

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

Tokyo, Japan
December 18, 2023

[00:00:00]

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen; fellow workers in government; and our friends from the press.

I am about to leave from Tokyo, Japan, where I attended the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan relations and met with ASEAN leaders and Prime Minister Kishida Fumio.

Throughout the summit and other related events, we discussed the future of ASEAN-Japan relations and emphasized the need for ASEAN to have an active role in maintaining peace, security and stability in the region.

We also advocated a rules-based Indo-Pacific region that is free and open, guided by the shared fundamental principles as enshrined in the UN charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

We highlighted the need to promote respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means and renunciation of the threat or use of force.

I called the tension to the worsening plight of the people of Myanmar and urged the proactive engagement of all stakeholders so as to alleviate the situation through the 5-Point Consensus, the United Nations mechanisms, as well as the AHA center.

The summit highlighted Japan's commitment to promoting friendship and camaraderie amongst the peoples of ASEAN in Japan through various initiatives, including the Japan-East Asian Network of Exchange for Students and Youth or JENESYS program.

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This has been supported by the Philippines since 2007. Japan's people-to-people programs create not only long-term relationships but also build trust which is the basis of ASEAN-Japan cooperation across all sectors.

We also discussed how Japan's role in ASEAN and individual states' economies have progressed over the past five decades particularly in our shared commitment towards peace and security, trade and investment, food security, climate action, energy security, supply chain resilience, infrastructure development and connectivity.

As permanent country coordinator for ASEAN-Japan economic relations, I assured ASEAN and Japan that the Philippines would continue to shepherd ASEAN initiatives and projects, not only to co-create a region of economic prosperity but also an inclusive society that is ready for the future.

I also delivered a keynote speech during the Creative and Sustainable Economy through Innovation Event, organized by our DTI. And they showcased collaborative projects of Filipino fashion designers and Japanese textile manufacturers.

In the area of investments, I am pleased to update you on the progress of business commitments signed by our valued Japanese partners during my last visit to Japan in February.

Japanese investors directly reported over 169.7 billion pesos of capital funneled into the Philippine economy. From these commitments, more than 9,700 new jobs have been generated today. Nine new letters of intent and MOUs were signed during this visit, valued at 14.5 billion pesos in investment, and over 15,750 additional jobs for our workers.

I'm also pleased to update that the letters of intent and MOUs signed in February 2023, together with those signed during this visit, total now 771.6 billion pesos or approximately 14 billion dollars in pledges from Japanese investors. This significant investment is anticipated to create around 40,200 jobs, marking a positive and promising development for our collaborative efforts.

We also concluded two Memoranda of Cooperation. One between the DENR and the Ministry of the Environment of Japan in the field of Environmental Protection. And the other, between the coast guards of the Philippines and of Japan. The completion of these MOC between coastguards strengthens an already excellent relationship.

On this last day I attended the Asia Zero Emissions Community or AZEC Leaders meeting where I apprised AZEC partner countries of the current Philippine initiatives towards promoting clean energy transition.

I highlighted 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. And I invited AZEC partners including Japan to invest in the Philippine renewable energy industry to achieve not only the intention of the AZEC but also the overall goal of the Paris Agreement.

My Administration will see to it that our constructive engagements with ASEAN, our external partners, our stakeholders continue to best serve our national interest in as much as we promote the regional interest of peace and prosperity for the wellbeing of our people.

Without a doubt, this summit reaffirmed the robust and enduring character of ASEAN-Japan relations.

Maraming salamat po.

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