

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
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**POST-VISIT STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. ON HIS OFFICIAL
VISIT TO WASHINGTON, D.C., USA**

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Magandang hapon sa inyong lahat. And thank you for this opportunity for me to able to make my final statement on this trip from --- of the Philippine delegation to the United States that we have just finished.

So, seeing as --- dahil hindi nga ako --- dahil tutuloy nga ako sa UK, sabi ko maaari ito na 'yung -- kung baga hindi ako makakapag-arrival statement doon sa Maynila, kaya't ipagkakataon ko na lang ito na makapagbigay ng statement tungkol nga dito sa kakatapos lamang na bisita natin sa United States at sa pamahalaan at kay President Biden, sa pamahalaan ng Estados Unidos.

So, this brings to an end my official working visit to Washington, D.C.

Over the past four days, I met with Joe Biden, the President, Vice President Kamala Harris, my counterpart in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, and several other Cabinet Officials who joined President Biden in our expanded bilateral meetings.

Our discussions were very productive. We are of the same mind that our long-standing alliance and partnership must be adapted to address the challenges of our time in order to bring about lasting peace and sustainable prosperity to our countries and to our peoples.

The joint statement we issued outlines the key initiatives that we will pursue across all areas of our bilateral engagement to achieve these objectives.

I look forward to having our respective teams follow through on the many areas of cooperation that we have identified, this will help advance our key priorities with respect to agriculture and food security, and to promote energy security as we transition to clean energy, and boost trade and build resilience of our supply chains, enhancing connectivity and digitalization, also of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In addition to existing bilateral policy dialogue platforms and working groups, we agreed to institutionalize a Ministerial-level study group to advance cooperation on climate-smart agriculture, which I myself will lead.

I also met with quite a few U.S. companies—both those looking to further expand their already valuable presence and operations in the Philippines and those looking to invest in our country for the first time.

They are all committed to be part of this development journey that we have embarked upon. We return to the Philippines with over USD 1.3 billion in investment pledges that have the potential to create around 6,700 new jobs for Filipinos within the country.

When realized, these investments will support our country's economic recovery efforts and further strengthen the foundations of our economic environment.

We expect even more investment that will lead to materialize once these companies firm up their plans. Nevertheless, the interest is a welcome sign of their trust and confidence in the Philippines as an investment destination.

Together, we will be working on addressing some of our key economic challenges, particularly food, energy, and health security, digital connectivity, and the cross-cutting issues of climate change and pandemic preparedness.

The discussions that we had with the U.S. business community also affirm the optimism [with] which international investors view the Philippines today. It was a great pride that I received their praises for the talent, ingenuity, [and] work ethic of Filipinos, this has become the main driving force for bringing their investments to our country.

We also welcome all the initiatives to expand collaboration with the Philippine government and our universities to support the continued growth of local talent. These, complemented by our game-changing economic reforms, will serve as a firm foundation for an indomitable partnership.

My visit would not have been complete without meeting with the Filipino Community from the U.S. East Coast, as well as some who came all the way from the Caribbean. I thanked them for their contributions to their communities in the Philippines and in the United States. They continue to bring honor to our country in the practice of their chosen professions, they continue to bring a shine to the reputation of Philippines and Filipinos with their philanthropic work, especially during calamities and disasters, that have touched so many lives.

I urged our fellow kababayans here in the East Coast to continue to be our partners in promoting the country for tourism and investments.

I then capped my visit with a speaking engagement at the Center [for] Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where I shared my reflections on why I think the Philippines and the United States [have] been and will continue to be naturally drawn to each other. Beyond our treaty alliance, we are bound by [our] shared values and our commitment to mutual prosperity.

I underscored my main message during this visit: The Philippines and the United States will have to forge closer economic ties and ensure that our bilateral partnership works for our

peoples. That will bring a truly important alliance, a truly valuable partnership, and a continuing friendship into the 21st century. Thank you.

I think there are few questions.

Q&A:

Q: Good evening, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Hi. Good evening. *[Good evening na ba?]*

Q: Yes. After the US and the Philippines finalized its bilateral defense guidelines, China said that the South China Sea should not be used as a hunting ground for forces outside of the region and it opposed what it called as meddling in the issue to harm China's sovereignty and maritime rights. What can you say about this, sir?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, I do not think --- as representing as a Filipino and representing the Philippines, I don't feel alluded to. How can we --- how can anyone say that we are not a party and interest in all of these issues?

