

# Philippine president-elect Duterte on killings: Corrupt journalists asked for it

Tuesday 12 July 2016, by [AFP](#) (Date first published: 31 May 2016).

**The foul-mouthed politician launches a series of post-election tirades against criminals and repeats his vows to kill them - particularly drug traffickers, rapists and murderers.**

DAVAO, Philippines – Philippine president-elect Rodrigo Duterte said on Tuesday, May 31, that corrupt journalists were legitimate targets of assassination, as he amped up his anti-crime crusade with bounty offers for the deaths of drug traffickers.

Duterte won this month's elections by a landslide largely due to an explosive law-and-order platform in which he pledged to end crime within 6 months by killing tens of thousands of criminals.

The foul-mouthed politician has launched a series of post-election tirades against criminals and repeated his vows to kill them – particularly drug traffickers, rapists and murderers.

In a press conference called on Tuesday to announce his cabinet in his southern hometown of Davao, Duterte said journalists who took bribes or engaged in other corrupt activities also deserved to die.

"Just because you're a journalist you are not exempted from assassination, if you're a son of a bitch," Duterte said when asked how he would address the problem of media killings in the Philippines after a reporter was shot dead in Manila last week.

The Philippines is one of the most dangerous nations in the world for journalists, with 174 murdered since a chaotic and corruption-plagued democracy replaced the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos 3 decades ago.

"Most of those killed, to be frank, have done something. You won't be killed if you don't do anything wrong," Duterte said, adding that many journalists in the Philippines were corrupt.

Duterte also said freedom of expression provisions in the constitution did not necessarily protect a person from violent repercussions for defamation.

"That can't be just freedom of speech. The constitution can no longer help you if you disrespect a person," he said.

Duterte raised the case of Jun Pala, a journalist and politician who was murdered in Davao in 2003. Gunmen on a motorcycle shot dead Pala, who was a vocal critic of Duterte. His murder has never been solved.

"If you are an upright journalist, nothing will happen to you," said Duterte, who has ruled Davao as mayor for most of the past two decades and is accused of links to vigilante death squads.

"The example here is Pala. I do not want to diminish his memory but he is a rotten son of a bitch. He

deserved it.”

Duterte, who will assume office on June 30, also said he would offer bounties to law enforcement officers who killed drug traffickers.

He said P3 million (\$64,000) would be paid to law enforcers for killing drug lords, with lesser amounts for lower-ranking people in drug syndicates. – Rappler.com

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\*Published 11:13 PM, May 31, 2016. Updated 12:42 AM, June 01, 2016:

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/134921-duterte-endorses-killing-corrupt-journalists>

\* Editor’s note: We have edited the headline to better capture the nuance of President-elect Duterte’s statement.