

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**PRESS STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.  
DURING THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT H.E. URSULA  
VON DER LEYEN**

[Delivered at the President's Hall in Malacañan Palace, Manila| 31 July 2023]

Your Excellency, the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen; the honored Members of the European Commission and Philippine Delegations; members of the Malacañang Press Corps; ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

Madame von der Leyen and I concluded a successful and productive bilateral meeting. This is the first visit to the country by the President of the European Commission.

But during our meeting, we discussed the economic relations with particular focus on revitalizing trade between our two regions. I welcomed the conduct this year of the scoping exercises between the European Commission and the Philippines towards negotiations for a Philippines-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The Philippine government experts will work with the European Commission in achieving a bilateral FTA.

On development cooperation, we committed to conclude a financing agreement on the Green Economy Program in the Philippines, a grant worth 60 million euros, which aims to support the Philippines in areas such as circular economy, renewable energy, and climate change mitigation.

I likewise acknowledged the EU's staunch support for the Bangsamoro Peace Process as well as the development of the country in areas such as rule of law and justice, agriculture, space cooperation, and disaster management.

I also thanked the European Commission for their decision to extend the recognition of STCW certificates issued by the Philippines, as this has a positive impact on the employment of more than 50,000 Filipino seafarers working onboard EU-flagged vessels.

As I mentioned to Madame President von der Leyen, the Philippines and the EU are like-minded partners through our shared values of democracy, sustainable and inclusive prosperity, the rule of law, peace and stability, and human rights.

The continued exchanges between Her Excellency and myself, which started in Brussels last year, is a testament to our joint desire to bring our bilateral relationship to greater heights.

Let this be a new beginning for the strengthening and the deepening of all our ties with the EU and the Philippines.

Thank you.

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