**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.’S**

**DEPARTURE STATEMENT FOR HIS STATE VISITS TO THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

**Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2**

**September 4, 2022**

[00:00:02]

Good morning, everyone. Please take your seats.

I’d like to greet of course Vice President Sara Duterte; House Speaker Martin Romualdez; members of the Cabinet; Representative Antonino Calixto, is he here? Oh there, hindi kita nakita, I’m sorry;the AFP Chief of Staff Lieutenant Bartolome Vicente Bacarro and the other major service commanders; Pasay City Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano; of course, our First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos; our newly minted Congressman from the 1st District of Ilocos Norte, Sandro Marcos; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Today I embark upon what I anticipate to be the first of a series of trips that I will be undertaking to our friends, our partners, our allies around the world. And this is to once again put the Philippines in a position where we have strong alliances and strong partnerships, which are necessary for us to come out of the post-pandemic economy.

So I leave to undertake my first State Visits to our immediate neighbors, Indonesia and Singapore. In other words, ako ay mangangapitbahay para sa ating bansa at para sa ating ekonomiya.

I go now --- I go from here, from Manila to Jakarta upon the invitation of President Joko Widodo for a State Visit from the 4th to the 6th of September. Indonesia has been our ally and one of our closest bilateral partners for the past seven decades. And beyond that, the cultural ties and the geographical affinities that we enjoy have always been part of our relationship with Indonesia. We will reaffirm our ties with fellow archipelagic nation and ASEAN co-founder, Indonesia, with whom we share an extensive maritime border in the south of the Philippines.

During my visit, President Widodo and I will be meeting for the first time and will be discussing the current state and the future as we see it, of the bilateral relationship between the Philippines and Indonesia and the changing global geopolitical environment.

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We will also witness the signing of several agreements between our two countries covering important areas of cooperation. These are agreements on defense and security, on the creative economy and culture. And our foreign ministers look forward to signing the Philippines-Indonesia Plan of Action for the next five years, which commits our two countries to projects and activities covering the full range of our bilateral ties.

Beyond that, we will also be seeking the partnership and the help of our friends in Indonesia --- from the President and our friends in Indonesia, for investment in the areas where we see that they can be of assistance especially in the critical areas as we have identified them in agriculture and in energy.

Likewise, upon the invitation of President Halimah Yacob, I shall undertake a State Visit to Singapore from the 6th to the 7th of September. Singapore is home to 200,000 Filipinos and as ever they make us proud for their contribution to the economies of Singapore and the Philippines.

I shall meet both President Halimah Yacob and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to renew our commitment to deepen bilateral relations, explore options for advancing our economic ties, as well as discuss regional and global issues.

Prime Minister Lee and I will also witness the signing of several agreements. Singapore has become the Philippines' top trading partner in ASEAN and the top source of approved investments in 2021. Our economic cooperation with Singapore has grown by leaps and bounds for the past half-century and more opportunities are just waiting to be tapped by both sides.

My State Visits to our ASEAN neighbors will seek to harness the potentials of our vibrant trade and investment relations. As such, an economic briefing, business forums and meetings have been organized to proactively create and attract more investments and buyers for our exports, in order to accelerate the post-pandemic growth of our economy.

I expect that we will be coming back with a harvest of business deals to be signed in my State Visits that will further strengthen our economic ties with both Indonesia and Singapore.

All these initiatives that we will undertake on these State Visits are very much in line with all of the priority areas that we have identified: the agricultural sector, the guarantee of food supply, the guarantee of prices --- food prices that are affordable to ordinary Filipinos, the long-term plans that we have for energy, the long-term plans that we have for our emergence into the new global economy.

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We have a full set of meetings and much work to accomplish during this trip, but it will not be complete without meeting our kababayans in Indonesia and Singapore. And I look forward to sharing with them our commitment and plans for enhancing the government’s efforts to protect the rights and ensure the welfare of our overseas Filipinos and I convey my appreciation for their support and valuable contributions to our country. And beyond that, we must thank Singapore and Indonesia for the way that they have welcomed and allowed to assimilate our Filipino nationals into their society, into their economy, and into their daily lives.

We are always so proud of them and we are glad to see that our neighbors where our Filipino nationals work and strive also appreciate them for what they do.

Maraming maraming salamat po! Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat. [applause]

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