

# Palace reminds gov't agencies on rules for inking int'l pacts

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Malacañang has reminded government agencies that negotiations or signing of international agreements and foreign loans and grants will require the approval of President Rodrigo Duterte.

This was contained in the Memorandum Circular No. 16 signed by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea on April 11 but was released by Malacañang on April 18.

The memorandum ordered all heads of departments, bureaus, offices, agencies or instrumentalities of the government, including government-owned or -controlled corporation (GOCCs) and state universities and colleges (SUCs) to coordinate closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) prior to the negotiation and signing of international agreements.

Prior to the negotiation and signing of international agreements, the memorandum said the lead agency must secure an authorization from the Office of the President (OP) “unless the DFA or the DOF determines that the nature or scope of the agreement does not require such authorization.”

Agencies seeking the President’s approval for an international agreement must “strictly observe and comply with the requirements of complete staff work” at least 10 working days before their desired date of issuance.

In a statement on Tuesday, presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said the memorandum “ensures that all agreements entered into by the government undergo thorough evaluation of all the agencies concerned, especially the DFA which is the lead agency for PH’s foreign relations.”

“Considering the massive and growing interest of foreign governments and investors in the country, the Office of the President has deemed it appropriate to issue the MC to ensure the effective and efficient coordination among agencies,” Abella said.