

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**INTERVENTION OF PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
FOR THE ASEAN-GCC SUMMIT**

[Delivered in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia | 20 October 2023]

Thank you, Your Highness.

Your Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

The Philippines welcomes the convening of the first ASEAN-GCC Summit, thirty-two years since the very beginning of the formal engagement between our two regional organizations in 1990.

For this, allow me to congratulate our co-Chairs, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, as well as the ASEAN coordinator for ASEAN-GCC, Malaysia, for their steadfast and collaborative work.

I also express my appreciation to our host, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for fine the arrangements for this historic meeting.

As the two regional organizations located astride the major sea gates and vital corridors of the world's commerce and communications, it is imperative that we work together to promote peace, security, and stability in both our regions, the South China Sea, and the Arabian Sea, grounded on the rules-based international order to ensure stability and prosperity of our countries and the rest of the world.

Peace and stability are indispensable to ensuring continued prosperity in our respective regions and of the world.

The Philippines is deeply concerned about the rising number of victims and the safety of all persons, as well as the dire humanitarian consequences of the conflict in Israel and in Gaza.

We hope that all parties will exert their utmost efforts to deescalate the situation, stop all violence, and engage in dialogue and diplomacy.

Continued prosperity also requires the establishment of concrete areas of cooperation and complementary working relationships amongst our respective specialized sectors.

We thus welcome the adoption of the ASEAN-GCC Framework of Cooperation to guide our respective sectors under the political-security, economic, and socio-cultural pillars.

The Philippines looks forward to advancing our common interests, particularly on energy and food security, enhancement of logistics and supply chains, the digital economy, and the free and secure flow of goods, people, and services that currently underpin an interdependent global economy.

Inasmuch as its part of the world is the central powerhouse of petrochemical industries, we call on the GCC countries to help ensure the reliable and sufficient supply of oil and gas to ASEAN

Member States to respond in a timely and effective manner to the vicissitudes of today's energy economics, deepening social cleavages, and the disruptions of adverse geopolitical developments.

We recognize that chemical fertilizers are the by-products of the petrochemical refinement process, and the GCC can also help ASEAN maintain its food security by filling up supply deficiencies in fertilizer export to our region.

We also recognize the potential synergies of capital investment between the hub economies of the GCC countries and the ASEAN Member States in our efforts to address food supply, renewable energy transformation, supply chain disruptions and to enhance the global logistics chains indispensable to trade and the international division of labor in manufacturing.

As we have witnessed through the breadth and width of ASEAN-GCC relations, as well as in our bilateral engagements, the success of our cooperation is founded on our vibrant people-to-people ties.

It is, therefore, imperative that we ensure the free flow not only of goods, but also primarily of professionals, labor, and services between our regions, as well as their upskilling and the enhancement and protection of their rights and promotions of their welfare.

GCC countries are home to an estimated 2.2 million Filipinos and roughly 2.7 million citizens of ASEAN Member States working in critical fields, each one providing valuable contributions not only to their host country economies, but also to the Philippines and ASEAN economies.

The Philippines welcomes the adoption of the Joint Statement of the Summit of ASEAN and the GCC as well as the ASEAN-GCC Framework of Cooperation from 2024 to 2028.

We believe that these two documents will chart our path forward, together, with greater political will.

Your Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

The Philippines remains strongly committed to support a meaningful partnership with GCC countries for peace in our regions and the prosperity of our peoples.

We cannot overstate the importance that we attach to this partnership between the ASEAN and the GCC, not only for our regions but for the entire global economy.

It is our firm belief that our success will pave the way for all the world toward progress and recovery.

Shukran jazeelan.