irresponsible" while DILG Secretary [Ismael Sueno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ismael_Sueno) stated that the description was "too much" and noted the lack of understanding over the administration's war on drugs. As 2016 concluded, the [Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organized_Crime_and_Corruption_Reporting_Project) (OCCRP) nominated Duterte as a runner-up in their *2016 Person of the Year Award* that "recognizes the individual who has done the most in the world to advance organized criminal activity and corruption". The OCCRP panel members who recognized Duterte noted his use of "death squads to slaughter drug dealers (and users)", with some panelists comparing his use of vigilante groups to those of the*2016 Person of the Year Award* winner, Venezuelan president [Nicolás Maduro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicol%C3%A1s_Maduro).

Duterte have consistently voiced out his grudge against the Commission of Human Rights, much to the dismay of various human rights groups and advocates. He had also threatened the abolition of the constitutionally supported institution. Under Duterte's first year, Budget spending for the Commission of Human Rights was cut by 72.9 million PhP; Duterte's allies in the congress even insists that the said agency deserves zero budget. The 2018 budget for the CHR was set to  ₱1,000 (US$20) by Duterte's allies in the congress, which was lauded by Duterte stating that they had it coming due to CHR's chairman [Chito Gascon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chito_Gascon) being a "yellow" ([Liberal Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberal_Party_%28Philippines%29) affiliated) and speaking out against Duterte's War on Drugs. Not contented with his insults against Gascon, Duterte has also accused Gascon of being a pedophile for caring so much about the deaths of minors. Duterte also stated that the CHR aligned themselves with his political enemies, stating that there are crimes against children happening everyday but the CHR only focuses on the crimes of his administration. The CHR budget was restored by the Senate after thousands of Filipinos have expressed their outrage and dismay against Duterte and his allies in the social media and on the streets.

In August 16, 2017, Duterte made another scathing remark against the Commission on Human Rights, threatening them with violence for their probes.

One of these days, kayong human rights, kayong imbestigahan ko. Conspiracy. If they are obstructing justice, you shoot them. (One of these days, when I investigate the people from the commission of human rights and find out that they're conspiring against me... if they are obstructing justice, you shoot them .)

— *Rodrigo Duterte to his security forces.*

Duterte's statements against the CHR came a few weeks after he threatened to bomb the indigenous schools which he accused of indoctrinating children with communist ideology.

Many have expressed criticism of Duterte's stance against Human Rights, but Duterte believes that the number of deaths due to extrajudicial killings and summary executions are a measure of his success in his war against drugs.

"There were 32 killed in Bulacan in a massive raid, that's good. Let’s kill another 32 every day. Maybe we can reduce what ails this country."

— *Duterte*

Duterte firmly believes that killing criminals is not a crime against humanity.

“When you kill criminals that is not a crime against humanity. The criminals have no humanity. God damn it! Marami pang patayan to. Lumalaban talaga yan. (There will be many more killings. They are really fighting back). It will not end tomorrow for as long as there is a drug pusher and drug lord!"

— *Duterte to the press*

Following the death of Kian de los Santos, a minor allegedly executed by policemen under the admin's [War on Drugs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Drug_War), United Nations special rapporteur [Agnes Callamard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_Callamard) had implored Duterte to make de los Santos' death the last. Duterte had responded by severely cursing Callamard and taunting her to come to the Philippines.

"Son of a bitch! tell her! Don’t try to scare me! Son of a bitch! She’s a fool! Where is that fool from?! What is her nationality?! Make her come here! Tell her to look at the situation! This is the Republic of the Philippines, not a territory of France! She’s a fool! She’s not listening to what I’m saying!"

— *Duterte to Reporters, [*[*Philippine Daily Inquirer*](http://globalnation.inquirer.net/160053/duterte-callamard-war-on-drugs-kian-delos-santos-killings-expletive%7C)*]*

Callamard had previously expressed that de los Santos was murdered by the police after a CCTV recording revealed footage of the policemen dragging an unarmed boy against his will, contrary to the local policemen claims that the boy fought back with a gun. Callamard tweeted her statement in response to Duterte's blasé speech admitting that Kian was indeed murdered, a week after Kian's death. In a previous speech, Duterte had told policemen to shoot suspects who resist arrest, and even joked that "if they don't resist, make them fight back".

