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SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE END-TERM GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES (LMP)

[Delivered at the Fiesta Pavilion, The Manila Hotel, One Rizal Park in Manila |12 February 2025]

Thank you, Secretary Anton Lagdameo, for your introduction. *[Please take your seats.]*

The League of Municipalities of the Philippines National President and La Paz Mayor Joseph Sto. Nino Bernos and his wife Congresswoman Ching Bernos; officials and members of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines; my fellow workers in government; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon to everyone. *[applause]*

Today we are convened here as leaders and public servants who have dedicated our years and, in many cases, our lives to civil service. For many of us, this is a calling and it is a lifelong commitment to serve our people.

Public service has defined much of my life. I have had the privilege of serving in various capacities—as a legislator, as a governor, and now as President. Throughout these years, one thing has remained constant to me: The challenges before us are always great, but the opportunity to create lasting change is even greater.

Our municipal mayors, you are the frontlines of governance. You are the first to hear the concerns of our people, the first to act on their needs, and the first to bear the weight of their expectations.

Your initiatives are anchored in the realities on the ground. You understand the strengths and limitations of your towns, and you design programs directly to respond to the needs of your constituents. A testament to this is the progress that we have made in local governance.

Because of the refinements that you have introduced in measuring financial sustainability under the Seal of Good Local Governance, so many LGUs have met our highest standards. From over 493 LGUs in 2023, this has grown to 714 in 2024. That number is a clear indication *[applause]*… Yes, yes, it is a very good result. This is a clear sign that more local governments are boosting fiscal discipline and transparency.

Beyond this, you have contributed to the formulation and lobbying of key pieces of legislation, such as the Real Property Valuation and Assessment Reform Act – a very, very important act that clears up so many, so much of the confusion that we ran into especially when it comes to building or reclassifying all of the things that we do to develop our land,
the valuation and assessment process that has now been put in place has clarified a great deal of the problems that we were facing before.

Also, is the Automatic Income Classification of Local Government Units Act. These laws uphold standards in managing real properties and provide a more equitable system for local government financing.

We have to do this because you are a victim of your own success. Kasi ang gagaling ninyo masyado, naaabot na karamihan ng ating mga municipality ay nabigyan na ng Seal of Good Local Governance. Kaya't ang gagawin ngayon natin we will make it even more rigorous in the testings so that makita naman natin na talagang 'yung standards natin sa local government ay dahan-dahan namang umaakyat.

In our collective drive to localize the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, you have also spearheaded island cluster conferences—ensuring that municipal leaders are equipped to align local programs with global targets for sustainability and development.

Nagsumila tayo rito ng sa alignment between local government projects and national projects. At 'yan ang aming isinusulong. At dahan-dahan naman nagiging – nagko-coordinate tayo. Ngayon tayo ay – sini-synchronize na rin natin ang ating ginagawa hindi lamang para dito sa national government ng Pilipinas kung hindi pati na sa mga standard na ibinigay sa atin ng United Nations.

At this juncture, I stand before you as somebody who has walked the same road that you have—who knows the difficulties and the rewards of local governance. I understand the weight of the responsibility that comes with the job; but I also know the fulfillment of seeing lives change for the better because of the work we do.

Yet, governance remains dynamic. The drivers of economic progress have changed from the traditional industry to innovation-based services, technology has advanced so far and so fast, climate change has upended our lives, and our people expect a government that is efficient, that is responsive, that is inclusive. The solutions of yesterday no longer are relevant today, they do not address the problems of today. So, we carry a mission that is more crucial than ever: we must lead, and we must lead with integrity, serve with competence, and govern with a vision that extends beyond our terms in office.

Sa dulo ng ating panunungkulan, isang tanong lamang ang mahalaga: Mas maginhawa ba ang buhay ng mga Pilipino dahil sa ating mga ginawa? Kung ang sagot niyo ay oo, alam natin nagampanan natin ang ating tungkulin.

So as this term comes to a close, I encourage you to reflect on the work that you have done. And whatever path you choose after this—whether you seek another mandate or move on to a new chapter in your lives—I trust that you will embrace the same grit, passion, and commitment to service.

Even beyond your tenure, I hope that you will adopt and sustain the reforms that we have introduced in national and in local government, such as the eLGU, which helps streamline services, the KALINISAN sa Bagong Pilipinas for healthier communities, [and] the Extended Producer Responsibility for environmental conservation.

So, let us strengthen this partnership—one that transcends positions and terms—so that governance remains a force for prosperity, and public service, a legacy that continues to endure beyond our time.