So, I think that kind of statement was directed more towards the United States than it was for the Philippines.

I think the Philippines' actions in continuing to strengthen our capabilities to continue to find and forge partnerships with the United States and both in the governmental sector and also with the private corporations that we have spoken to as an important part of what we have been trying to develop in the past --- almost one year.

And that is I think only right and proper because we in the Philippines need to do this if we are going to go forward and find new opportunities for our people at hindi naman masasabi na walang karapatan ang Pilipinas na gawin lahat 'yun.

Kaya't 'yang statement na 'yan ay sa palagay ko hindi naka-direct sa Pilipinas.

Q: Okay. Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Hi, sir. Good afternoon po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good afternoon.

Q: Sir, prior to this trip you said that you want the Mutual Defense Treaty to evolve. In your sit-down po with President Joe Biden, were there specific provisions of the MDT that you discussed with him? And if so po, what was his reaction?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Again? You have to --- if the?

Q: The specific provisions --- prior to this trip you said that you want the MDT to evolve po. Were you able to mention specific...?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: We are not yet there. What we did in this trip and what we have managed to formulate are the guidelines pa lang doon sa mga magiging provision at saka magiging detalye.

But the premise continuous to be the same. It's a strengthening of relationship and we... The word evolve is one that I have been using and that other people have seem to have adopted

because that is exactly what it is that we need to do.

We have to evolve and why? And to explain it, is that we need to evolve because the situation that we face is evolving and when I speak about the evolving situation, I'm not only taking about security and defense, I'm talking about trade, and I'm talking about economy, I'm talking about climate change, I'm talking about all the other aspects of our society, of our economy and even our government that we have to --- we have to adjust as a response to what changes we are facing.

Iba na ang mundo ngayon. Hindi na kagaya kung ano 'yung mundo natin noong November ng 2019. Hindi na natin makikita 'yun. At talaga naman ayaw nating bumalik doon tayo ay tumutungo sa kinabukasan natin at 'yun kailangan natin kilalanin kung ano ang kailangan gawin dito sa bagong sitwasyon kaya't evolve ang aking ginagamit na salita.

Q: Thank you sir.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Thank you, President. This is from the Asahi Shimbun, Japanese newspaper. I have two questions. So, first, regarding the tension in the Taiwan Strait. You were meeting with President Biden, your counterpart. What kind of discussion did you have to [inaudible] contingency in Taiwan and how do you react to the Taiwan Strait crisis? And secondly, after meeting with President Biden, joint statement mentioned the trilateral cooperation including Japan and Australia. So, what kind of cooperation do you expect? And what kind of role do you expect Japan to play for the stability and peace in the region?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: I expect a developing cooperation. Patuloy ang pagpatibay natin ng ating pagsasama at pagpa-partner dito sa ating mga --- sa iba't ibang bansa na hindi lamang 'yung mga nakapaligid sa Pilipinas. Hindi lamang ang ating karatig bansa kung hindi pati na ang mga bansa na dati hindi naman natin nakakausap dahil walang pangangailangan na magkaroon tayo ng partnership.

Kagaya ng pagsagot ko doon sa nakaraang tanong, 'yun talaga ay nagbago lahat. Kaya't kailangan natin na ayusin lahat ang ating mga arrangements.

We have to fix the arrangements, our alliances, so that they conform to the needs of the day. And that again, comes back again to that process of evolution.

So, but --- because the situation is new then the solutions have to also be new and that is why we are now formulating those partnerships between all the different countries, not just Australia, not just the United States, also South Korea, also Japan, all of the ASEAN Member States and I think we can continue to do --- we can continue to do that and I know that the countries, these countries that I have mentioned have been --- are already of the same mind.

Pareho ng pag-iisip tungkol sa mga pangangailangan na natin gawin at kung saan natin --- saan ang pinaka-makakatulong sa Pilipinas na mga partnership.

Sila rin ay ganyan din ang kanilang pag-iisip. Sila rin ay naghahanap na nga ng mga --- magsama-sama upang harapin ang bagong mundo na sabay-sabay.

It seems that the message of unity that we were espousing during the campaign is beginning to extend to unity not only in the local situation in the Philippines, but also in the international scale.

Kaya't 'yun ang naging talumpati ko noong ako'y nagsalita sa UN na kailangan na natin magkaisa, kailangan na tayo magkaintindihan upang makapagtulungan tayo sa isa't isa.

