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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE AWARDING OF  
INCENTIVES FOR THE TEAM PHILIPPINES MEDALISTS IN THE 32ND SEA GAMES AND  
12TH ASEAN PARA GAMES**

[Delivered at Ceremonial Hall, Malacañan Palace | 9 August 2023]

Thank you very much to our Philippine Sports Commission Chairman, Chairman Richard Bachman, for your kind introduction; Senator Francis Tolentino who has joined us for this afternoon; PAGCOR Chairman and CEO Al Tengco; the Philippine Olympic Committee President Abraham Tolentino; Philippine Paralympic Committee President Michael Barredo, who you may not know is actually a schoolmate of mine and he has used it to his great advantage to bring all of these issues that before were not really in the fore, especially when it came to Paralympics, when it came to disabled people. Marami siyang nagawa.

So, I'm glad to see him continuing in that vein; to our, of course, our athletes, who have represented our country and have brought pride and honor to all Filipinos; ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Malacañan Palace, good afternoon. *[applause]*

Today, we are fortunate to welcome the latest in a long list of triumphant heroes in Philippine sports. Athletes from the Philippines have surpassed the competition and brought out the best version of themselves, becoming exemplars of sporting prowess for our nation and the rest of the world.

But I think the most important thing that you demonstrated as you competed in these tournaments, in these games was to show the strength of the Filipino spirit, the grace of the Filipino character, and the passion of the Filipino heart. And that is what comes out with the results with what you have been able to do with admittedly, limited resources.

I am always a little embarrassed when I see that we are not supporting our athletes and our coaches and our trainers and all the support groups, even the families.

Alam naman natin, hindi kayo naging champion na nag-iisa. At maraming tumulong para kayo ay maging champion. Maraming nagsakripisyo. Lyon na nga iyong ating mga coach, kung sino 'yong mga nagpapakain sa inyo, mga magulang ninyo.

So it seems that what we in government, considering the honor and the pride that you bring to the Philippines it seems that it is not commensurate for the great service that you do to our country and to our people.

Kaya naman nagkataon, alam ko darating kayo ngayong araw, kaya naman nagkataon noong Linggo ng gabi, andito po ang ating idol si Senator Manny Pacquiao at mayroon kaming pinapanood na palabas, 'yung mga ibang para-athletes ay nandito rin, who joined the Paralympics. They were here and we did a tribute to our athletes.

At kasama ko si Senator Manny Pacquiao at pinag-uusapan namin ito. Sabi ko, dahil atleta ka taaga, naiinitindhian mo kung ano 'yung pangangailangan. At 'ika ko, sa makalawa ay bibigyan ko ng premyo o incentive kung ano man ang tawag sa ating mga atleta na nanalo, na maganda ang naging resulta.

At sa palagay ko naman, tama rin naman dahil kayo naman ay nag-perform kayo. Hindi naman nangyayari 'yan na hindi kayo naghirap, hindi kayo nagsaksripisyo.

Ngunit sabi ko, hindi lang naman ang mga athlete ang nandiyan. Kaya gumaling 'yan dahil na-train 'yan nang mahusay, dahil may coach 'yan, dahil masustansiya ang kinakain, dahil mayroon siyang access sa mga training facilities, lahat ng pangangailnagn para nga maging champion.

Kaya't gumawa kami ng paraan at gagawa kami ng plano na susuportahan natin lalo na basta't Philippine Team na athletes at saka coaches at saka trainers at saka mga nutritionist at saka pati na 'yung mga driver, lahat. Kasi kailangan niyo 'yan.

Ang hirap, paano kayo magte-train, hindi kayo makarating doon sa binaha, 'yung NLEX, hindi kayo makapunta doon sa pinagpupuntahan ninyong stadium.

Kaya't kailangan nating tulungan kayo at kaya naman dahil sa dami natin, darating kayo rito kagaya ngayong hapon, at lagi nating sinasabi ipinagmamalaki namin kayo. Totoo naman, ipinagmamalaki namin kayo.

Dapat naman susuklian naman namin ang inyong ginawang sakripisyo, ang inyong dinala na dangal para sa ating mahal na Pilipinas.

Kaya't asahan ninyo na sa administrayon na ito ay gagawin natin ang lahat para masuportahan natin at ipalabas natin ang kagalingan, ang husay ng ating atleta para makita...

Kung iniisip ko, sinasabi ko nga sa sarili ko, karamihan diyan hindi natin natulungan. Talagang kung saan-saan na lang kumukuha ng suporta, nakakahiya. Pero ganun pa rin ang resulta, ang ganda-ganda pa rin ng resulta, ang titibay pa rin. Nakaka-proud pa rin.

Kaya't isipin ninyo kung tulungan natin. Isipin ninyo kung suportahan natin.

'Yun ang pangarap ko na mangyari 'yan at masabi natin na dinala kayo namin sa mas mataas na standard para sa bawat inyong sport, at napalabas natin ang tunay na galing ng atletang Pilipino.

Maraming salamat at magandang hapon sa inyo. *[applause]*

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