Complementing your efforts, this administration is focusing on streamlining and digitalizing bureaucracy to make government services more efficient. We are reinforcing collaboration

across sectors to ensure that policies that we put in place address the actual contemporary needs and the challenges that you face.

One concrete step in this direction is the implementation of the Electronic Business One-Stop Shop or eBOSS. As of last year, 113 out of 1,634 LGUs have fully complied with the eBOSS requirement. Meanwhile, over 1,200 LGUs have now initiated automation efforts to enhance their transactions.

To further support this shift, we have developed the eLGU as a ready-to-use eBOSS platform. With 741 LGUs adopting it as of 2024, we have made critical government frontline services more transparent and accessible to our people.

The Modernized Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System also drives our push for efficiency and transparency in public procurement. With features like the Virtual Store, the eWallet, ePayment, [and] eMarketplace, we are simplifying processes, ensuring accountability, and safeguarding public funds.

Ang sa pangyayari ngayon nandito na tayo sa ating kasaysayan at ang humaharap sa atin na mundo ay – what faces us today is a highly technical world, a highly technical system for our different economies, for the global economy, and a rapidly accelerating development in all kinds of research and technology. And that is why we have to keep up with that.

Hindi lamang dahil kailangan natin makipagsabayan sa iba't ibang bansa. Ngunit bukod pa roon ay kailangan natin na magamit ang pinakamagagandang teknolohiya upang maging mas maganda ang serbisyo nating ibinibigay sa tao.

Kailangan na natin maunawaan kung papaano natin gagamitin ang mga bagong teknolohiya kagaya ng aking mga nabanggit. Ito ay makakatulong para maging mas mabilis, mas maginhawa, at mas accountable lahat ng ating mga ginagawa para sa taong-bayan.

Napakaimportante nito -- this is very, very important because without doing this – as you can see we have seen the differences not only within our own political system but also with the different countries around the world.

Iyong mga bansa na nakapag-develop nang mabilis at nai-adopt itong mga teknolohiyang ito ay sila ang nagiging matagumpay. At 'yung mga iba naman na hindi nila nagawa itong paggamit ng mga bagong teknolohiya upang pagandahin ang serbisyo para sa publiko, 'yan ang mga bansa na naiiwanan.

Kaya't namin ito ay isinulong upang huwag naman ang Pilipinas maging isa sa mga bayan na naiiwanan. Ngunit sa ngayon sa pagsasama at kooperasyon ng national government at saka ang ating mga LGU maganda naman ang nagiging progreso. Kailangan lang nating ipagpatuloy at ituloy naman ang ating suporta sa mga LGU para sa pag-adopt ng mga bagong teknolohiya.

Napipilitan na tayo ngayon. Kailangan lahat tayo maging techie na, kailangan lahat tayo… Hindi na maaari 'yung 'pag may gagawin kayo ipapagawa mo sa anak mo kasi hindi mo naintindihan.

Kailangan maintindihan na ninyo ang technology. Kailangan maintindihan na ninyo ang bagong sistema upang ma-maximize ito para sa serbisyo sa publiko.

Sa Kalinga at Inisyatiba Para sa Malinis na Bayan— o KALINISAN sa Bagong Pilipinas Program, last year alone, 22,200 barangays took part in the regular clean-up activities—demonstrating synergy in building a healthier, more dignified nation.

Ito rin ay napakahalaga dahil lahat naman siguro sa municipal mayor ay naramdaman ninyo ang napakahirap na nagiging epekto ng climate change.
Kaya't kailangan naman lahat naman tayo ay gagawin natin ang lahat upang mabigyan nang kaunting proteksyon ang ating mga constituent dito sa mga bagong pangyayari.

Hindi naman natin masasabi na 'yung nakaraan na mga bagyo nung – na anim na bagyo na dumaan sa Pilipinas sa 23 araw ay hindi natin masasabi na hindi mauulit 'yan. Kaya't kailangan na natin paghandaan. Kailangan na natin tingnan ano ang naging problema sa mga nakaraan dahil ang mga nangyayari, ang panahon ngayon, ang weather ngayon ay hindi na natin maasahan 'yung mga dating ginagawa natin.

Tayong lahat sa LGU pagka sinabi sa atin may parating na bagyo, mayroon na, alam na natin 'yung gagawin natin. Kukunin natin 'yung heavy equipment dadalhin sa municipality, dadalhin sa Kapitolyo, at ia-alert na natin lahat ng mga first responders. Alam na natin kung papaano ang gagawin.

Ngunit ngayon ay nagbago talaga. At kung saan hindi nagkakabaha noon, nagkakabaha na ngayon. Kung saan naman hindi gumuguho ang lupa noon, nangyayari na ngayon. Dahil kailangan natin tanggapin na ang weather ngayon ay hindi kagaya ng panahon – ang mga bagyo ngayon hindi kagaya ng bagyo noon. Sila ay mas malakas at mas madalas.