Yes, Pent Duterte, this is murder. All unlawful deaths must be investigated. To stop all murderers

— [*Calamard*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_Callamard)*, [*[*twitter post*](https://mobile.twitter.com/AgnesCallamard/status/900791022099288066?p=v%7CCallamard%27s)*]*

During his diatribe against Callamard, Duterte had accused France of having a policy of "guilty until proven innocent", an erroneous assumption which the French embassy corrected later on. France is among the UN Human Rights Council members which expressed serious concerns over the extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. Representatives from Bulgaria, France, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Peru recommended to the Philippines to allow Callamard to conduct an investigation into the alleged extrajudicial killings in connection with President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs. The concerned member states include Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Vatican City, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States. Duterte had vowed that Kian would not be the last, after cursing Callamard again. Duterte stated that there will be more victims killed for the sake of ending the "drugs problem".  Barely a month after Kian's death, it was followed by the deaths of Carl Arnaiz and Reynaldo de Guzman who were all minors found to be murdered by gunshot wounds. Duterte had stated that it was not state policy to kill drug suspects. Duterte also expressed ridicule at allegations that they were killed similarly to Kian. Duterte rebuked the media, saying "how could he kill them, when one of them is even a relative". Duterte also claimed that the slaying of the minors is done in an attempt to discredit the PNP and undermine his war on drugs.

"Sabihin pa, ‘O, last na itong kay Kian ha? ‘Pag meron pa…’ Puta! (She said “Kian should be the last… if there’s another one…" Bitch!). Who are you to say that?! Kaya bitch sabi ko (That's why I called her a bitch)"

— *Duterte talking about Callamard, [*[*The Philippine Star*](http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/08/30/1734320/duterte-resumes-tirade-over-callamard-tweet%7C)*]*

Callamard had stated that her official visit to the Philippines to engage Duterte is not possible due to the pre-conditions imposed by Duterte's admin to force her to engage in a public debate. Callamard had repeatedly refused Duterte's taunts for her to engage him in "public debate", saying that her visit should not be for "entertainment".

1) Citing December 2016 OHCHR statement. 2) An official visit without respect for the victims, respect for the law, respect for due process would be unacceptable. 3) An official visit is not a vehicle for entertainment, theatrics or politicking.

— [*Callamard*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_Callamard)*to Duterte, [*[*News*](http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/30/17/callamard-says-visit-to-ph-not-vehicle-for-entertainment%7CAbsCbn)*]*

The [Human Rights Watch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Rights_Watch) (HRW) had called the first year of Duterte in office as a human rights calamity. The HRW estimates that there has been 7,000 extrajudicial killings from the day Duterte first took office to January 2017. The Duterte administration suspended the drugs war by February 2017 in an effort to cleanse the police ranks, also halting the disclosure of figures on deaths related to drug arrests and raids. In March 2017, the HRW released a special investigation and report on the state of police related shooting, titled "License To Kill". The New York Times had also released a video documentary "When A President Says I'll Kill You", which depicts Duterte's war on drugs through a local photographer's eyes. In August 17, 2017, HRW called Duterte a threat to the Human Rights community after Duterte made threats against Human Rights activists.  As of August 2017, Human Rights groups and activists had claimed that more than 13,000 people had been killed in extra-judicial killings including those they believed the government had executed such as Kian de los Santos, contrary to government figures which estimated it to be only around 3,000.

On May 8, 2017, Jude Sabio, the lawyer of [Edgar Matobato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_Matobato), filed a case against Duterte in the [International Criminal Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Criminal_Court) (ICC). An online petition for the ICC to investigate Duterte for advocating shoot-to-kill orders had been filed in Change.org only three months after he started to serve as president, following the drastic increase in vigilante killings and Duterte's advocacy to kill drug pushers.

