

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK

**SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE SOLAIRE RESORT NORTH OPENING CEREMONY**

[Delivered at Solaire Resort North in Quezon City | 25 May 2024]

Thank you all very much Executive Secretary, Chief Luc Bersamin for your kind introduction.

[Please be seated.]

The honorable members of the Senate who are here, I think we have a few attendees here; the honorable members of the House of Representatives, who, if they are not here now, will soon be; Quezon City Mayor, Mayor Joy Belmonte; PAGCOR Chairman, sisisurgadihin ko na lang na tama, Al Tengco *[laughter]* baka magkamali pa; of course, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Ricky Razon and Mrs. Lizzy Razon; of course, the introductions would not be complete without introducing my fair lady, the First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos; my fellow workers in government; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, good evening!

It is evident today that the Philippine tourism and hospitality industry [have] made an impressive recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have slowly started to witness how hotels, restaurants, recreational amenities, and tourist spots have slowly but surely risen to the challenge of travel resurgence, welcoming 5.45 million inbound tourists in 2023. This is more than double the 2.65 million visitors recorded in 2022.

And that's why I am very happy to be here with you this evening as we inaugurate the Solaire Resort North, which will be another [game-changer in the] global hospitality industry.

[Chairman Tengco, they're coming to get you.]

I thank the men and women behind Solaire Resort and Bloomberry Resort Corporation for their very concerted efforts in making this monumental project possible.

In the last decade, the Solaire brand has redefined the resort stay experience here in the Philippines. You have set an entirely new benchmark for luxury, entertainment, comfort, and service.

Its first development, the Solaire Resort Entertainment City, already set the standard for quality and innovation in providing tourism and hospitality services to its guests from around the country and all over the world.

Ten years after this entertainment city welcomed its first visitors, we now see another jewel in your crown with the opening of the Solaire Resort North.

This resort, [which] features not only first-class amenities but also world-class Filipino talent, is going further to raise the country's image on the international stage.

Beyond the revenues that pour in from leisure activities and tourism, this industry has provided jobs to our people and has contributed to social development.

Gaming ventures provided employment [to] about 100,000 Filipinos in 2019, supporting various roles in casino operations.

Ensuring efficient casino operations necessitates a close relationship with interactive entertainment accessories and equipment suppliers, with more than a hundred registered suppliers offering their services in this area alone. That creates additional employment for our fellow Filipinos.

The contribution of this industry is more than what has been understood in the traditional sense.

Apart from operations, this industry also expanded into crucial sectors, including hotels, retail centers, movie theaters, and dining establishments.

With Solaire Resort North hiring more than 4,000 Filipino employees, this will not only boost our economy but will also empower our people to reach their full potential.

The revenues from these ventures contributed huge funding for the operations of government agencies such as the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, the Philippine Sports Commission, [and] the Dangerous Drugs Board.

It redounds to the implementation of the Universal Health Care, Early Childhood Care and Development Fund, Integrated Sports Development Program, the National Endowment for Culture and Arts, and the establishment and the operation of adequate drug rehabilitation centers.

With this, I am confident that the Solaire Resort North is all set to take these successes to an even higher level.

As a result of this move, there will be more growth opportunities for our citizens while making the Philippines' unique brand of hospitality known worldwide.

To my fellow Filipinos, it is without a doubt that the world loves the warmth that is within us.

This culture of love—which we extend to each visitor who comes ashore and which we bring everywhere that we go—is what makes us unique as a nation.

More than the best tourist destinations here in the Philippines, it is our people that keeps bringing tourists back. Our smiles, our generosity, [and] our hospitality.

I thank everyone here tonight for continuously believing in the potential of our country and for continuing to help us nurture our identity as Filipinos.

You are a living proof that we have what it takes to succeed, and your work shows us what it truly means to "Love the Philippines."

So, let us reach out to the world beyond our shores, for it is filled with people who are yearning for adventure and eagerness to discover new experiences that, I am sure, the Philippines can certainly offer.

We want them here, visiting our islands, investing in our businesses, [and] spending their hard-earned money by having fun and having the best time of their lives here in our country.

It is our mission to let the entire world know that the Philippines is open for tourism, for business.

I am certain that Solaire Resort North is with us in our desire to capitalize on this strength further to improve our position in the global hospitality sector.

It is truly a bold and ambitious move that we must take to make the Philippines the perfect destination for tourism, relaxation, and entertainment.

I hope that you will all continue to work with us in making each visit to our islands a safe, rewarding, and memorable experience.

Help us in making this goal the center of our efforts in building the *Bagong Pilipinas* that we dream of.

So, as we open the doors of Solaire Resort North, let us also open our arms to the world, inviting them to experience the warmth and beauty of our country and Solaire Resort North will certainly play a very, very big part in that.

So, let us show them that we are ready to embrace the opportunities that they offer us, and I am confident [that] the world is also ready to embrace us back.

Thank you very much. Congratulations to all those who have been involved in this mega project and we look forward to your greater and continuing success. Maraming, maraming salamat po at magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat. *[applause]*

— END —