

Declaration of Independence of the Philippines

Sunday 12 June 2022, by [BAUTISTA Ambrosio Rianzares](#) (Date first published: 12 June 1898).

In the town of Cavite-Viejo, Province of Cavite, this 12th day of June 1898: BEFORE ME, Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista, War Counsellor and Special Delegate designated to proclaim and solemnize this Declaration of Independence by the Dictatorial Government of the Philippines, pursuant to, and by virtue of, a Decree issued by the Egregious Dictator Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy,

The undersigned assemblage of military chiefs and others of the army who could not attend, as well as the representatives of the various towns,

Taking into account the fact that the people of this country are already tired of bearing the ominous yoke of Spanish domination,

Because of arbitrary arrests and abuses of the Civil Guards who cause deaths in connivance with and even under the express orders of their superior officers who at times would order the shooting of those placed under arrest under the pretext that they attempted to escape in violation of known Rules and Regulations, which abuses were left unpunished, and because of unjust deportations of illustrious Filipinos, especially those decreed by General Blanco at the instigation of the Archbishop and the friars interested in keeping them in ignorance for egoistic and selfish ends, which deportations were carried out through processes more execrable than those of the Inquisition which every civilized nation repudiates as a trial without hearing,

Had resolved to start a revolution in August 1896 in order to regain the independence and sovereignty of which the people had been deprived by Spain through Governor Miguel Lopez de Legazpi who, continuing the course followed by his predecessor Ferdinand Magellan who landed on the shores of Cebu and occupied said Island by means of a Pact of Friendship with Chief Tupas, although he was killed in battle that took place in said shores to which battle he was provoked by Chief Kalipulako of Mactan who suspected his evil designs, landed on the Island of Bohol by entering also into a Blood Compact with its Chief Sikatuna, with the purpose of later taking by force the Island of Cebu, and because his successor Tupas did not allow him to occupy it, he went to Manila, the capital, winning likewise the friendship of its Chiefs Soliman and Lakandula, later taking possession of the city and the whole Archipelago in the name of Spain by virtue of an order of King Philip II, and with these historical precedents and because in international law the prescription established by law to legalize the vicious acquisition of private property is not recognized, the legitimacy of such revolution can not be put in doubt which was calmed but not completely stifled by the pacification proposed by Don Pedro A. Paterno with Don Emilio Aguinaldo as President of the Republic established in Biak-na-Bato and accepted by Governor-General Don Fernando Primo de Rivera under terms, both written and oral, among them being a general amnesty for all deported and convicted persons; that by reason of the non-fulfillment of some of the terms, after the destruction of the Spanish Squadron by the North American Navy, and bombardment of the plaza of Cavite, Don Emilio Aguinaldo returned in order to initiate a new revolution and no sooner had he given the order to rise on the 31st of last month when several towns anticipating the revolution, rose in revolt on the 28th, such that a Spanish contingent of 178 men, between Imus and Cavite-Viejo, under the command of a major of the Marine Infantry capitulated, the revolutionary movement spreading like wild fire to

other towns of Cavite and the other provinces of Bataan, Pampanga, Batangas, Bulacan, Laguna, and Morong, some of them with seaports and such was the success of the victory of our arms, truly marvelous and without equal in the history of colonial revolutions that in the first mentioned province only the Detachments in Naic and Indang remained to surrender; in the second, all Detachments had been wiped out; in the third, the resistance of the Spanish forces was localized in the town of San Fernando where the greater part of them are concentrated, the remainder in Macabebe, Sexmoan, and Guagua; in the fourth, in the town of Lipa; in the fifth, in the capital and in Calumpit; and in the last two remaining provinces, only in their respective capitals, and the city of Manila will soon be besieged by our forces as well as the provinces of Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pangasinan, La Union, Zambales, and some others in the Visayas where the revolution at the time of the pacification and others even before, so that the independence of our country and the revindication of our sovereignty is assured.

