

**JOINT LEADERS' STATEMENT**

President's Hall, Malacañan Palace

June 4, 2025

(00:00:00)

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS. JR.:** Prime Minister Lawrence Wong; the members of the Singaporean delegation; my colleagues in the Philippine government; our friends in the media; ladies and gentlemen.

Good evening.

This visit of Prime Minister Wong demonstrates what we already have known for a long time to be true – the robust ties between the Philippines and Singapore and the steadfast camaraderie between Filipinos and Singaporeans are strong and remain strong.

Less than a year after welcoming President Tharman Shanmugaratnam – finally, I got that right at some point – we are honored that Prime Minister Wong has accepted our invitation and made his first bilateral overseas trip since securing a fresh mandate from the people of Singapore.

In our bilateral meeting just now, Prime Minister Wong and I had extensive follow-through discussions on the results of the ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur last week, and we exchanged views on what we can further do together to make the ASEAN Community stronger and more resilient.

Bound by our shared commitment to free trade and the value of multilateralism, we each elaborated on how we hope to achieve ASEAN 2045, a vision of a resilient and inclusive regional community.

We had detailed discussions on priority areas of bilateral cooperation that yield tangible benefits for the Philippines and for Singapore, both immediate and in the longer term.

I expressed to Prime Minister Wong the gratitude of the Filipinos for Singapore's quick and effective deployment of its air assets to assist our efforts in delivering immediate necessities to far-flung victims of a typhoon last October.

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Singapore remains one of our country's most important investors. I expressed my hope that we will remain an important destination for these investments, and that the collaboration of our private sectors, both in the Philippines and in the region, will further deepen and adapt to global developments.

[On] climate change mitigation, our two countries reaffirmed our commitment to collaborate on a carbon credits mechanism in line with Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement by commencing negotiations on an implementing arrangement.

It is hoped that the early completion of the negotiation will result in climate-friendly actions and increased investments in related sectors, thereby creating meaningful and sustainable livelihood and business opportunities for both Filipinos and Singaporeans alike, while producing good sustainability outcomes for our local communities.

We are likewise seeking further achievements in our renewable energy sector. Acknowledging how Singapore will remain a major partner in our aspiration to diversify our energy sources, I encouraged Singapore to increase its investments in the renewable energy sector as part of our forward-looking bilateral agenda.

As we continue to promote collaboration and innovation, and facilitate training and exchanges between our health experts, we hope to soon conclude a bilateral agreement with Singapore on health cooperation.

Through the Digital Leadership Program between our Civil Service Commission and the National University of Singapore, we aim to accelerate digital leadership and transformation across the civil service.

I would like to acknowledge Singapore for ensuring the survival and propagation of some of the Philippines' endemic and endangered species, most notably the Philippine Eagle.

I also extend our sincere appreciation to Singapore for ensuring the welfare, security, and safety of the 200,000, more or less, Filipino community residing in Singapore.

It is appropriate that our respective agencies assist in the reintegration of the hardworking overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) once they have completed their work contracts in Singapore and have returned to the Philippines.

In order to achieve peace and stability in the West Philippine Sea and South China Sea, I expressed how the Philippines will continue to be a committed advocate [for] the rules-based international order, one grounded on international law, in equity, and on justice.

Finally, please allow me to express our sincere congratulations to all Singaporeans, as your country celebrates the 60th year of your independence this August. Your remarkable progress over six decades to become one of the world's most stable, most admired countries is indeed an achievement worth celebrating and, for the Philippines, worth emulating.

Thank you very much. [applause]

(00:05:14)

**PRIME MINISTER LAWRENCE WONG:** Mr. President; excellencies; distinguished guests.

Let me once again thank President Marcos Jr. for his warm welcome and generous hospitality.

The Singapore-Philippines' relationship has never been better. It is a partnership that has been carefully nurtured over the decades by successive generations of leaders and officials. It is built on a high degree of mutual trust and respect.

It has enabled mutually beneficial cooperation over a wide range of areas. For example in trade and investments, as the President said just now, our links have continued to grow over the years.

Singapore has consistently been one of the top investors in the Philippines and that testifies to the confidence that businesses have in your economy.

We have also begun cooperation in new areas like sustainability and new technologies.

During our meeting earlier, the President and I had a good discussion on ways to build on and further enhance our bilateral cooperation.

Let me add on to the areas that the President highlighted just now. First, we agreed on the importance of expanding our collaboration in renewable energy both bilaterally and also in the region.

Singapore companies are interested in renewable energy projects in the Philippines including solar and wind projects.

Such projects can generate economic opportunities for the Philippines while supporting the Philippines' renewable energy targets.

We also agreed to accelerate these efforts to achieve the ASEAN power grid. This will improve energy resilience in the region and support ASEAN's green transition.

Second, we agreed to do more in sustainability to meet our respective climate goals.

We took an important first step last August with the signing of an MOU on Carbon Credits collaboration. And our officials are working now towards finalizing a legally binding implementation agreement that's aligned with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. This will facilitate commercial participation in carbon credits projects which can spur technology transfer, green investments and create good jobs.

Third, we agreed to bolster people-to-people links between our two countries and that forms the bedrock of our bilateral relationship.

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Singapore is home to a large community of Filipinos. They live and work in Singapore contributing to our economy and society and enriching our cultural diversity.

I convey to the President Singapore's appreciation for their invaluable contributions especially, the Filipino healthcare workers who stood with us during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Singapore is committed to being a good second home for the Filipinos living and working in our country.

The Ministry of Health is exploring ways to support Filipino healthcare workers in Singapore to upskill and eventually reintegrate into the Philippine healthcare system.

Both health ministries are also exploring ways to deepen cooperation in mutual areas of interests through a broader healthcare partnership.

Fourth, Singapore will support the Philippines' capacity-building efforts.

We are already stepping up human resource development cooperation in various fields including on digitalization. For example, as the President said just now, the National University of Singapore has developed a leadership program to advance the Philippines Civil Service Commission's digital transformation agenda.

Temasek Foundation has also been active in the healthcare space in Taguig City. So we will continue to step up cooperation in these fields and more.

Finally, the President and I agreed to work closely together in ASEAN. We are both founding members of ASEAN. So Singapore and the Philippines share common interests in preserving ASEAN centrality and unity.

This will be critical in accelerating the integration of the region and enabling us to unlock the full potential of ASEAN.

It will also enable ASEAN to better engage our external partners like the GCC countries of the EU so the Philippines can count on Singapore's full support for its ASEAN chairmanship next year.

And we will coordinate closely because Singapore takes over from the Philippines—the ASEAN chairmanship the following year. So we will work shoulder-to-shoulder; side by side.

And I look forward to partnering President Marcos Jr. to chart the next phase of our bilateral relationship.

I am confident that under his leadership, the Singapore-Philippine relations will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Thank you.

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