

**Presidential Communications Operations Office
Presidential News Desk**

**VIRTUAL PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS OF NEW AMBASSADORS TO THE
PHILIPPINES**

[Malacañan Palace | 02 December 2020]

H.E Shambhu Santha Kumaran (Republic of India): Your Excellency Mr. President, I have the great honor and privilege to present to you my credentials as the Ambassador of the Republic of India to the Republic of the Philippines.

At the outset, Excellency, I'd like to convey the greetings and best wishes of my President, His Excellency Mr. Ram Nath Kovind, and my Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr. Narendra Modi, to you, and their personal greetings and warm regards.

Excellency, the relationship between India and the Philippines is century's old, and today, we are building a new and modern relationship to the mutual benefit of our people. I wish to thank you Your Excellency, Mr. President, for your personal support and guidance that has helped us to strengthen this relationship in many areas.

In my time here, I hope to work towards strengthening our partnership to help both our people develop and particularly focus on the digital economy and in the context of the current pandemic and the health sector.

India will continue to stand by its partners. India will continue to stand with the Philippines as we, together, combat this deadly disease.

We have supplied medicines and we look forward to having the opportunity to work towards a vaccine that will help us overcome this epidemic.

I also like to explore various opportunities for cooperation in new areas such as space and to work towards ensuring a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific by working together in the areas of defense and maritime security.

I thank you very much for this opportunity, Mr. President, and I'm really humbled and honored to have this presence before you.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte: I am pleased to accept Your Excellency's credentials as Ambassador of the Republic of India to the Philippines.

The Philippines and India have long-standing ties anchored on shared democratic values.

Our friendship is fostered at the highest levels and driven by synergies between my administration's Independent Foreign Policy and India's Act East Policy.

Last year, I had the pleasure of welcoming President Ram Nath Kovind in Manila. I also recall my visit to India almost three years ago, and my fruitful discussions with Prime Minister Narendra

Modi on that occasion and again in June this year. I look forward this year towards honoring the Prime Minister Modi's kind invitation to visit India, even as we plan for a virtual Summit.

The Philippines is committed to further enhance cooperation with India in defense, security, trade and investments, and in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congratulations again, Your Excellency, and I wish you a very successful tour of duty. Welcome.

H.E Shambhu Santha Kumaran (Republic of India): Thank you, sir.

H.E. Claudio Alberto Rojas Rachel (Republic of Chile): Your Excellency, good evening. It was a great pleasure to present to you my letter of credential as Ambassador of Republic of Chile to the Republic of the Philippines issued by His Excellency President Sebastián Piñera.

In a personal note, I have the privilege of visiting the Philippines on numerous previous occasions, [unclear] my first times in 1994. Various events during the '90s gave me the opportunity to retain and to work with our Filipino colleagues in 1996 due to the APEC Summit during the presidency of His Excellency President Ramos.

At that time, I was working in the APEC Secretariat and also I came to this beautiful Palace for the occasion of the first visit of a Chilean President to the Philippines, Mr. Eduardo Frei, in 1995.

Now, after many years in the foreign service as a career diplomat, coming to the Philippines again as the Head of the Chilean mission in this country is truly a privilege and an honor, Your Excellency. I feel at home.

At the Diplomatic Academy, I trained under Ambassador of Chile to the Philippines Luis Melo Lecaros who was responsible for opening the embassy here in 1967. While educating us about the Philippines, he will always emphasize the significance of the Philippines in the organization and creation of ASEAN.

Also, Your Excellency, the Philippines was the first country that we established diplomatic relations and has been our longest partner in the Southeast Asia. As a matter of fact, next year, we will be celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations.

In this context, Philippines' support for Chile in becoming an APEC-member economy since the early stage is a reflection of an existing policy that is constructive and engaging with others.

Also, in 2019, the support of the Philippines was crucial for Chile's aspiration to becoming a development partner of ASEAN. Therefore, Your Excellency, only with gratitude we acknowledge this milestone in our relationship.

