

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
DEPARTURE STATEMENT: PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMEMORATIVE
SUMMIT FOR THE 50TH YEAR OF ASEAN-JAPAN
FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION**

Villamor Air Base, Pasay City
December 15, 2023

[00:00:01]

Thank you, Secretary Ben Diokno.

Please take your seats.

The only person we see on television anymore, [chuckles] Speaker Martin Romualdez. [laughter] Your life is not exciting enough. You have to find other pursuits to keep you occupied.

Members of the Cabinet who are here now; Pasay Lone District Representative Antonino Calixto; and, of course, Pasay City Mayor, Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano; the AFP Chief of Staff General Romy Brawner; PNP Chief General Benjie Acorda; Philippine Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Artemio Abu; and of course First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, I had to make sure to get that right; my fellow workers in government, good afternoon.

I embark today to Tokyo to attend the Commemorative Summit celebrating the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation at the invitation of Prime Minister Kishida Fumio.

This last ASEAN-related Summit for the year presents an opportunity to once again affirm the Philippines' position on current international issues and advance Philippine interests. It is also an opportunity to welcome the conferment of Comprehensive Partner Status to Japan, ASEAN's trusted and reliable partner in peace, economic development and community-building for the past 50 years or so.

The Commemorative Summit will feature three sessions, each with a particular focus within the ASEAN-Japan framework. The first session will take stock of Japan's contribution to ASEAN's community-building efforts, as well as Japan's consistent support for ASEAN Centrality and the rules-based international order.

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The second session will feature "Heart to Heart" Partnership across Generations. We will recognize Japan's commitment and steadfast initiatives in promoting friendship and camaraderie amongst the peoples of ASEAN and Japan to include the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youth Program.

I will highlight that the Philippines has a long history of cultural exchange through the JENESYS Program and has been one of its largest beneficiaries, welcoming Japan's young people while sending our own since 2007.

The last summit program will be on Co-creation of Economy and Society of the Future and I will bring the Philippine economic team led by Secretary Fred Pascual to participate in those talks.

I will highlight that the ASEAN-Japan relationship has inexorably evolved and progressed over the past five decades, particularly in shared commitments towards peace and security, trade and investment, food security, climate action, energy security, supply chain resilience, infrastructure development and now, connectivity.

I shall reassure ASEAN Member States and Japan that as permanent country coordinator for ASEAN-Japan Economic Relations, the Philippines will always continue to shepherd ASEAN initiatives and projects with Japan not only to co-create a region of economic prosperity, but also an inclusive society that is ready for the future.

On the heels of the ASEAN-Japan Summit will be the Asia Zero Emission Community or AZEC Leaders Meeting and I will apprise the AZEC Partner countries of the current Philippine initiatives towards promoting a clean energy transition.

We will highlight our experience in promoting clean energy projects such as the first wind farms in Southeast Asia in 2003 during my term as governor of Ilocos Norte. I will thus invite AZEC Partners, Japan included, to invest in the Philippine Renewable Energy Industry to achieve not only the intentions of the AZEC, but also the overall goal of the Paris Agreement.

This administration will see to it that our constructive engagements with ASEAN, our External Partners and stakeholders, will continue to best serve our national

interest, in as much as we promote the regional interest of peace, security and prosperity, for the well-being of the Filipino people.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat. Magandang hapon sa inyo at Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! [applause]

[00:05:25]
