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FROM ARREST TO AFFIRMATION:

Developments in Rodrigo Duterte's Case
from the Past Year

More than a year has passed since the arrest of Rodrigo Duterte on March 11, 2025, an event that in itself was a major triumph of hundreds of families left-behind by the victims of the so-called drug war. The months that followed evoked a mixture of anxiety and confusion as the case underwent multiple procedural delays. Nevertheless, the ICC proceedings stand today as a beacon of hope for the victims' families.

EVENT	DATE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Arrest and Initial Court Appearance	March 9, 2025	Rodrigo Duterte addressed Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in Hong Kong during a campaign rally for the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino (PDP-Laban) a few days before the midterm elections.
	March 11, 2025	Duterte was arrested by the Philippine National Police (PNP) in cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and was flown to The Hague in the Netherlands.
	March 14, 2025	The ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I held a hearing to verify the identity of Duterte, inform him of the crimes he allegedly committed, and inform him of his rights before the Court. He attended via video link appearing frail and sickly.
Challenges on the Court's Jurisdiction	May 1, 2025	Duterte's Defence team submitted a document challenging the ICC's jurisdiction on the alleged crimes, emphasizing the Philippine's 2019 withdrawal from the Rome Statute.

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Urgent Request for Interim Release	June 12, 2025	The Defence submitted an urgent request for Duterte's interim release. To the victims' relatives, this posed a heightened risk of Duterte evading accountability and of violence returning to their communities.
	June 23, 2025	The ICC Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) released its view on the request, echoing the sentiments of the victims' families and rejecting the plea.
"Bring Him Home" and the Spread of AI Disinformation	June 24, 2025	Senator Robinhood Padilla filed a resolution seeking the immediate repatriation of Duterte.
	July 10, 2025	Senator Alan Peter Cayetano filed a resolution seeking house arrest for Duterte.
	July 27, 2025	Vice President Sara Duterte echoed the call for her father's urgent interim release to an audience of Filipino expatriates in Seoul, South Korea. Meanwhile, artificial intelligence (AI)-edited and generated content supporting the repatriation of Duterte and fueling the mockery of victims and their families circulate in social media.
Submission of the Document Containing Charges	July 4, 2025	The OTP submitted the Document Containing Charges (DCC), which lays out the three counts of crimes against humanity Duterte is suspected of.
Postponement of the Confirmation of Charges	August 18, 2025	The Defence submitted a request for the indefinite adjournment of the process, stating that Duterte is not fit for participation.
	September 8, 2025	The Pre-Trial Chamber I announced the postponement of the Confirmation of Charges, originally set from September 23 to 27.
Positive Shifts in the Tide for Victims' Families	September 26, 2025	The Pre-Trial Chamber denied the request for interim release.
	October 23, 2025	The Pre-Trial Chamber rejected the Defence's challenge on the ICC's jurisdiction on Duterte's case.

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Positive Shifts in the Tide for Victims' Families	November 8, 2025	Philippine Ombudsman Jesus Crispin Remulla claimed that the ICC has already issued an arrest warrant against Senator Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa. Dela Rosa began his months-long absence from the Senate.
	November 28, 2025	The ICC Appeals Chamber denied the Defence's appeal for interim release, which was submitted on August 18.
	December 18, 2025	A panel of medical experts announce that Duterte is fit to participate in the proceedings of his case.
Appointment of the Common Legal Representatives for Victims (CLRVs)	January 26, 2026	The ICC Registry appoints lawyers Joel Butuyan, Gilbert Andres, and Paolina Massidda as Common Legal Representatives for the Victims (CLRVs). They are also joined by Nicolene Arcaina as case manager.
	February 11, 2026	A few days ahead of the Confirmation of Charges, the Defence sought the disqualification of Butuyan, Andres, and Arcaina from the CLRV, citing conflict of interest.
	February 20, 2026	The Court rejected the request for disqualification and ruled out the Defence's argument on the existence of a conflict of interest.
Confirmation of Charges	February 23 - 27, 2026	The Confirmation of Charges Hearing was held and broadcasted live by the ICC. The OTP, Defence, and CLRV each presented their arguments before the Pre-Trial Chamber.
	April 22, 2026	ICC jurisdiction over Duterte's alleged crimes is confirmed by the Appeals Chamber.
	April 23, 2026	All three charges against Duterte were confirmed. The Pre-Trial Chamber announced that the case will now proceed to trial, with the first hearing set to November 30, 2026.
Bato on the Run	May 11, 2026	After six months of absence, Bato dela Rosa reappeared at the Senate, causing a standoff with the NBI and a lockdown at the Senate building. On the same day, the ICC publicly released dela Rosa's arrest warrant.
	May 14, 2026	Dela Rosa reportedly slipped out of the Senate building after three days of protective custody. He remains at large as of writing.

"Bilang pamilya ng biktima ng EJK, lubos ang pasasalamat ko sa ICC sa kanilang masusing pagsusuri at nararapat na desisyon sa pagkumprima ng sakdal laban kay Duterte. Isa na naman itong tagumpay na hakbang naming mga pamilya ng mga pinatay sa ilalim ng madugong Duterte regime. Napakalaking kagaanan sa aming loob na sa wakas ay mauumpisahan nang harapin ni Duterte ang kaniyang mga kasalanan."

(As a relative of an EJK victim, I wholeheartedly thank the ICC for their thorough examination and dutiful decision to confirm the charges against Duterte. This is another momentous win for us, the families of the victims of the bloody Duterte regime. A tremendous weight has been taken off our chest, knowing that Duterte will finally face his crimes.)