And having as witness to the rectitude of our intentions the Supreme Judge of the Universe, and under the protection of the Powerful and Humanitarian Nation, the United States of America, we do hereby proclaim and declare solemnly in the name and by authority of the people of these Philippine Islands,

That they are and have the right to be free and independent; that they have ceased to have any allegiance to the Crown of Spain; that all political ties between them are and should be completely severed and annulled; and that, like other free and independent States, they enjoy the full power to make War and Peace, conclude commercial treaties, enter into alliances, regulate commerce, and do all other acts and things which an Independent State has a right to do,

And imbued with firm confidence in Divine Providence, we hereby mutually bind ourselves to support this Declaration with our lives, our fortunes, and with our most sacred possession, our Honor.

We recognize, approve, and ratify, with all the orders emanating from the same, the Dictatorship established by Don Emilio Aguinaldo whom we revere as the Supreme Head of this Nation, which today begins to have a life of its own, in the conviction that he has been the instrument chosen by God, in spite of his humble origin, to effectuate the redemption of this unfortunate country as foretold by Dr. Don Jose Rizal in his magnificent verses which he composed in his prison cell prior to his execution, liberating it from the Yoke of Spanish domination,

And in punishment for the impunity with which the Government sanctioned the commission of abuses by its officials, and for the unjust execution of Rizal and others who were sacrificed in order to please the insatiable friars in their hydropical thirst for vengeance against and extermination of all those who oppose their Machiavellian ends, trampling upon the Penal Code of these Islands, and of those suspected persons arrested by the Chiefs of Detachments at the instigation of the friars, without any form nor semblance of trial and without any spiritual aid of our sacred Religion; and likewise, and for the same ends, eminent Filipino priests, Doctor Don Jose Burgos, Don Mariano Gomez, and Don Jacinto Zamora were hanged whose innocent blood was shed due to the intrigues of these so-called Religious corporations which made the authorities to believe that the military uprising at the fort of San Felipe in Cavite on the night of January 21, 1872 was instigated by those Filipino martyrs, thereby impeding the execution of the decree-sentence issued by the Council of State in the appeal in the administrative case interposed by the secular clergy against the Royal Orders that directed that the parishes under them within the jurisdiction of this Bishopric be turned over to the Recollects in exchange for those controlled by them in Mindanao which were to be transferred to the Jesuits, thus revoking them completely and ordering the return of those parishes, all of which proceedings are on file with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to which they are sent last month of last year for the issuance of the proper Royal Degree which, in turn, caused the growth of

the tree of liberty in this our dear land that grew more and more through the iniquitous measures of oppression, until the last drop from our chalice of suffering having been drained, the first spark of revolution broke out in Caloocan, spread out to Santamesa and continued its course to the adjoining regions of the province where the unequalled heroism of its inhabitants fought a onesided battle against superior forces of General Blanco and General Polavieja for a period of three months, without proper arms nor ammunitions, except bolos, pointed bamboos, and arrows.

Moreover, we confer upon our famous Dictator Don Emilio Aguinaldo all the powers necessary to enable him to discharge the duties of Government, including the prerogatives of granting pardon and amnesty,

And, lastly, it was resolved unanimously that this Nation, already free and independent as of this day, must use the same flag which up to now is being used, whose design and colors are found described in the attached drawing, the white triangle signifying the distinctive emblem of the famous Society of the "Katipunan" which by means of its blood compact inspired the masses to rise in revolution; the three stars, signifying the three principal Islands of this Archipelago-Luzon, Mindanao, and Panay where this revolutionary movement started; the sun representing the gigantic steps made by the sons of the country along the path of Progress and Civilization; the eight rays, signifying the eight provinces-Manila, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Laguna, and Batangas—which declared themselves in a state of war as soon as the first revolt was initiated; and the colors of Blue, Red, and White, commemorating the flag of the United States of North America, as a manifestation of our profound gratitude towards this Great Nation for its disinterested protection which it lent us and continues lending us.

