



Office of the President of the Philippines

STATEMENT

Joint Courtesy Call of the Ambassadors of the Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, State of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates 16 December 2021

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte reaffirmed the Philippines' commitment to further strengthen bilateral ties with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, particularly the Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, State of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates during the joint courtesy call of said countries' ambassadors on 15 December 2021 in Malacañan Palace.

President Duterte thanked the GCC governments for their assistance to the Philippines' pandemic response efforts and in the repatriation of Filipino nationals affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

The President stated that the Philippines looks forward to working closely with GCC partners as they implement their respective labor reform initiatives. *"I hope that these reforms succeed and evolve to encompass the more vulnerable sectors in the GCC labor market, particularly household service workers,"* said the President.

President Duterte also noted the successful implementation of the GCC countries' strategic frameworks aimed at economic diversification, opening opportunities for broader cooperation in various spheres, particularly climate change.

"The Philippines is keenly interested in working with our GCC partners to realize our shared aspiration for a better future for all our peoples," the President added.

For their part, the GCC Ambassadors expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet and discuss with the President bilateral issues of mutual interest, including pandemic cooperation, labor reform, migration and development, regional peace and security, climate change and energy. **END**