

**Presidential Communications Operations Office  
Presidential News Desk**

**OPENING REMARKS  
OF  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
AND  
REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESIDENT  
MOON JAE-IN  
DURING THEIR BILATERAL MEETING**

[The Westin Chosun Busan Hotel | 25 November 2019]

**PRESIDENT MOON JAE-IN:** Mr. President, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you together with the Korean people. Your visit comes at a very meaningful time as we celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our diplomatic relations this year.

After we have designated 2019 as the year of mutual exchanges during your visit last year, many cultural exchange events were held in Korea, including concerts, film festivals, and exhibitions. These events have brought the Korean people closer to the Philippines.

The Philippines was the first among ASEAN countries to establish diplomatic relations with Korea and also the first to dispatch troops to fight on our side during the Korean War.

I'd like to express my profound gratitude to the people of the Philippines for their lasting friendship over the past 70 years and to you Mr. President for your great affection for Korea.

The Korean people love the Philippines. Koreans are the number one visitors to the Philippines while our bilateral trade volume surpassed the 15 billion US dollars mark for the first time last year. Numerous Korean companies are doing business in the Philippines, including in the fields of energy, electricity, electronics, textiles, shipbuilding, and [SOC?].

Based on our history of friendship and trust, the time is right for our two countries to think about elevating our relations to a strategic partnership. The elevation of our relations will pave the way for our two countries to engage in greater cooperation that will lead us to common prosperity.

The Philippines is the future of ASEAN as it continues to achieve an impressive growth rate of 6 percent each year, thanks to your outstanding leadership. Through our meeting today, I hope to strengthen my friendship with you and expand our bilateral cooperation to contribute further to the development of ASEAN.

Thank you.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** I am pleased to join you, Excellency, and fellow ASEAN leaders here in your beautiful hometown. Thank you for the gracious hospitality and excellent preparations.

This year is auspicious. We mark the 30th anniversary of the ASEAN-Republic of Korea Dialogue Relations. And we commemorate 70 years of meaningful bilateral relations.

Excellency, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea share a unique affinity. We became blood brothers in 1950s on the altar of freedom. In 1980, the world watched as we waged a parallel struggle for democracy.

In the meantime, our economies took diverging paths and fortunes. The Republic of Korea rose to become one of Asia's economic and technological powerhouses. Ours faltered, but with perseverance, the Philippines has since recovered and is now [a] well-performing, emerging economy.

The past seven years --- decades have witnessed the level of our interaction rise. Our cooperation encompasses various spheres --- from trade, investment, and ODA to infrastructure development, defense, science, technology, and agriculture.

Solidarity and mutual aid have been the hallmark of our ties since 1950. It touches us that this remains so. I thank your government for donating 100,000 US dollars for the earthquake victims in Mindanao last month. Clearly, at no other time in our shared history have the bonds [between] our people this strong.

In 2018, the Republic of Korea was our fourth largest trading partner, with total trade amounting to over 13 billion dollars. It has also a --- it was also a valued source of foreign direct investments, ranking 13th in the same year.

I assure you that the Philippines will continue to find common cause and purpose with the Republic of Korea towards enhancing our bilateral engagement and promoting peace and stability in your region.

Thank you, Excellency.

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