

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s  
SPEECH AT THE OATH-TAKING CEREMONY OF OFFICERS OF THE  
FEDERATION OF FILIPINO-CHINESE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE  
AND INDUSTRY, INC.**

Muelle de Binondo, City of Manila  
June 10, 2025

[00:00:00]

Thank you, Education Secretary, Secretary Sonny Angara.

Please take your seats.

Of course, the honorary presidents and the newly elected officials and members of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Incorporated led by its President, Mr. Victor Lim; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat! [applause]

There are moments in life when we are reminded that true progress does not happen overnight. It is built patiently and purposefully by those who believe in something greater than themselves.

Since 1954, the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Incorporated has been a steadfast partner in nation-building. You have supported commerce, education, and countless civic initiatives.

It is in this spirit of service and shared responsibility that we witness now the oath-taking of the new officers of the Federation. It also comes at a time as we

celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China. Five decades of partnership strengthened by collaboration, mutual respect, and shared progress.

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Our story is shaped not just by treaties or official documents, but by consistent cooperation: relief efforts in times of crisis, educational initiatives, cultural exchanges, and economic ventures.

In all these endeavors, the FFCCCII has been a reliable foundation for [bridging] differences between communities, laying the groundwork of growth, and harnessing the strength of collective action.

Hindi po madaling panatilihin ang tiwala at pagkakaisa sa harap ng patuloy na pagbabago.

And yet, time and again, your institution has demonstrated that real, inclusive development is possible when anchored on sustained cooperation and shared values.

For over seven decades, you have connected Filipino and Chinese communities, forged strong ties between enterprises and government, and ensured that progress reaches those who need it most.

Above all, you have promoted cultural pride, demonstrating how embracing diversity can strengthen the nation. Through your dedication, Chinese-Filipino heritage has now become an essential thread in the fabric of our national identity.

And who could ever forget one of the biggest cultural exchanges in our story as a people? We share so many different types of food together.

Our Filipino-Chinese brothers and sisters have brought us, well, lumpia, pancit na without which no celebration feels complete. Even a simple merienda, you will always find Chinese food in our table.

Kapag nagsimula ang handaan, iyan ang una nating kinukuha. Kapag may natira pang lumpia—iyan ang unang nagiging shina-sharon. [laughter]

That's the beauty of our heritage. It gets passed on, it blends, it becomes something that we can call our own.

Just last weekend, we also witnessed the illumination of the iconic Jones Bridge, reaffirming the deep cultural ties that continue to unite our communities.

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That same evening, the Federation distributed 2,000 gift bags to families living along the Pasig River—an act that once again speaks to the compassion and solidarity that the Filipino and Chinese communities share.

And I don't even like to talk about the Filipino and Chinese communities in a separate way. They are so completely embedded within each other, that it is impossible to make that difference.

In commerce, well, we are very – it is very, very clear your impact has been no less profound.

You have supported pivotal trade agreements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership or RCEP.

This opened new doors for trade, investment, and regional integration.

Your efforts extend far beyond commerce though.

Through Operation Barrio Schools, you have built more than 6,300 school buildings nationwide. Each one brings a glimmer of hope and opportunity for thousands of children. In line with this, we would like to express our gratitude to the Federation for your commitment to turning over 250 units of two-classroom school buildings in the next year.

The medical and dental missions that you have reached – that you have undertaken have also reached those who are underserved, bringing compassion and healing to our fellow Filipino citizens.

For all these—and more—the nation offers its sincerest gratitude.

To the newly elected officers: This is your time to shine.

You inherit a legacy defined by service and by vision. It is now your turn to write the next chapter with even greater courage, wisdom, and purpose.

So, I challenge you now to lead with clarity. Steer our industries towards innovative strategies that are globally competitive, sustainable, and ready for the future.

But your leadership should not only focus on large enterprises. It is just as crucial that you empower small and medium-sized businesses. By uplifting them, you are also uplifting the entire economy and the entire nation.

And as you lead, honor the cultural legacy that binds us. Our joint heritage is one of our greatest strengths; inspire future generations to carry that forward.

Finally, you are uniquely positioned to help deepen our international partnerships, particularly, of course, with China. Stronger ties mean better trade, greater investments, and enhanced collaboration. Use your platform to showcase the Philippines as a dependable partner for economic growth.

So, as you embark on this new chapter, know that you do not walk alone. This government stands with you.

Through reforms such as the Green Lanes for Strategic Investments and the CREATE MORE Act, we are shaping a business landscape that is agile, transparent, and future-ready. This time, free from red tape and bureaucratic delays.

All these initiatives send a clear and resounding message: The Philippines is open for business and partnerships that uplift lives and transform communities.

Let us continue walking side by side, as we have for generations—moving forward towards a Bagong Pilipinas that is united, progressive, and proudly ours.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay po kayong lahat!

Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas!

Mabuhay ang Federation! [applause]

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**BAGONG PILIPINAS**

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