

Lopez, Salvador P.

10/12.04

PRESS STATEMENT BY DR. SALVADOR P. LOPEZ

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Yesterday, I announced the resumption of classes if conditions permit. Hundreds of students responded to the announcement. Unfortunately classes could not be held as we had hoped.

I am now convinced that only if the barricades are removed and the buildings vacated would it be possible to resume normal academic activity.

It will be recalled that upon my intercession, the Quezon City police and the Metrocom withdrew from the campus last Wednesday evening in order to give the University community a chance to solve the problems arising from the present emergency. I have tried to bring together all the sectors of the community - - students, faculty, administrative personnel, and residents - - to help me take positive steps to restore peace and order, while maintaining the freedom and integrity of the University as an academic community.

Unfortunately, our efforts to this end have proved unavailing.

Meanwhile, the police authorities are insisting that they have a duty under the law to take action with respect to what they claim is the increasing incidents of crime in the campus during the emergency. They have declared that they would enter the campus and remove the barricades, by force if necessary. To this I am unalterably opposed.

If, therefore, the barricades are not removed and the police forcibly enter the campus, I shall be constrained to resign.

I cannot in conscience sanction any police action which would violate the freedom and integrity of the University, and result in serious loss of life and destruction of property.

I, therefore, address an earnest appeal to the students to remove the barricades at once.