



**Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman
Climate Change Commission**

CLOSING REMARKS

**Gun Safety and Marksmanship Training
Bravo Company, 403 Ready Reserve Infantry Battalion
06 May 2018**

Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat. It is of great honor to speak before each and every one of you today.

First of all, I would like to congratulate you for completing your gun safety and marksmanship training.

As men and women in uniform, you bear a heavy responsibility—a responsibility that has evolved over time as we face new development challenges as a nation.

Crisis management and disaster response are integrated in defense and security for a reason: Climate change will continue to drive vulnerability and exacerbate existing risks.

It must be recognized, however, that even before the recognition of the climate change problem, the Armed Forces of the Philippines was already a key player in natural hazard events, whether in disaster or peaceful, "uneventful" times.

On top of keeping peace, restoring order, and protecting our people in times of conflict, the AFP bears the equally significant responsibility of rescuing civilians who are in danger and ensuring the timely delivery of relief goods in times of calamity.

Ladies and gentlemen, climate change is a clear threat to national security as it impacts severely on key sectors and on the welfare of our people.

Every year, we are ravaged by an average of 20 typhoons. But in recent years, the intensity of these typhoons has increased because of our warming planet.

The United Nations had reported that 90 percent of recorded major disasters were caused by natural hazards linked to the changing climate and the increasing weather extremes.

The Climate Change Commission sees the AFP as one of government's most critical contributors to the country's resilience building against climate change.

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The AFP, having the basic skills for risk management, would be a significant contributor to the knowledge and skills development on risk management of other sectors, especially the LGUs and community leaders.

Among other possible contributions of the AFP, its corps of engineers can help develop and establish local risk management infrastructure and systems, such as for multihazard early warning systems and services and efficient evacuation of populations at risk of natural hazard impacts. Its vast open spaces in camps could also serve populations displaced by disasters.

Moreover, the AFP can strengthen over-all national capability to address the underlying factors that aggravate disaster risks such as environmental degradation, especially those brought about by human actions.

In this regard, we in the Climate Change Commission see three ways to enhance the AFP's knowledge, skills, and institutional capacities on disaster avoidance, beyond its traditional capacities for disaster response and recovery.

First, we in the Commission endeavor to build the capacity of the AFP and its reservists for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation based on their current competencies and strengths.

Second, we aim to promote peer-to-peer learning among AFP officials and personnel on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation good practices in camps.

Third, we wish to make defense planning and budgeting informed by DRR-CCA and sensitive to disaster and climate risks.

In this regard, we in the Commission are closely coordinating with the top brass, and we are happy to share that we have been receiving positive response from your bosses.

Our dear reservists, let us explore possible areas of collaboration to mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction and management within your institution and at your local community.

Bear in mind that the Climate Change Commission is open to all kinds of partnership and cooperation towards the goal of protecting our people against the impacts of climate change.

Before I end, I would like to thank you for your volunteerism and service. Your commitment to environmental protection, rescue operation, and the security of our people should only be met with respect and admiration from us in the national government and from our people.

Thank you for your kind attention and I am looking forward to seeing all of you again soon.

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