And holding up this flag of ours, I present it to the gentlemen here assembled—Don Segundo Arellano, Don Tiburcio del Rosario, Sergio Matias, Don Agapito Zialcita, Don Flaviano Alonzo, Don Mariano Legazpi, Don Jose Turiano Santiago y Acosta, Don Aurelio Tolentino, Don Felix Ferrer, Don Felipe Buencamino, Don Fernando Canon Faustino, (Hijo), Don Anastacio Pinzun, Don Timoteo Bernabe, Don Flaviano Rodriguez, Don Gavino Masancay, Don Narciso Mayuga, Don Gregorio Villa, Don Luis Perez Tagle, Don Canuto Celestino, Don Marcos Jocson, Don Martin de los Reyes, Don Ciriaco Bausa, Don Manuel Santcs, Don Mariano Toribio, Don Gabriel Reyes, Don Hugo Lim, Don Emiliano Lim, Don Fausto Tinorio, Don Rosendo Simon, Don Leon Tanjanque, Don Gregorio Bonifacio, Don Manuel Salafranca, Don Simon Villareal, Don Calixto Lara, Don Buenaventura Toribio, Don Zacarias Fajardo, Don Florencio Manalo, Don Roman Gana, Don Marcelino Gomez, Don Valentin Polintan, Don Felix Polintan, Don Evaristo Dimalanta, Don Gregorio Alvarez, Don Sabas de Guzman, Don Esteban Francisco, Don Guido Yaptinchay, Don Mariano Rianzares Bautista, Don Francisco Arambulo, Don Antonio Gonzalez, Don Juan Arevalo, Don Ramon Delfino, Don Honorio Tiongco, Don Francisco del Rosario, Don Epifanio Saguil, Don Ladislao Afable Jose, Don Sixto Roldan, Don Luis de Lara, Don Marcelo Basa, Don Jose Medina, Don Epifanio Cirisia, Don Pastor Lopez de Leon, Don Mariano de los Santos, Don Santiago Garcia, Don Claudio Tria Tirona, Don Estanislao Tria Tirona, Don Daniel Tria Tirona, Don Andres Tria Tirona, Don Carlos Tria Tirona, Don Sulpicio P. Antony, Don Epitacio Asuncion, Don Catalino Ramon, Don Juan Bordador, Don Jose del Rosario, Don Proceso Pulido, Don Jose Maria del Rosario, Don Ramon Magcamco, Don Antonio Calingo, Don Pedro Mendiola, Don Estanislao Calingo, Don Numeriano Castillo, Don Federico Tomacruz, Don Teodoro Yatco, Don Ladislao Diwa,

Who solemnly swear to recognize and defend it unto the last drop of their blood.

In witness thereof, I certify that this Act of Declaration of Independence was signed by me and by all those here assembled including the only stranger who attended those proceedings, a citizen of the U.S.A., Mr. L. M. Johnson, a Colonel of Artillery.

Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista

12 June 1898

The declaration, in the form of a proclamation, in the presence of a huge crowd, was done on June 12, 1898 at the ancestral home of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo between four and five in the afternoon in Cavite el Viejo (now Kawit), Cavite, some 30 kilometers south of Manila. The event saw the unfurling of the national flag of the Philippines, made in Hong Kong by Mrs. Marcela Agoncillo, Lorenza Agoncillo and Delfina Herboza, and the performance of the Marcha Filipina Magdalo, as the country's national anthem, today known as Lupang Hinirang, made by Julian Felipe and played by the San Francisco de Malabon marching band.

The Act of the Declaration of Independence was prepared and written by Ambrosio Rianzares Bautista in Spanish, who also read the said declaration. A passage in the Declaration reminds one of another passage in the American Declaration of Independence. The Philippine Declaration was signed by ninety-eight persons, among them an American army officer who witnessed the proclamation. The proclamation of Philippine independence was, however, promulgated on August 1, when many towns had already been organized under the rules laid down by the Dictatorial Government.

The June 12 proclamation was later modified by another proclamation done at Malolos, Bulacan, upon the insistence of Apolinario Mabini, who objected to the original proclamation, which essentially placed the Philippines under the protection of the United States.

P.S.

- <https://thecorpusjuris.com/constitutions/declaration-of-independence.php>