

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
DEPARTURE STATEMENT FOR OFFICIAL VISIT
TO WASHINGTON, D.C., USA**

Villamor Air Base, Pasay City
April 10, 2024

[00:00:01]

Thank you, Executive Secretary Luke Bersamin.

Please, take your seats.

Vice-President Sara Duterte; members of the Cabinet — iyong iba nakaalis na, so you're going to have to hold down the fort in the meantime; Pasay Lone District Representative Antonino Calixto; Chief of Staff General Romeo Brawner; Philippine National Police Chief, General Rommel Marbil; Coast Guard Commandant, who's been very busy in the past few days, Admiral Ronnie Gavan; fellow workers in government; ladies and gentlemen. Good afternoon.

Today, I leave for Washington, D.C. to attend the first Philippines-U.S.-Japan Trilateral Summit. It is a historic meeting, and I will be meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio; and it is aimed at advancing trilateral cooperation between our three countries, which have long enjoyed warm and friendly relations and robust cooperation. This visit builds upon my previous meeting with Prime Minister Kishida and U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris last September in Jakarta.

During --- this was actually what they called in diplomatic circles a pull aside where during the farewell dinner of ASEAN because it was the last summit that Indonesia was chairing, we had a pull aside and we talked quite comprehensively about the idea of having this trilateral agreement.

This was also --- the follow up to this was held with our foreign ministers and our national security advisers last year.

During this Summit, I will underscore the importance of enhancing our continued economic cooperation, with a view of promoting economic resilience and, of course, security. I intend to explore ways of advancing cooperation, especially in the areas of critical infrastructure, semiconductors, digitalization and cyber security, critical minerals, renewable energy, as well as defense and maritime cooperation.

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It is my intention also to exchange views with my U.S. and Japanese counterparts on various regional security issues of mutual concern, while continuing to reiterate the importance of upholding the rule of law and preserving the rules-based international order in the Indo-Pacific region.

On the margins of the summit, I will also have a bilateral meeting with U.S. President Biden. Just --- kami lang dalawa at I think he is also going to have that bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Kishida. Where we will continue our discussions on strengthening further our alliance between our two countries and also to meet with U.S. business leaders to invite them, once again, to invest in the Philippines.

We look forward to moving the discussion to a progressive discussion so that --- our intention really is to strengthen the partnerships between our three countries, between the United States, Japan and the Philippines. It is not --- it is mainly an agreement to strengthen the cooperation on the economic front. Of course, security and defense is going to be part of that discussion but nonetheless, I think I can assure everyone that that is not the main intent of this trilateral agreement.

The main intent of this trilateral agreement is for us to be able to continue to flourish, to be able to help one another and, of course, to keep the South China Sea as a freedom --- to keep the peace in the South China Sea and the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.

To that end, the details of that are what we are going to be discussing very, very soon. And I hope to come back with some good results in the next few days

Thank you very much and good afternoon. [applause]

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