Nowadays, we confront a new reality that is a complex and is a challenging reality defined by a pandemia. We are of the view that only through cooperation, the international community will be able to confront second chances in a manner that could provide a secure and healthy environment for all.

Your Excellency, I come from Latin America as an importance of continent far away and particularly South America offers the Philippines several opportunities for your endeavors in that region.

And we acknowledge and recognize the incremental relationship of the Philippines with Chile and other countries in the region.

We are of the view that working together, we will have a springboard for Chile to promote the Philippines in Latin America and for the Philippines to promote Chile in the Southeast Asia.

I am optimistic for the opportunity that lies ahead for Chile and the Philippines on working together in promotion our ties, to foster trade, economic growth and development but most significant, your Excellency, that in doing so, we are securing the well-being of our people.

Your Excellency, may I appeal to you for the support and cooperation in carry on these tasks in my duty as Ambassador of Chile to the Philippines. I will work with you and your government and all the ministry and agency along with the socials and the cultural affairs department.

Thank you very much, Your Excellency.

President Duterte: Excellency, I am pleased to accept your credentials as Ambassador of Chile to the Philippines.

Next year, we will celebrate 75 years of warm and friendly ties between our countries.

We look forward to further enhancing our cooperation, particularly in trade and investments, disaster risk management, agriculture, geothermal energy, tourism, and culture.

I thank your Government for the hospitality extended to Filipinos in Chile and for the assistance in the repatriation of stranded Filipino seafarers during this pandemic.

Congratulations, Excellency. May you have a successful tour of duty in the Philippines. Welcome.

H.E Claudio Alberto Rojas Rachel (Republic of Chile): Thank you. Mabuhay. Thank you.

H.E. Dr. Titanilla Tóth (Hungary): Your Excellency, first of all, please allow me to take this opportunity to allow me to convey to Your Excellency the best wishes of my President, His Excellency János Áder, and extend this wishes to the government of Hungary and the people of Hungary our best wishes to the government and the people of the Philippines.

Your Excellency, during my tenure of office I will exert my efforts to deepen our friendship and mutual beneficial cooperation, bring our relations to new heights by emphasizing the trade, the water management, the education and cultural activities.

Hungary is a stable and reliable partner in Europe to your country. Our relationship have gained a new momentum since 2016 when we have reopened our embassy in Manila.

Needless to say, it is true both ways. The Philippines is an important partner of ours in the region, in the ASEAN, and in Asia. Testified by several high-level visits, cardinal agreements, and underlined by the protection of our common solid Christian values together.

Aiming to build our people-to-people context, Hungary offers 35 full degree, full scholarships to Philippine students every year and we would like to extend this number in the upcoming years.

I'm looking forward to these responsibilities and I ask for the support of your good Excellency in carrying out my duties in the interest of our both countries.

Your Excellency, I have the honor to present my letter of credence as Ambassador Extraordinary Plenipotentiary of Hungary to the Republic of the Philippines and the letter of recall of my predecessor.

President Duterte: Excellency, I accept your credentials as Ambassador of Hungary to the Philippines.

I am pleased with the strong momentum of high-level exchanges between our two countries, notwithstanding the pandemic.

The visit of your Foreign Minister in October and our hosting this week of the 2nd meeting of the Joint Committee on Economic Cooperation are proof of this.

I thank Hungary for supporting the Philippines in the multilateral fora in line with your government's policy of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries.

I also note Hungary's financial cooperation proposal to facilitate expanded collaboration on water management and other areas.

Finally, let me express appreciation for Hungary's scholarships for Filipino students pursuing advanced degrees in your country. This will help foster amity and mutual appreciation between our peoples.

These augur well for the future of our relations.

Congratulations, Excellency. I wish you a successful tour of duty in the Philippines, and welcome.

H.E. Dr. Titanilla Tóth (Hungary): Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Mabuhay.