So, I think it is not only the Philippines that thinks that way. It's not only Australia that thinks that way. It's not only the US that thinks that way. I think every country in the world is thinking in those terms.

At least, most of the countries that have not --- that are --- continue to keep open relationships with their partner governments around the world are also of the same mind.

And that's why I'm confident that that process will continue and will go from strength to strength.

Q: Magandang gabi po, Mr. President. Sir, you just made very interesting remarks during the CSIS forum this afternoon, you said: "The syndicates have grown stronger, wealthier, and more influential, [worryingly?] so." This despite what you mentioned abuses committed by certain elements in the government. Sir, how do you assess the drug war of the previous administration and how do you intend to go after --- to make those people behind those abuses accountable?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: I'm in no position to assess the administration of anybody else. That is not proper for me to --- that's not a proper role for me to take.

But when you asked what we are doing, well, alam naman ninyo lahat. We formed the commission to --- and I asked for the resignation of all the police officers, colonel up, so that we can assess and see and study what their records are.

Kung sila ba ay kasama sa mga sindikato, kung sila ba ay mayroong, may kinalaman dito sa patuloy na paglago ng drug problem sa Pilipinas.

Kaya't 'yun ang palagay kong unang-una dahil hindi mangyayari ito. Tingnan na lang ninyo ang sitwasyon, ang drug problem sa lahat ng iba't ibang bansa sa buong mundo.

Ang mga nagpapatakbo niyan ay hindi 'yung mga maliliit na tao na nakikita mo sa lansangan na sila mismo nagbebenta o user sila. Hindi naman sila ang nagpapatakbo niyan. Ang nagpapatakbo niyan ay 'yung mga matataas na opisyal, kung minsan sa police, kung minsan sa gobyerno. So, 'yun ang hinahabol natin.

Kaya't sinimulan natin sa police dahil law enforcement sila eh. Sila ang dapat na nakatutok dito sa problemang ito. Kung hindi gumaganda ang sitwasyon, ibig sabihin hindi nila nagagawa ang trabaho nila at kaya naman natin ginawa 'yung ginawa natin upang tanungin bakit hindi ninyo nagawa ang trabaho ninyo?

Baka may kakulangan sa sistema ng police, ayusin natin. Eh baka naman talaga ito ay kasabwat doon sa ating mga tinatawag na drug lord at kung 'yung iba ay sila mismo ang nagiging drug lord.

Kaya't 'yun ang mga hinahabol natin. Kaya't 'yan ang palagay ko malaking bagay 'yan. Ngayon, sinasabi na kung magtanggap --- kahit na ma-identify natin sila, tatanggalin natin, may papalit diyari, 'yun ang iiwasan natin, 'yun ang binabantayan natin ngayon.

So sa kasalukuyan, 'yung dalawa na sa police na nagbigay ng courtesy resignation ay tinanggap na ang resignation. May 30, labis na 30 na under investigation pa rin. Titingnan natin kung sila ba ay dapat kasuhan, kung sila ba ay kailangan suspendihin, kung ano man dahil kung mayroon man silang kinalaman sa mga drug syndicate, iba-ibang involvement.

Mayroon 'yung pinababayaan lang, look the other way 'ika nga. They just look the other way. Ano 'yung magiging parusa para diyan?

As opposed to, 'yun talagang pinapalakad, 'yung mga opisyal pinapalakad 'yung mga tropa nila para tulungan ang drug syndicate. Iba naman siguro ang sitwasyon na 'yun. Kaya't 'yun ang pinag-aaralan natin para naman...

Karamihan naman --- marami naman sa pulis wala namang involvement diyan, mababait at talagang nagsisipag upang matuklasan at mabuo ang mga kaso na hinahawakan nila.

Kaya't kailangan natin maging maingat din na hindi tayo --- hindi natin hahabulin 'yung mga walang kinalaman.

Kaya't kailangan natin pag-aralan kung sino ba talaga ang dapat imbestigahan, kung sino ba talaga ang dapat parusahan.

Q: Salamat po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Good evening, sir. May we know po kung anong oras po kayo tutungo sa United Kingdom for King Charles's coronation? And secondly, where do you see the Philippine-UK relations under King Charles reign and ano po 'yung nakikita nating benefits po nito? At lastly, tatanggapin po ba natin 'yung imbitasyon po ni Prime Minister Rishi Sunak na makipag-dayalogo po as inyo?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, aalis ako mamaya in a few hours, in two hours, aalis na ako in a while para makatungo --- para darating ako sa --- magla-landing ako sa Gatwick dahil ang dahilan kung bakit sa Gatwick ako magla-land...

