

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFING OF DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ASSISTANT
SECRETARY FOR THE OFFICE OF ASEAN AFFAIRS JUNEVER M. MAHILUM-WEST ON
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSOCIATION OF
SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) – REPUBLIC OF KOREA COMMEMORATIVE
SUMMIT**

[New Executive Building, Malacañan Palace, Manila | 22 November 2019]

OPENING STATEMENT:

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: Thank you and good morning to everybody. Magandang umaga po at maayong buntag sa tanan, ladies and gentlemen of the media.

I am pleased to provide an overview of the President's participation in the 2019 ASEAN-ROK Republic of Korea Commemorative Summit and other side events which will be held from 25 to 26 November 2019 and where we are expected to discuss the current direction of our partnership and cooperation on areas of mutual concern.

The President will be leaving Manila for Busan soon and will be coming back right after the summit. And the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit will be attended by heads of governments or states of ASEAN Member States and the Republic of Korea's President Moon Jae-in.

And the Cabinet --- the President will be accompanied by his Cabinet members and we defer to the Office of the President to confirm who will be in the delegation list.

And we just would like to inform you that joining the President as members of the Philippine delegation are lead agencies for the three pillars of the ASEAN Community namely: DFA for political and security community pillar; the Department of Trade and Industry for the economic community pillar; and the Department of Social Welfare and Development for the socio-cultural community pillar.

The President last met with ASEAN leaders and the Republic of Korea President Moon Jae-in in Bangkok, Thailand earlier this month during the ASEAN Plus Three Summit and the East Asia Summit. During these meetings, the leaders shared their views regarding regional and international issues affecting our region and beyond.

In Busan, two outcome documents are expected in the forthcoming ASEAN-ROK Summit and other side events. And these documents are the ASEAN-ROK Joint Vision Statement for Peace, Prosperity, and Partnership and the Co-Chairs' Statement on the ASEAN-Republic of Korea Commemorative Summit and these two represent the strong partnership between the ASEAN and ROK.

This will be the President's second visit to the Republic of Korea since assuming office and his

first time to visit Busan. The President previously travelled to Seoul, South Korea for an official visit in June 2018.

Thank you and we are now ready to answer your questions if you have any.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Q: Hi ma'am good morning. I understand ma'am that the President will be having bilateral meetings during his visit to Busan. May we have more details about this?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: Yes, the President is scheduled to have bilateral talks with President Moon Jae-in and we cannot divulge yet what will happen in the meeting. But we expect some agreements to be signed on certain areas of cooperation.

Q: May we know what are these agreements, ma'am?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: We cannot divulge it yet because we are still --- the negotiations are ongoing and we haven't concluded our coordination about those agreements yet.

Q: Just to confirm because I understand Korean Ambassador to the Philippines mentioned during his briefing the last time that you're eyeing agreement about education, tourism. Is that true? Can you confirm these, ma'am?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: Yes, we are eyeing and anticipating to sign agreements on education, tourism, social security and perhaps fisheries as well but as I've said, negotiations are still ongoing.

Q: Is there a schedule for the President to visit the Filipino community?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: At this visit, not yet because I think there are many side events as well of the summit to which the President and other ASEAN leaders are invited to go. So, I think the schedule is very hectic at the moment.

Q: Thank you ma'am.

Q: So sa ngayon ma'am wala pa kayong masabi at ma-confirm na details?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: Wala pa. Wala pa, sa bilateral events. But as to the summit events, naka-ano --- naka-schedule na 'yun lahat.

Q: It's more on broad strokes lang, general?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: That's right.

Q: Thank you.

Q: Ma'am, can you give us a brief rundown of the schedule nung summit?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: The main summit is going to happen on the 26th of November and there are going to be two sessions. One session would be on discussion on the 30 years of cooperation between ASEAN and ROK because this year is the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-ROK dialogue relations.

And the second session will focus more on connectivity, which is a very important concern of both ASEAN and the Republic of Korea. And after those two sessions will be the leaders' lunch, retreat --- in retreat format. And the most pressing, most important regional security issue will be the Korean peninsula. So leaders will exchange views on that issue.

That's basically the summit meetings but as I've said there are also other side events where agencies of the Philippines like DILG and NEDA and DTI will take the lead.

Q: Ma'am, may update po ba 'yung --- kasi sabi ni Pangulong Duterte nung nakaraan parang magka-canvass daw siya doon ng arm --- armas. May --- kasama ba sa schedule 'yun?

ASEC. MAHILUM-WEST: We should know that sa bilateral relations natin. 'Yung defense procurement with the Republic of Korea is ongoing. Yes, perhaps but I don't want to pre-empt the President. I would defer to the President on that issue.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

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