**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**

**DURING THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER TUN DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD**

**Reception Hall, Malacañan Palace**

**07 March 2019**

Good afternoon.

Today, we are greatly honored to welcome Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia to the Philippines.

Mr. Prime Minister, your visit reaffirms the friendship between our two peoples and nations, and demonstrates your strong resolve as our partner for progress and a brother for peace.

Our discussions today augur well for other countries and for ours. As we reviewed the milestones achieved in further strengthening our bilateral relations, we also charted new paths collaborative work.

We resolved to ramp up cooperation to address security issues, particularly on terrorism, piracy and transnational crimes, including the fight against the illegal drug trade.

We resolved to address security issues. We touched on our extensive economic cooperation. We shared the view that its further expansion serves our mutual interests as that of ASEAN and our region.

As two of Asia’s growth engines, intensified two-way trade and investments between the Philippines and Malaysia is needed to sustain progress and prosperity. Conscious of synergy and dynamism of our private sectors, our governments have agreed to further enhance trade, investment and infrastructure development.

I thanked the Prime Minister for Malaysia’s robust support for our, “Build, Build, Build” program. This includes Malaysian companies’ active role in the development of the sustainable and smart metropolis of Clark Green City.

I was happy to share with the Prime Minister the great strides we have achieved towards securing just and lasting peace in Mindanao. The road leading to the historic transition to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region was paved in large part by the support of our international partners. Malaysia occupies a prominent role in this roster of friends. The good work will have to continue.

I thanked the Prime Minister for Malaysia’s unrelenting support for development in the south. Mindanao’s progress is the key for the Philippines and the BIMP-EAGA sub-region. I have personally seen significant headways that spurred and sustained economic communities in the BIMP-EAGA sub-region through which active socio-cultural and economic interchange across borders and enhanced cooperation between customs, immigration, quarantine and security matters.

We need to ramp up cooperation in this area. We devoted exchanges on other matters of mutual concern, covering our people-to-people ties, including the promotion of reciprocal tourism, cooperation in health and education, as well as in the protection and promotion of the welfare of our respective nationals.

We affirmed our commitment to collaborate in regional and multilateral

platforms, particularly within ASEAN to advance the rule of law in Southeast Asia and beyond. We emphasized the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation and over flight over the South China Sea, as well as the peaceful settlement of disputes.

This is, without resort to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law. We shared the international community’s hope for peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and noted efforts by relevant parties to achieve progress through dialogue.

Indeed, there is much to look forward as we write a new chapter of cooperation between the Philippines and Malaysia.

In closing, let me again say, the Philippines’ destiny is in ASEAN and in Asia. Asia’s destiny is in Asia. Malaysia – the Philippines’ partner for progress and brother for peace – will continue to play an important role as we generate and continue to progress our shared aspirations for the greater peace, progress, prosperity and stability in the ASEAN region.

Thank you.

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**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF  
MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER MAHATHIR MOHAMAD**

**DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT**

**Reception Hall, Malacañan Palace**

**07 March 2019**

Thank you, Mr. President.

Members of the Philippines government and the Malaysian government; Members of the press.

I am very pleased and honored with the hospitality that His Excellency President Rodrigo Duterte and the government of the Republic of the Philippines extended to me and my delegation throughout this visit to Manila.

The President and I had a very productive discussion this afternoon. We discussed a wide range of issues on bilateral relations between Malaysia and the Philippines as well as regional and international issues of mutual concern.

We have very strong and close ties within our two countries at every level. I fully support the theme, “Partners for Progress, Brothers for Peace” for this visit. Given the vast economic potential of this area, I believe with the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao or BARMM, we have to boost economic ties between both countries. I therefore assured Mr. President of Malaysia’s desire to continue to be of help in the development of Mindanao.

I congratulated President Duterte on the success of the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law and the appointment of members into the Bangsamoro Transition Authority. I look forward to the smooth transition of the ARMM through the interim government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao.

We also discussed on the economic matters, the trade between both countries are increasing but they are largely in favor of Malaysia. I believe there is still room for improvement and from my meeting with Mr. President, we would encourage private sectors from both countries to explore opportunities of collaboration and venture in new cooperation and investments.

One of the main priority areas where cooperation could be exerted is the --- to enhance connectivity which is vital to promoting economic development. Malaysia and the Philippines have been actively involved in the BIMP-EAGA and could use this platform to assist the Mindanao Development Authority.

The Philippines is ranked as Malaysia’s 15th largest trading partner globally and fourth largest trading partner among ASEAN member countries.

The President and I strongly believe that trade and investment through between the two countries could be further strengthened in the coming years. We had the opportunity to apprise ourselves with the progress in the present areas of tourism, health and education including the investment of our private sectors.

I look forward to the finalization and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the government of Malaysia and the government of the Republic of the Philippines on cooperation in the field of health.

I highlighted that Malaysia has been a favorite healthcare destination for the Philippines. The number of patients from the Philippines seeking treatment in Malaysia has been increasing over the years.

The President and I also emphasized on the importance of education. We discussed programs for teachers and students in Madrasahs, especially in Mindanao.

The President and I also talked about security matters. Malaysia is committed to take the necessary steps to address the serious issue of terrorism and violent extremism through the Trilateral Cooperation Agreement. Under this framework, Malaysia and the Philippines together with Indonesia have agreed to undertake unilateral maritime and air patrols to tackle the growing security challenges.

We also exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues of mutual interests, such as the South China Sea and cooperation within ASEAN.

I thank you.

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