Following the UN's 72nd General Assembly, [Alan Peter Cayetano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Peter_Cayetano), who represented Duterte who deliberately decided not to attend it, states that it scored a big victory claiming that the [UNHRC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Human_Rights_Council) "overwhelmingly adopted Manila’s human rights report card.” The [CHR](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commission_on_Human_Rights_%28Philippines%29) however states that these claims are nothing more than "doublespeak" that serves to deliberately mislead people to think that the Duterte admin is serious about human rights. The Philippines did not accept 154 recommendations of other UN member-states, including a condition-less visit for UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings Agnes Callamard and a thorough investigation of the deaths in connection with the war on drugs.

**Rape comments**

Duterte had again made another remark regarding rape when he rallied the troops during the war against the [Maute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maute_group) in Marawi.

"Just do your job. I will take care of you. I will go to jail for you. If you happen to rape three, I will own up to it. If you marry four, you will beaten [[*sic*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sic)]."

— *Duterte to soldiers*

Malacañang had defended Duterte's remarks, claiming that it should not be taken seriously because it is due to heightened bravado. Several public officials expressed their distaste for the remark including a [Bangsa Moro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangsamoro_peace_process) committee member who quit the council out of sheer disgust. Women's rights groups protested Duterte's statements claiming that rape is a heinous crime and should not be joked about, even alleging that the Maranao refugees in the evacuation camps were being threatened with rape by soldiers who were encouraged by the President.

[Chelsea Clinton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chelsea_Clinton) expressed her disapproval of Duterte through social media, to which Duterte defended himself saying that he was being "sarcastic" when he made the remark. Displeased with her comments, Duterte launched a verbal tirade against Clinton by bringing up the [Lewinsky scandal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewinsky_scandal), in which her father, former President [Bill Clinton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Clinton), was involved.

"When your father was screwing [Lewinsky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monica_Lewinsky) and the rest of the young girls there in the [office of the president](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House), on the table, on the floor, on the sofa, did you raise any criticism?"

— *Duterte to Chelsea Clinton*

In a speaking engagement, Duterte states his views on rape. He stated that what he did not like the most was having children raped by their attackers, however if the victim was a "Miss Universe", he would give him a free pass but the rapist should know he'll be killed afterwards.

"What I don’t like is for children to be raped. If you mess up with a Ms. Universe contestant, maybe I would even congratulate you for having the balls to rape somebody when you know that you are going to die"

— *Duterte to diplomats*

During the second time that Duterte visited Marawi, he also made a remark on using "starlets" to reward the soldiers for their valor, much to the hoots and the laughter of the soldiers.

"For certain, those qualified for a Medal of Valor, I’ll give one. If there are many of you, we’ll just pick lots. The consolation prizes will be the starlets I will bring. The trip to Hong Kong, that’s free. If you want to bring a partner or wife … If you don’t want, just point to the starlet you want and let’s talk to her."

— *Duterte to soldiers*

It is well known that Duterte and his allies have been using sexy starlets, performers and actresses in their rallies and protests to entertain their followers.

**International stage**

In 1995, after [Flor Contemplacion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flor_Contemplacion), a Filipino, was executed in [Singapore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singapore) after confessing to a double murder, Duterte, as Davao City mayor, allegedly burned a [flag of Singapore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Singapore) (though this claim was later denied) and joined 1,000 employees of Davao City in protest.

Duterte has been accused by his critics in the media of having a "dirty mouth". He had, however, promised to behave in a "prim and proper" manner on the national and international stage once he was to be inaugurated as President, to the point that, "almost, I would become holy."

In July 2016, Duterte accused the [United Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom) and the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) of importing [terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism) to the Middle East through its interventions, saying: "The U.S. destroyed the Middle East. ... Great Britain and the U.S. will not admit that they forced their way to Iraq and killed Saddam. Look at Iraq now. Look what happened to Libya. Look what happened to Syria."

