

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.'s
DEPARTURE STATEMENT FOR THE 29th APEC
ECONOMIC LEADERS' MEETING IN BANGKOK, THAILAND
Maharlika Hall, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City
November 16, 2022**

[00:00:15]

Good afternoon, everyone.

Nandito si Inday. Vice President Sara Duterte; President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; House Speaker Martin Romualdez; members of the Cabinet; and of course— she just stuck her tongue out at me, our First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos; Representative Antonino Calixto and Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano; the commanders of the Armed Forces, Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Bartolome Bacarro and PNP Police Chief General Jun Azurin; fellow workers in public service; ladies and gentlemen, magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

Ako ngayon ay tutungo sa Bangkok sa Thailand sa pag-anyaya ng His Excellency Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand. I am going to attend the 29th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation or APEC - ito 'yung Economic Leaders' Meeting. It will be an honor for me to represent the Philippines at the APEC.

APEC remains to be one of the prime platforms to engage the economies of the Asia-Pacific region. The importance of this region to us and to the rest of the world cannot be overstated. We host 38% of the world's population, 48% of the trade and 62% of its GDP. The largest segments of our OFWs call this region their second home, 85% of our trade is within this region and that's the reason why Filipino consumers have access to goods and services from this region. But more importantly, our farmers, our laborers, our businessmen and most importantly our MSMEs are able to export their goods and services to the economies in this region.

Mga kababayan ko, ang dala natin sa ganitong klaseng mga summit at saka mga meeting ang ating mga pangarap para sa magandang buhay. This is what we aspire for a peaceful, a prosperous Asia-Pacific region.

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We will be engaging with the leaders of the economies of the Asia-Pacific region to agree on how we can achieve food and energy, safe and seamless cross-border passage for our seamen and our other Filipino workers, economic inclusion of our MSMEs, women, indigenous people and other segments whose economic potential remain to be unlocked, digitalization and our participation in the digital economy and the connectivity that must be achieved if we are going to take full advantage of that digitalization, sustainable development and of course that existential problem that we all face, the climate change crisis.

In addition to the APEC meetings, the First Lady and I will meet Their Majesties King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajira Klao Chao Yu Hua --- I hope I pronounced that properly --- and Queen Suthida Bajrasudhabimalalakshana, who graciously granted a royal audience to the APEC leaders and their spouses.

I will meet of course with Thai business leaders on the APEC sidelines to invite investments and seek business opportunities to promote the Philippines, our economic agenda and our exports. And I am participating in panel discussions on “The Global Economy and the Future of APEC,” among select APEC leaders invited to speak at the annual gathering of top CEOs from across the region. There will be bilateral meetings which at present we are still finalizing with other economic leaders, both private and heads of states to discuss the strengthening of diplomatic relations and economic cooperation.

As this will be my first trip to Thailand since I assumed the presidency, I will take the opportunity to meet all our kababayans there. Since the start of my coming into office, we have already gone through a lot but we do not waver on the dream, ang ating pangarap na wala nang ginugutom na Pilipino. And that we achieve the upper middle income Philippines where the fruits of our hard work are equitably shared by all.

I hope to build upon the discussions that we had during the ASEAN Summit. There were many as I mentioned when I first arrived from Cambodia, from Phnom Penh, it is very clear that there are many areas of consensus between our countries in the Asia Pacific, Indo-Pacific region.

And that is what I hope to build on. We have established that those are the concerns, the common concerns, of all the leaders, of all the countries around the region. I am hoping now to put some meat on those very preliminary discussions that we have had. I believe that is also what the other leaders are intending to do and I hope to report good progress when I come back from Bangkok.

Thank you very much. Mabuhay kayong lahat! [applause]
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