Usually, hindi sa Gatwick ang pinupuntahan ngunit ngayon ay pupuntahan ko 'yung Gatwick dahil titingnan ko 'yung operation ng kanilang airport kung bagay ba ito --- 'yung mga lessons learned nila, 'yung mga ginagawa nila, kung best practices 'yan na puwede nating dalhin sa Pilipinas.

At isa sa pinakamalaking dahilan kung bakit ako pupunta ay kilala namin si --- Prince Charles pa ang pagkakilala ko sa kanya.

At kaming lahat ay noong namatay nga si Queen Elizabeth ay hindi ako nakapunta at ang pinadala ko si --- ang kapatid ko na si Irene na kilalang-kilala rin ni Prince Charles.

Kaya't sabi ko naman ay palagay ko dahil magkakilala kami dapat naman ay napakalaking bagay na siya'y kokoranahan bilang hari ng United Kingdom, ay dapat makapag-attend na ako.

At ang --- the UK is a constitutional monarchy so in terms of foreign policy, may input ang royal family pero hindi galing doon. It will be the foreign ministry that will determine what our relationship with the UK is and I think that will...

I think that is constant right now and patuloy lang naman. We trade and we continue to help ang ating mga foreign --- Filipino nationals na nandoon sa UK.

At 'yun lang siguro ang mga concern natin. Ngunit, titingnan natin. Kaya't makikipagkita ako sa kanilang bagong Prime Minister, Prime Minister Sunak upang makapag-usap kami kung mayroon bang pagbabago sa kanyang pag-iisip sa pagka --- pag-partner ng UK at saka ng Pilipinas.

Sa palagay ko ay ganun din ang sasabihin niya na dapat papatibayin natin.

At naghihingalo, hirap na hirap ang ekonomiya ng UK. So, baka isang bagay 'yun na pag-uusapan namin kung papaano mag-trade, kung papaano dagdagan...

I'm sure babanggitin niya kung puwede makakuha ng healthcare workers galing Pilipinas dadalin sa UK. Dahil alam mo ang nangyari, noong pandemic sumikat talaga nang husto ang healthcare workers ng Pilipinas, na Pilipino at Pilipina ay kaya't lahat ng bansa ay umaasa at nagtatanong kung puwede ba paramihin natin ang mga healthcare workers na pupunta.

So isang bagay 'yun. But I think in general, we will maintain the same relationship. It has been a very --- a relationship very advantageous to all parties involved. So, I think that we will stay the course and continue to deal with each other in very similar way that we have done before.

Q: Sir, [inaudible] kung kailan po 'yung scheduled meeting natin with Prime Minister Sunak?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: On the sidelines lang, dahil kung titingnan niyo kung schedule, pagdating ko doon may reception sa Palasyo, sa Buckingham Palace. The next day's the coronation.

Pagkatapos ng coronation, aalis na ako, babalik na ako ng Maynila. Kaya't wala halos oras. So, mayroon akong --- may mga proposal --- makikipag-usap ako siyempre sa Prime Minister, Prime Minister Sunak pero habang siguro nag-aantay doon sa actual na seremonya ng pag-coronation kay King Charles.

So ganun na lang. It has to be very casual dahil everybody has to follow the very heavy schedule of the coronation.

Mayroon din mga request ang ibang leaders na mga gustong makipag-usap sa akin pero ganun din, puro ganun. Ang tawag --- ang ginagawa na lang natin pagka may pagkakataon ay maging --- "lika, usap tayo."

And that's what's going to happen siguro this time again. Because I cannot see any window where --- of time in the schedule kung saan puwedeng mag-sit down, mag-usap, to exchange notes et cetera, et cetera.

So very casual lang ito, very informal pero huwag natin mamaliitin 'yang mga ganyang klaseng meeting. Dahil kung minsan, 'yung hindi mo aakalain mangyayari, may nangyayari na napaka-importante pala.

Kaya't siyempre open tayo lagi na makipag-usap sa lahat. At baka naman sakali, mayroon tayong makitang pagkakataon na makatulong sa Pilipinas.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat. Thank you very much and see you in Manila, Philippines.

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