In August 2016, Duterte was criticized after he made a [homophobic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homophobia) comment (using a Tagalog language slur) about the US Ambassador to the Philippines [Philip Goldberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_Goldberg), stating "As you know, I'm fighting with (US Secretary of State [John Kerry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Kerry)'s) ambassador. His gay ambassador, the son of a whore. He pissed me off." Duterte added: "He [Goldberg] meddled during the elections, giving statements here and there. He was not supposed to do that." The U.S. State Department summoned the Filipino chargé d'affaires Patrick Chuasoto to discuss Duterte's comments. Duterte refused to apologize.

In the same month, [United Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) human rights experts called for an end to extrajudicial killings of suspected drug dealers, about 900 of whom had been executed since the May election, accusing Duterte of "incitement to violence and killing, a crime under international law". In response, Duterte threatened to [leave the UN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Withdrawal_from_the_United_Nations) and form a separate organization with China and African nations. He announced in a news conference on August 19: "You now, United Nations, if you can say one bad thing about me, I can give you 10 [about you]. I tell you, you are an *inutil* ("useless" in Filipino street language.). Because if you are really true to your mandate, you could have stopped all these wars and killing [in Syria and Iraq]." Asked about possible repercussions, he stated: "What is ... repercussions? I don't give a shit to them." He said that the UN had acted against protocol: "You do not just go out and give a shitting statement against a country."

In his speech at the [Davao Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Bangoy_International_Airport), Duterte criticizes [U.S. President](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States) [Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama) for planning to discuss the Philippine Drug War.

At the 2016 [ASEAN Summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASEAN_Summit), Duterte and [U.S. President](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_the_United_States) [Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama) planned to meet with each other. The United States said that President Obama planned to discuss the 2,400 Filipinos who died during Duterte's war on drugs. Duterte criticized the planned topic of the meeting, saying, "I am no American [puppet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puppet_president). I am the president of a sovereign country and I am not answerable to anyone except the Filipino people. You must be respectful. Do not just throw away questions and statements. Son of a whore, I will curse you in that forum." The vulgar insult prompted the [White House](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House) to cancel the meeting instead. During a press conference at the [2016 G20 Hangzhou summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_G20_Hangzhou_summit) in China, President Obama discussed the cancellation of the meeting, saying: "I always want to make sure that if I'm having a meeting, that it's actually productive and we're getting something done." Obama and Duterte later met informally.

On September 30, 2016, Duterte appeared to compare the killings of suspected drug addicts to the [Holocaust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holocaust) saying: "[Hitler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) massacred three million Jews. Now, there are 3 million drug addicts. ... I'd be happy to slaughter them." His remarks drew international outrage particularly from the Jewish Communities. [World Jewish Congress](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Jewish_Congress) president Ronald S. Lauder condemned the statement, as did the [Anti-Defamation League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Defamation_League). [Israeli Foreign Ministry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Foreign_Affairs_%28Israel%29) also condemned his remarks while the German government slammed Duterte's comments as unacceptable, and called in the Philippine ambassador to the Foreign Ministry over the matter. On October 2 he apologized to the Jewish community. When listening to the full conference, he was in fact referring to the accusation of genocide by lawyers of the European Union who wanted him to face the International Court of Justice and, as Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella explained, that it "was an oblique reflection of the way he has been pictured as a mass murderer, a Hitler, a label he rejects".

In September 2016, Duterte said that the United States has not even apologized to the Philippines for its atrocities during the [Philippine–American War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine%E2%80%93American_War). In October 2016, Duterte continued his tirade against the US and the European Union saying in Tagalog that "Mr. Obama, you can go to hell. EU, better choose purgatory. Hell is already full. Why should I be afraid of you?"

Duterte's constant cursing had local officials worried that the Philippines would lose foreign aid from the United States and European Union. He responded that “If you think it is high time for you guys to withdraw your assistance, go ahead. We will not beg for it. We have a problem here trying to preserve our society" he said. The President continued that he would “be the first to go hungry. I will be the first one to die of hunger". Local actress [Agot Isidro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agot_Isidro) responded in Tagalog "First of all, no one's trying to fight you. As a matter of fact, you're the one who's picking a fight. Secondly, the country where you are elected as President by 16 million out of 100+ million is Third World. You talk as if the Philippines is a superpower. Excuse me, we don't want to go hungry. If you want, you do it yourself. Leave us out of it. So many people have nothing to eat, and yet you'll starve us even further". Her sentiments were echoed by Senator [Panfilo Lacson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panfilo_Lacson) adding that "if the economy worsen, the entire Filipino people will be affected, they will go hungry as well".

