

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE OATH-TAKING CEREMONY OF THE
NEWLY PROMOTED PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD OFFICERS**

Ceremonial Hall, Malacañan Palace

May 6, 2025

[00:00:01]

The Presidential Adviser for Military and Police Affairs, Secretary Roman Felix.

Please take your seats.

The Philippine Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Ronnie Gil Gavan; of course, the newly promoted Star-Ranked Officers of the Philippine Coast Guard and their families who are with us here this afternoon; ladies and gentlemen. A good day to all of you!

Before I begin, let us take a moment to honor and to remember Seawoman Second Class Dain Janica Rendoque Alinas. She is no longer with us, but her courage and dedication continue to live on. Allow me to extend my deepest condolences and prayers to her family and to the Philippine Coast Guard community.

For decades, the PCG has stood as a vigilant force across our seas—calm in crisis, firm in mission, unshakable in your dedication to serve. Driven by your vision to become a highly professional, multi-missioned, and modernized maritime force, you have made enormous strides. From routine operations to moments of peril, your commitment has been strong and unwavering.

From January 2024 to March 2025 alone, you have managed to conduct about 2.7 million inspections—covering pre-departure checks, vessel safety,

emergency readiness, and port state control. Behind every inspection is a promise: that every Filipino who sets sail will return home safely.

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Nearly 45,000 seaborne missions and over 3.1 million square nautical miles of patrols show both the scale of your responsibility and the depth of your determination. And in moments when lives hang in the balance, you have proven time and again: The Coast Guard is there. The Coast Guard never turns away.

You have responded to over 2,000 maritime incidents and rescued nearly 4,500 individuals. Each one tells a story of survival because someone in uniform answered the call.

This is what sets the PCG apart: In the face of uncertainty, you show up. In the middle of the storm, you bring order. In the loneliest parts of our waters, you bring hope. And you go beyond protecting lives—you also protect what sustains life.

Your leadership in responding to the MT Terra Nova oil spill was a defining moment for the Coast Guard. You coordinated swiftly, acted decisively, prevented further devastation to our marine ecosystems. That is what service looks like: anticipating, acting with purpose, and leaving no community behind.

You further enforced our environmental standards with nearly 18,000 inspections of vessels and facilities and 555 shore-based patrols—ensuring that those who operate in our waters always respect those waters.

In maritime law enforcement, you have held the line with discipline and with resolve. Over 33,000 sea marshaling operations, nearly 600 individuals that have been held accountable for illegal maritime activities. These figures are proof that the PCG remains a trusted guardian of peace and justice at sea.

But perhaps nowhere is your presence more crucial, than in the West Philippine Sea. Your continued patrols across the Kalayaan Island Group, the Philippine Rise, our other maritime zones reaffirm our unwavering commitment to our sovereign rights.

What you are doing is not only protecting territory. What you are doing is not only protecting citizens. You are defining for the rest of the world the territory of the Republic of the Philippines. And having done so, you are defending that territory. That is the importance of what the job has become for Philippine Coast Guard.

The missions are declarations: we will always stand for what is ours, and we will do so with dignity, with integrity, with strength.

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To further support this mission, you have conducted 130 maritime patrols and domain awareness activities. You likewise distributed 36 high-speed rigid boats across PCG districts, reinforcing our rapid deployment and interdiction capabilities.

More importantly, you harnessed the power of cooperation, of goodwill, and diplomacy in guarding our territory. You have forged valuable partnerships—with the United States, Japan, our ASEAN neighbors—through joint patrols and port visits. These are strategic actions that preserve peace, that ensure the freedom of navigation, and protect the livelihoods of our fishermen who rely on these waters.

We have made meaningful progress but we must also recognize that the work is never over. And that is why we are here today.

To our newly promoted officers—two Vice Admirals, eight Rear Admirals, and 19 Commodores—this ceremony is a covenant. It is a declaration that your country now entrusts you with greater responsibility, and expects greater sacrifice to make a legacy that we can uphold.

This moment belongs to you, as well as to your families and your loved ones—those who have stood behind you, beside you, and at times, carried you through. We honor their sacrifices as we celebrate your achievements.

Your promotions are not merely steps in your careers—they are steps forward for yourselves, for the Coast Guard, but also for the nation.

You now wear stars on your shoulders, may these remind you to embrace with humility, to lead with purpose and to serve with courage.

In a time of global instability and rising maritime tensions, we look to you, together with the Philippine Navy and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, to stand the ground in stormy seas and never waver in what is right.

This administration stands with you to boost your capabilities through advanced vessels, through new technologies, and to support systems which reflect the scale and the urgency of your work.

Just as you protect our people, we will ensure that you and your families are likewise protected. Aside from the Comprehensive Social Benefits Program, I am pleased to note that in April 2025, I have signed the Free Legal Assistance for Military and Uniformed Personnel Act. This benefits personnel who face any charge arising from incidents related to the performance in their official duty.

Let us move forward together with clarity of purpose and unity of heart. We will sail towards a future that is peaceful, resilient, and sovereign. Because when the seas are rough, the nation looks to the ones who stand unwavering.

And today, we can say with confidence: The Coast Guard is ready.

Congratulations to our newly promoted officers!

Mabuhay ang Tanod Baybayin ng ating bansa!

Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas!

Thank you and good afternoon. [applause]

[00:08:09]

BAGONG PILIPINAS