At tayo ay siguro… Tayo naman sa Pilipinas nasa frontline tayo niyan. Dahil ang mga pag-assess-assess ng risk factors sa buong mundo ang Pilipinas laging Top 3. Kaya't kailangan talaga natin pag-isipan ito at paghandaan ito.

Dahil sa Bagong Pilipinas, hangad natin ang tunay at pangmatagalang pagbabago para sa lahat ng Pilipino. At ang pagbabago ay hindi lamang tungkulin ng gobyerno, kundi bawat mamamayan.

Kaya't umaasa akong magsisikap tayong lahat na maging Bagong Pilipino—isang mamamayang inuuna ang bayan bago ang sarili, kumikilos para sa kapwa, at naniniwala sa kakayahan na ating itataguyod ang ating kinabukasan.

Hindi natin kaya – bilang lider, halimbawa, ikaw ay mayor, ikaw man ay – kahit na anong klaseng elected official, kung ano 'yung ninanais ninyong gawin alam naman natin hindi natin kayang gawin ng tayo lang. Nag-iisa tayo nasa opisina o umiikot na tayo lang, kahit nag-iisa nagagawa natin lahat ng kailangang gawin.

Kailangan natin na samahan tayo ng ating mga kababayan. At ang Pilipino naman ay nakakaunawa, ang Pilipino naman ay maka-bayanihan. Kaya't hindi mahirap na pakiusapan ang ating mga kababayan, ang ating mga kapitbahay, ang ating mga kapamilya, ang ating mga kaibigan na sila ay tumulong dahil kailangan natin lahat ng kamay na mabibigay ng ating mga kababayan upang magbigay nang kaunting lutas dito sa problemang hinaharap natin.

We must engage our public. We cannot do these very hard things alone, very important things alone. And that's why in the national government we have adopted the policy and the concept of the whole-of-government approach. We have even expanded that to the whole-of-society

approach. Kaya't sinasama na ngayon natin ang ating mga private sector, ang ating mga negosyante, ang ating mga NGO, ang civil society. Lahat ay sinasama natin upang makipagtulungan sa ating lahat.

Iyan ang kailangan nating gawin dahil itong problemang mga hinaharap natin ay hindi lamang problema ng mayor, hindi problema ng vice mayor, ng sanggunian. Problema ito ng bawat isa na nasa constituency ninyo. Kaya't dapat ay kasama ang ating mga kababayan sa pagbigay ng solusyon.

So, together, we will forge a legacy of leadership not only measured by words, but by livelihoods created, by lives improved, by dreams that have been realized. A legacy that will uplift our people today and empower our nation for many, many generations to come.

Ngayon nakita naman natin itong ating mga achievement. Eh papasok na tayo – nagsimula kahapon ang campaign period para sa mga national candidates. At nagsimula na kami, nasa Laoag kami kagabi at hinarap namin ang mga kandidato ng Alyansa. Ngunit ang mga local government officials ay papasok na. Maghihintay na lang tayo ng anim na linggo at kayo na ay papasok na sa campaign period.

At alam naman natin – at ako sa karanasan ko, ang pinakamainit na eleksyon ay nilalaban sa local government. As a matter of fact, palagay ko siguro mag-agree kayo sa akin mga mayor kayo nakikita ninyo ito, ang pinakamainit na eleksyon ay barangay. Iyon ang pinaka – dahil puro magkakilala, puro magkakamag-anak kaya't nagkakapersonalan.

Mainit pa rin kahit sa municipality, and that tama 'yan – that is the process of democracy. Kailangan natin dumaan sa eleksyon. Kailangan natin makuha ulit ang mandato ng tao upang tayo ay magawa natin ang ating trabaho.

Ngunit sa init ng kampanya, sa init ng halalan, huwag nating kakalimutan na tayo ay nandito, tayo ay pumasok sa serbisyo ng publiko upang tulungan ang taong-bayan. Kahit na mainit na nga ang laban, maiinit, maaanghang na ang mga binibitawang salita, sa puno't dulo nito ginagawa natin lahat ito para makatulong sa ating mga minamahal na kapwa Pilipino. Huwag natin sanang makakalimutan 'yan.

At pagkatapos ng halalan ay mag… Alam ko kung minsan ay napakahirap na magpalamig ng ulo ulit. Ngunit kailangan natin gawin 'yun dahil kailangan natin ng lahat ng mga gustong tumulong na magkapit-bisig upang magtulungan.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat. Mabuhay ang LMP! Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! *[applause]*

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