Former president Fidel Ramos on his resignation as special envoy to China stated that he did not like Duterte's treatment of US president Barack Obama and lambasted the administration on its refusal to ratify the Paris which was later agreed by Duterte.

During the [2016 APEC Summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/APEC_Peru_2016) in Peru, President Duterte skipped two major events due to jet lag. In a press conference at his office in Makati, Former president Ramos hit the absence of Duterte at the APEC gala dinner and the shoot for the leaders’ traditional family photo. Ramos said that while Duterte and his Cabinet may have thought that the two events are negligible, it could have disappointed the host country. “Peru President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski must be very disappointed,” Ramos said. He said the gala night could have been an opportunity for Duterte to exchange ideas with world leaders and sickness is an unacceptable alibi to skip such an important gathering.

**Catholic Church**

President Duterte talks with [Manila Archbishop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Manila) [Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luis_Antonio_Tagle)d uring a courtesy call at [Malacañang Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaca%C3%B1ang_Palace), July 19, 2016

Duterte has referred to the [Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) as "the most hypocritical institution", after the [Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Bishops%27_Conference_of_the_Philippines) president [Socrates Villegas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates_Villegas) released a [pastoral letter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pastoral_letter) indirectly referring to Duterte as a "morally reprehensible" candidate who has shown "scant regard" for the rights of others and the teachings of the Church, urging Filipino Catholics to not vote for him. Unlike many prominent [conservative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_conservatism) politicians, Duterte has spoken in favor of birth control, LGBT rights, and reimposition of the [death penalty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_punishment) which was abolished by President [Gloria Macapagal Arroyo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Macapagal_Arroyo), a devout Catholic, during her second term in 2006. Upon being elected, Duterte called local bishops "sons of whores", and said he would expand family planning, which the Church had been opposed to. The Catholic Church in the Philippines had lost much of its popularity and political power since being active in overthrowing [the Marcos regime in 1986](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proclamation_No._1081). Antonio Contreras, a political science professor at De La Salle University in Manila, said that Duterte's attacks on the Church were likely to prove popular.

Duterte was accused of having referred to [Pope Francis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis) as a "son of a whore" during the [pontiff's visit to the Philippines in January 2015](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis%27_visit_to_the_Philippines) because it caused [traffic congestion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traffic_congestion), though he immediately apologized publicly, explaining he wasn't using these words in regards to the Pope but rather a rant to the government's way of preparing the Pope's visit. On December 4, 2015, Duterte, along with his executive assistant Bong Go, visited and talked with [Davao Archbishop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Archdiocese_of_Davao) Romulo Valles and Bishop George Rimando, together with Monsignor Paul Cuison to get lectured on Christian Values. Duterte committed to lessen his profanity in public gatherings and even assured that he would donate ₱1,000 to Caritas Davao every time he swears in public. He also stated that he will be planning to visit the [Vatican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vatican_City) at a later time. Duterte however canceled his planned trip and instead wrote a letter to Pope Francis dated January 21, 2016. During a campaign rally in [Ubay, Bohol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubay%2C_Bohol), Duterte's camp showed the letter coming from the Vatican's Secretariat of State, signed by [Giovanni Angelo Becciu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Angelo_Becciu) dated February 24, stating that Pope Francis had received his letter and that the Vatican appreciated Duterte's apology after allegedly cursing Pope Francis in public. In January 2017, Duterte wrote a personal letter to Pope Francis, expressing his gratitude during his papal visit in the Philippines and his "highest esteem and respect" for the pontiff.