H.E. Marat Ignatyevich Pavlov (Russian Federation): Mr. President, I have the honor to present my letter of credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of the Philippines and the letter of recall of my predecessor.

I would like to assure you of my strong will to further strengthen bilateral cooperation, intensified over the recent years by the close and confidential dialogue between my President Vladimir Putin and you.

Then next year, we will mark the 45th anniversary of establishing the Russian-Philippine diplomatic relations. We should approach the celebration of this date by implementing the project over we agreed upon as well as signing your agreements and the [unclear] interaction in international fora like the United Nations.

It will also be a good occasion to step up people-to-people connectivity by promoting humanitarian exchanges and enhancing into regional ties. One promising area of bilateral cooperation is the joint combat against the coronavirus pandemic.

I am confident that our collaboration in possible distribution and manufacturing of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine in the Philippines will greatly contribute to continued development of the friendly, constructive relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of the Philippines.

Mr. President, let me avail myself of the opportunity to congratulate you on the forthcoming Christmas and convey my best wishes for the prosperity, happiness, and good health to you, members of your family, as well as to the people of the Philippines.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. President.

President Duterte: I am pleased to accept your Excellency's credentials as Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Philippines.

The Philippines considers Russia a good friend and partner. Over the past few years, we have strengthened cooperation in defense and security, health, science and technology, and the economy of our countries.

We aim for an even more robust and deeper cooperation in the coming years.

We thank Russia for its offer to supply SPUTNIK-5 and share its technology on vaccine production with the Philippines.

Next year marks the 45th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. I take this opportunity to reiterate my invitation for President Vladimir Putin to visit the Philippines, as soon as circumstances will allow.

It will be an opportunity to celebrate and reaffirm the enduring friendship and cooperation between our countries.

Congratulations, Your Excellency. I wish you a successful tour of duty in the Philippines and welcome.

H.E. Marat Ignatyevich Pavlov (Russian Federation): Thank you, Mr. President.

H.E Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad Kazi (Islamic Republic of Pakistan): Honorable President, magandang gabi. I feel greatly honored and privileged to be given this opportunity to present my letter of credence as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Pakistan to the Republic of the Philippines.

I take this opportunity to convey, Your Excellency, the warmest and sincere most greetings of the President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Imran Khan, and also the greetings and the goodwill of the people of Pakistan.

Our two countries, Excellency, enjoyed long enduring ties of friendship and cooperation.

In fact, we started off in 1949, when a consulate of Philippines was opened in Karachi. Last year, we celebrated 70 years of our diplomatic relations and we admire the far-sighted policies and transcendent leadership of Your Excellency, which has brought so many dividends for the Republic of Philippines.

Of course, with this COVID, which has challenged the plans of each and every country in the globe, again, under your able leadership, Philippines has gained lot of success in containing the contagion.

We, in Pakistan, admire the consistent endeavors of Your Excellency towards restoration of peace and stability in the Mindanao Region, which has brought increased trust and stability and trust among the stakeholders and significant prosperity for the people of the region and the country.

Excellency, during my tenure, I'll do my utmost to increase and strengthen our relationship in political, economic, commercial, educational, cultural and people-to-people contacts between our two countries.

[Garbled] we have robust institutions of the joint economic commission and political consultations --- policy consultations to us. I hope these committees will meet soon.

And in [garbled] of East Asia policy, we are committed to further our relations with the ASEAN Region and, in particular, with Philippines.

We always cherish this support of the Philippines who have contributed and supported our engagement and we wish to become full part dialogue partner from the existing sectoral dialogue partner of the ASEAN.

Excellency, I take this opportunity to convey my personal gratitude to you in receiving me today. I feel honored and privileged to serve as the Pakistan's Ambassador to this great country with a vibrant and thriving economy, and kind and friendly people.

I look forward to a fruitful and rewarding stay here and sincerely hope that our two countries stride with new height in the days ahead.

