

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK

**SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE SIGNED CONCESSION AGREEMENT (CA) FOR
THE TARLAC-PANGASINAN-LA UNION EXPRESSWAY (TPLEX) EXTENSION
PROJECT**

[Delivered at the Kalayaan Hall of the Malacañan Palace | 10 July 2024]

Thank you, Executive Secretary, Secretary Luc Bersamin.

[Please take your seats.]

DPWH Secretary, Secretary Manny Bonoan, and that's the proper pronunciation by the way of his name, it's Bonoan not Bono-an. The proper Ilocano translation; the honorable members of the House of Representatives; San Miguel Holding Corporation and our partner in the transformation of our economy, Chairman of San Miguel and CEO Ramon Ang; Concessionaire of the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway (TPLEX) Extension Project; fellow workers in government; ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

In 2022, we introduced our infrastructure program, building and expanding on the achievements of my predecessors.

“Build Better More” is more than just a slogan. It is almost a battle cry; our commitment to ensure that our motivation, our efforts, and our plans are fixed toward one crucial goal: the betterment of the welfare of the Filipino people.

For, if we aim to improve the lives of our people, it is not enough to build for the sake of building. The keywords are “Build” and “Better,” as it is also important to be strategic [and] to be focused [on] our pursuits to propel the nation’s economy forward.

With the signed Concession Agreement for the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway or TPLEX Extension Project, we are now witnessing another milestone that brings into fruition the Build Better More infrastructure program.

The TPLEX Extension Project exemplifies our dedication to progress, the extension of our dreams, and the opportunities we want to give to our people.

This almost 60-kilometer, four-lane toll road, which will cost over 23 billion pesos, will extend the present terminus of the TPLEX from Rosario to San Juan in La Union.

What does that mean?

Remembering how the TPLEX became a driver of economic growth in Central and Northern Luzon when it was completed, we expect this extension to generate an even greater flurry of activity in Luzon.

Once finished, this extension will reduce the travel time between Rosario and San Juan from the current 90-minute travel time to about 40 minutes, resulting in smoother and safer journeys for those who wish to go to [and from] La Union, and the Ilocos and Cordillera Regions.

Aside from bringing in tourists and economic activities more quickly to the northern part of the country, it will also bring resources and food faster to the southern parts of Luzon.

So, we also expect [it] to forge value-adding partnerships among agriculture, industry, and tourism enterprises in the area as it links vital regional corridors and hubs.

This will, of course, generate a significant number of decent jobs and more opportunities for all.

With all these projections that we can look forward to, I wish to extend my appreciation to everyone involved, especially, of course, to [the] San Miguel Holdings Corporation. You really have been a steadfast partner of the government through the years. Let us keep that partnership strong and vibrant.

I expect nothing less than to see the same mark of quality that we have witnessed from your past endeavors.

Not only are you embarking on another challenge of turning visions into reality — you are also leading a brilliant example of how the private sector can have a great impact on our country's development.

Indeed, with more meaningful public-private partnerships like this, we can pursue and gain more for the benefit of the nation.

Of course, DPWH and the other government agencies have been an important part for helping us shape this vision and slowly bring it to fruition.

All stakeholders can expect that this government and its entire machinery will provide the necessary support to complete this venture.

In turn, I appeal to [the] San Miguel Holdings Corporation to complete the TPLEX Extension Segment 1 by 2028 and all other sections as scheduled; [and] to ensure that every person involved in this project — whether in the office or in the construction zone — will work with determination and integrity, day in and day out.

As I said earlier, “Build Better More” is more than just a tagline, just as this project is more than another item to add to our list of accomplishments.

It is a chance for each of us to build a Bagong Pilipinas that would bring comfort and prosperity to our people and the generations to come.

May our collective efforts bring better roads and a more sustainable and progressive future for us all.

A very hearty congratulations to all involved in this grand project and I wish you all the success in the future.

Maraming salamat po at magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat. *[applause]*

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