On August 28, 2016, [Luis Antonio Tagle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luis_Antonio_Tagle), the Archbishop of Manila, acknowledged that people were right to be "worried about extrajudicial killing". He said that it was equivalent to abortion, "unfair labor practices", "wasting food" and selling illegal drugs, explaining that these are all "form[s] of murder". On August 31, in a speech before a gathering of a religious group in Davao City, Duterte said that he once considered being a priest: "It's good I didn't join the priesthood," said Duterte, "or else now I would be a homosexual."

**Views on media killings**

The Philippines is one of the most dangerous countries for journalists, with 174 assassinations recorded since the Marcos dictatorship. In a press conference on 31 May 2016, Duterte said that "Most of those killed, to be frank, have done something. You won't be killed if you don't do anything wrong." He appeared to announce his support for killing "corrupt" journalists: "Just because you're a journalist you are not exempted from assassination if you're a son of a bitch".

At the press conference where Duterte announced this, he [wolf-whistled](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolf-whistling) at a female journalist ([Mariz Umali](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariz_Umali) of [GMA News](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GMA_News_and_Public_Affairs)) when she asked a question. At a news conference on the following day he defended his comments and refused to apologize, telling reporters, "I cannot protect you". He has been criticized by foreign and domestic media organizations regarding his comments. The Southeast Asia representative of the Committee to Protect Journalists said: "What he has done with these irresponsible comments is give security officials the right to kill for acts that they consider defamation. This is one of the most outrageous statements we have ever heard from a president in the Philippines."

Melinda Quintos de Jesus, executive director of the Center for Media Freedom, stated in October 2016 that major newspapers and television stations have not critically analyzed Duterte's policies, because "they fear him. They basically are afraid to be singled out."

Despite his rocky relationship with the media, Duterte's first Administrative Order was the creation of a Presidential Task Force on Media Security, whose main task is conduct an inventory of cases of media killings, including unsolved cases, cases under investigation, cases under preliminary investigation, cases under trial, and cases under appeal, and "to put an end to all forms of political violence and abuses of powers against members of the fourth estate." Since Duterte took office there has been a significant drop in media killings with only one incident being recorded; as compared to nine during the first year of the previous administration.

**Personal killings**

Duterte has repeatedly admitted to killing three people while he was the Mayor of Davao. In December 2015, Duterte recounted shooting three gunmen dead only months into his first mayoral term in 1988 after they had kidnapped and raped a Chinese girl. He justified his actions, saying "they were committing a crime in my presence and I was the person in authority under the law". In an interview with BBC on 16 December 2016, he said: "I killed about three of them, because there were three of them. I don't know how many bullets from my gun went inside their bodies. It happened, and I said, I cannot lie about it".

On 14 December 2016, Duterte gave a speech to business leaders in the presidential palace where he spoke of personally killing suspected criminals as Mayor of Davao to set an example for local police. He said, "In Davao I used to do it personally. Just to show to the guys that if I can do it why can't you. And I'd go around in Davao with a motorcycle, with a big bike around, and I would just patrol the streets, looking for trouble also."

**War on Drugs**

*Further information:*[*Philippine Drug War*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Drug_War)

Despite constant criticism of his war on drugs, Duterte had staunchly defended his administration efforts at getting rid of "filth" from the streets. Duterte had even called [Cesar Gaviria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%A9sar_Gaviria) an "idiot". This was after he read Gaviria's opinion that was published on the New York Times. Gaviria claimed that Duterte is simply repeating his mistakes during his term as president when he used heavy-handed means in Columbia's war against drugs. Duterte said Gaviria was “lecturing” and the Philippine case was different to Colombia.

Various international publications and media companies had claimed that Duterte's "War on Drugs" was a war against the poor due to the abject poverty of those arrested or killed.

In August 18, 2017, Duterte admitted his mistake in trying to end drugs in 6 months, and it would take him his entire term to end it. Duterte stated that he had no idea when he took office that Philippines had become a failed state, having been degenerated into a narco-state. He blamed the Bureau of Customs whose people he thought was loyal to him. He also blamed the governors, mayors and policemen who were involved in drugs and threatened to have them killed. The Duterte admin had been using a "narco-list" which Duterte shares with the mass media to warn public officials allegedly involved in the drug trade to surrender. Duterte claims to have received several death threats because of his campaign against drugs. Unfazed by these, Duterte stated that he welcomes all attempts to kill him.

