

# Palace cites healthy PH democracy

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DEMOCRACY in the Philippines is “vibrant and strong,” a top aide to President Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday, rejecting the observation of a UN investigator.

The comment from UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples Victoria Tauli-Corpuz that the country had become “very authoritarian” showed “how detached she is with the realities happening in the Philippines,” Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea said.

Tauli-Corpuz, in a speech at the Human Rights Festival in Milan, said the government “controls” the legislature.

She also cited impeachment proceedings against Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno and the imprisonment of Sen. Leila de Lima, an administration critic.

“Democracy in the Philippines is vibrant and strong. All the branches of the government are functioning and the rule of law thrives,” Medialdea said in a statement.

“The Executive branch respects the separation of powers and the independence of the other co-equal branches and doesn’t meddle with their affairs,” he said.

The Department of Justice had petitioned to label 600 individuals, including Tauli-Corpuz, as terrorists over their alleged links to the communist New People’s Army.