I seek your Excellency's permission to present my letter of credence as well as the letter of recall of my predecessor.

In doing so, I wish you good health, happiness, and continued success in the noble task of serving your people.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay.

President Duterte: Your Excellency, I am pleased to accept your credentials as Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Philippines.

The friendly ties between the Philippines and Pakistan span over seven decades. We are keen on enhancing our overall bilateral relationships, particularly in trade and investments.

I recall my visit aboard the Navy Ship *PNS Saif* in 2017. Let me extend our military-to-military exchanges and sharing of intelligence and best practices, particularly in countering terrorism and violence.

Congratulations, your Excellency. May you have a productive tour of duty in the Philippines.

Mabuhay. Salamat.

H.E. Juha Markus Pyykkö (Republic of Finland): Your Excellency, I have the honor to convey to you greetings from Mr. Sauli Niinistö, the President of the Republic of Finland.

I have provided Your Excellency a letter from President Niinistö accrediting me as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Finland to the Republic of the Philippines as well as letter of recall of my predecessor.

Your Excellency, Finland re-opened her embassy here in Manila at the beginning of September this year. And I am honored and pleased to be the first new ambassador of Finland, here in Manila.

There are three main grounds for re-opening. Firstly, to facilitate more business interaction between our two countries. Secondly, to strengthen cultural and immigration services here. And thirdly, to provide a more solid bases for foreigner and security policy analysis in this geopolitically important and interesting region in Asia.

Naturally, I hope that I, together with our embassy, campaign instrumental and intensify our existing good relations in general and in especially in the field of business, for example, in the development of sustainable and smart cities.

I foresee business opportunities between Finland and the Philippines in the fields of renewable energy, circular economy, ways to energy, digitalization, health technologies and education.

And in this same spirit, I hope to be instrumental in encouraging and cherishing more people-to-people contacts between our nations as well.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I just would like to mention that since the times of Armi Kuusela and Virgilio Hilario, there has been a special place for the Philippines in the hearts and minds of Finns and Finland.

Thank you.

President Duterte: I am happy to accept Your Excellency's credentials as Ambassador of Finland to the Philippines.

The Philippines welcomes your Government's decision to re-open its Embassy in Manila this year. We look forward to enhancing our bilateral cooperation on various areas of mutual interest.

We are particularly interested in expanding ties, particularly in ICT, renewable energy, and clean technology.

We appreciate Finland's support for our peace processes throughout the years.

Mr. Ambassador, congratulations, and I wish you a very fruitful tour of duty in the Philippines.

H.E. Juha Markus Pyykkö: Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Welcome.

H.E. Juha Markus Pyykkö: Thank you.

H.E. Ahmed Shehabeldin Ibrahim Abdullah (Arab Republic of Egypt): Mr. President, His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, extends his warmest greetings to you and has assigned me with clear instructions to explore all avenues for opening a new chapter of bilateral relations for the prosperity and welfare of the peoples of our two countries.

With your permission, Mr. President, I would immediately start working and save no effort in collaboration with my friends and colleagues in your friendly country to make the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations signifying the start of such new chapter.

As well said by Jose Rizal: "No good water comes from muddy spring. No sweet fruit comes from a bitter seed."

Mr. President, I have the honor to present my letter of credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Arab Republic of Egypt and to the Republic of Philippines and the letter of recall of my predecessor.

Mabuhay.

President Duterte: Excellency, I am pleased to accept your credentials as Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Philippines.

Over the past seven decades, the Philippines and Egypt have enjoyed warm and fruitful ties. We hope to further build on this as we strengthen our cooperation in trade, agriculture, and cultural exchanges as well as in security and combatting terrorism and violent extremism.

Egypt is home to over five thousand Filipinos. I thank your Government for your continued kind treatment accorded to them.

Congratulations, Excellency. I wish you all the best as you begin your tour of duty in the Philippines. Welcome.

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