In September 2017, Duterte's son, [Paolo Duterte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paolo_Duterte) was implicated in a ₱6.4 Billion drugs smuggling case and was accused by Senator Trillanes of being a member of a Chinese Triad based on "foreign intelligence". Duterte reacted to this by urging soldiers to have a gun duel with Trillanes. Duterte also accused Trillanes of having several offshore accounts that was used for his "dealings" with China, showing bank account numbers in national television which had been circulating in social media. In response to this, Trillanes signed several bank waivers allowing anyone to investigate these alleged offshore accounts, which Duterte's camp dismissed, stating that those were joint accounts. Duterte also refused to sign a bank waiver after Trillanes dared him to do the same. To clear his name and disproved Duterte's allegations against him, Trillanes personally traveled to Singapore to the banks which he allegedly have an offshore account in. Accompanied by journalists and reporters, he enquired bank tellers for these alleged offshore accounts, which was revealed to be non-existent. Duterte admitted that he merely invented those bank account numbers to "entrap" Trillanes, but did not state how Trillanes was "entrapped". Afterwards, Duterte ordered the Philippine National Police to kill his children if they're caught being involved in drugs. Duterte states that showing his children's corpses to his critics will silence them for good.

Several senators have implored the public to express more outrage at Duterte's War on Drugs.

Personal life

Duterte is known for being an avid fan of [big bikes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cruiser_%28motorcycle%29) but detests luxury cars. He once owned a second-hand [Harley Davidson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harley_Davidson) and currently a [Yamaha Virago](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yamaha_Virago). He was once a habitual [smoker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smoking) but he eventually quit after a doctor's suggestion due to health concerns. Duterte is an avid reader of [Robert Ludlum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Ludlum) and [Sidney Sheldon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sidney_Sheldon) novels. Duterte is also known for his straightforward and vocal attitude in public especially in interviews, showing no hesitation in using [profanity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profanity) profusely live on-screen on numerous occasions despite formal requests by media groups and schools beforehand to abstain.

Duterte has his own local show in Davao City called *Gikan Sa Masa, Para Sa Masa* ("From the Masses, For the Masses") aired as a [block timer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Block_programming) on [ABS-CBN Davao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DXAS-TV). He is also a member of [Lex Talionis Fraternitas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lex_Talionis_Fraternitas), a fraternity based in the [San Beda College of Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Beda_College_of_Law) and the [Ateneo de Davao University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ateneo_de_Davao_University).

**Family**

Duterte's children (from L-R): Sebastian, Veronica, [Sara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) and [Paolo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paolo_Duterte) escort their father (center) to his [inauguration ceremony](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inauguration_of_Rodrigo_Duterte), June 30, 2016

Duterte with Avanceña along with their daughter, Veronica

Duterte was once married to [Elizabeth Abellana Zimmerman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Zimmerman), a flight attendant who hails from Davao City and is of [German American](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_American) descent who also traces her roots in [Tuburan, Cebu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuburan%2C_Cebu). They together have three children (from eldest to youngest): [Paolo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paolo_Duterte) ("Pulong"), [Sara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sara_Duterte) ("Inday Sara") and Sebastian ("Bastê"). Paolo and Sara ventured into politics while Baste, with no interest in politics, concentrated on business and surfing. Paolo married twice, first with Lovelie Sangkola whom he had separated with, and second with January Navares-Duterte, his current wife. Sara is currently married to a fellow lawyer while Baste has two kids: a daughter with a former girlfriend and a son with current girlfriend Kate Necesario. In 2012, Duterte made a notorious remark in a media interview regarding an incident where Paolo's name was allegedly linked to a carnapping ([portmanteau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portmanteau) of car and [kidnapping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kidnapping)) syndicate led by Ryan Yu. Duterte is infamously quoted as having said: "Kill my son Paolo if he is involved in crime." Paolo was never charged for lack of evidence and eventually won the Davao City vice mayoralty in 2013. Duterte's father Vicente died in 1968 while his mother Soledad died on February 4, 2012, at the age of 95. Zimmerman was diagnosed with [stage 3](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cancer_staging) [breast cancer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast_cancer) in 2015.

Duterte has been publicly very open about his infidelity and philandering while married to Zimmerman and cited it as the reason for his failed first marriage when asked in interviews. In 1998, Zimmerman filed a petition with the [Regional Trial Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regional_Trial_Court) in [Pasig](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pasig) to nullify her marriage. Duterte never appeared in court and did not contest Zimmerman's petition. Two years later, the court decided in her favor, ending the 27-year marriage of Duterte and Zimmerman. Duterte and Zimmerman have been on good terms in recent years with Zimmerman stating, "Yes, [Rodrigo] is really a very good leader. That is all he is. But when it comes to family, he is not capable of taking care of it." In 2001, Zimmerman eventually ran for a seat on the city council but lost. Duterte and Zimmerman are said to have patched things up and appear to be civil to each other, 15 years after their marriage was declared null and void. Zimmerman eventually joined the campaign trail for Duterte's presidential candidacy in early 2016 called *Byaheng Du30* in which she would travel by bus to major cities together with her daughter Sara and a number of delegates.

Duterte is currently living with his [common-law wife](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common-law_marriage) Cielito "Honeylet" Avanceña, a nurse, with whom he has one daughter named Veronica ("Kitty"). Duterte has eight grandchildren, half of whom are Muslims and the other half Christian.

**Ancestry**

On his paternal side, he shares familial ties with some of the prominent families of the Visayas, particularly the Almendrases & Duranos of [Danao, Cebu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danao%2C_Cebu).

**Religion**

Despite being raised as a communicant of the [Catholic Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church), on January 19, 2016, while meeting with businessmen in [Binondo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binondo), Manila, Duterte clarified that he has not attended [Mass](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_in_the_Catholic_Church) for quite some time already since he deemed it incompatible with his mayoral responsibilities: "If I listened to the Ten or to the priests" said Duterte, "I would not be able to do anything as a mayor". He then clarified that he still believes in God, but not in religion. On June 26, 2016, Duterte said he's [Christian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity), but also said that he believes "in one god [Allah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allah)".

**Health**

Duterte has [Buerger's disease](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thromboangiitis_obliterans), an inflammation of blood vessels, mostly in the limbs, and [Barrett's esophagus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrett%27s_esophagus), wherein esophageal cells are gradually replaced by gastrointestinal cells. He has denied rumors of throat.

**Prescription drug use**

Duterte admitted in December 2016 that he had been a user of the addictive [opioid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opioid) drug [Fentanyl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fentanyl). He said that a doctor prescribed the drug to alleviate back pain and headaches, but that he would take more than he was prescribed: "I was only given a fourth of [the whole patch], but no more, because of course my doctor learned that I was using the whole patch because I felt better". Fentanyl is described by the US [National Institute on Drug Abuse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Institute_on_Drug_Abuse) as "a powerful synthetic opioid analgesic that is similar to [morphine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morphine) but is 50 to 100 times more potent". Duterte later denied that he was a drug addict, and a spokesman stated that he was not affected by side-effects of the drug, which include confusion, anxiety and [hallucinations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hallucination).

Duterte has "bragged about his [Viagra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viagra)-fueled serial adultery", drawing criticism from the [GABRIELA Women's Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GABRIELA_Women%27s_Party). He told supporters at a rally in 2015: "When I was young, I could do overnight, which is more expensive. When I got old, I could do short time only because I have such a short time left. After one erection, that’s it. No more. Without Viagra, it’s even more difficult." Despite one of its representatives Luz Ilagan once stated that the people should focus on his track record and not on his womanizing ways, GABRIELA national chairperson Emmi de Jesus reiterated its stance against Duterte.