

**Office of the Press Secretary
Presidential News Desk**

MEDIA INTERVIEW BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.

[Fairmont Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia | 06 September 2022]

OPENING STATEMENT:

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, so far so good. The things that we planned to talk about with the President of Indonesia, President Joko Widodo, lahat ng issues that we expected to be raised with us, na hindi naman issue, but the subjects that we expected to be raised, we did. Pero nalampasan namin 'yung plano. We started talking about other things besides.

So we talked about the -- what we will plan to do in ASEAN, the ASEAN conference coming up in November, and the position that Indonesia will take, the Philippines will take on different subjects.

He raised the subject of Myanmar and again the part that ASEAN... We discussed what do you think ASEAN should do and we came up with some ideas. And I think this will be all raised in the -- in the conferences in November. We actually -- the main subject was to be trade, to continue our long-standing relationship.

The trade between Indonesia and the Philippines, increased by 50 percent in '21. 'Yun lamang. There's a trade imbalance really between Indonesia and the Philippines. So I said we should find ways to turn that around.

And I brought up the subject of agriculture, again because that is in my mind a very important subject that needs to be discussed. And we talked about the possibility of them supplying us with fertilizer with Urea of Indonesia, increasing its trade also for our energy because much of our coal comes from Indonesia.

And there was a time a few weeks back where they stopped export of coal. Nakiusap tayo sa kanila at sinama naman tayo doon sa listahan na bibigyan nila. Mag-export sila ng coal. So that's...

We talked about then the place of the renewable energies because coal nga is not seen as the most environmentally friendly fuel. Sabi ko, "How do we shift? How does Indonesia plan to shift to renewable?" Pinag-usapan din namin 'yun.

But I think the most extensive subject matter was in fact, PPP. Because nandito talaga tayo para i-encourage 'yung PPPs with the Philippine government. But not only the Philippine government.

Bukod sa PPP, pinag-usapan namin 'yung mga joint venture ng mga negosyante dito. Pupunta sila sa Pilipinas, ang negosyanteng Pilipino pupunta rito sa Indonesia para makapag-joint venture, but also with the government, the PPPs with the government.

We had pretty much – we had two business meetings during this trip here in Jakarta and in those meetings, meron mga napirmahan, naumpisahan pa lang. I mean you know, MOUs and LOIs are only the beginning to these things. But we are determined that it will not end there.

Kung minsan kasi nagpipirmahan ng MOU tapos wala ng nangyari. Eh pipilitin namin na hindi mangyari 'yung ganun. Sabi ko nga, doon sa mga napirmahan na LOI at saka MOU, pag natapos natin 'yung kalahati diyan, malaking bagay na 'yan. So that's something...

But the talk between myself and President Widodo proceeded so quickly. Umabot na kami doon sa organization ng mga task force at the technical level, which generally you don't get to in a state visit.

Usually pag-uusapan niyan 'yung mga ministerial level lang muna eh. O mag-uusap with our group, we'll come and talk to you. Sabi niya, huwag na tayong dumaan diyan, let's go straight already. Let's get something done.

Very enthusiastic naman ang mga ministers ni President Widodo, 'yung mga prospects dito sa atin sa Pilipinas, and marami silang nakikitang mga opportunities. So we will pursue that.

And so I think I would describe the trip as extreme – more productive than we had expected.

And last night suddenly he invited us to see – to go to a mall. Bago nung dinner namin, pinuntahan namin 'yung mall. 'Yun pala, 'yung mall na pinakita sa amin, gobyerno ang may-ari at saka ang produktong pinagbibili doon sa loob ng mall, lahat local, lahat MSMEs, lahat maliliit. Pagka masyado nang lumaki, hindi na sila pwede doon sa mall. Lilipat sila doon sa regular na mall.

So 'yun ang idea nila. So sabi ko, baka pwede natin gawin sa Pilipinas. Marami tayong... We had a very good exchange of ideas.

Sabi ko naman sa Pilipinas, ganito ginagawa namin. I was describing 'yung OTOP, 'yung One Town, One Product. Sabi ko, pero maliliit. So kailangan turuan.

And nag-agree na naman kami. Sabi niya, oo, kailangan natin turuan 'yung packaging, 'yung market, kung ano 'yung hinahanap sa merkado, how do you business plan, 'yung mga ganung klaseng bagay. Pareho sa atin.

Kaya't the parallels between the Indonesian experience and the Philippine experience are very evident. So we will build on that. We will build on that.

Ang maganda nito, Jakarta, Indonesia long-standing – 73 years na tayong mag-partner ng Indonesia. So meron talaga tayong pundasyon na maganda na we can build on for – to develop all of these.

So last night, we met with – we had dinner with some of the biggest businessmen here in Indonesia. And again, all of them are very enthusiastic. Sabi nila hindi – we haven't been able to come into the Philippines properly, because nung pinaplano nila, nag-pandemic, kung ano na nangyari. And PPPs weren't really being encouraged in the previous years.

So sabi ko nagbago na 'yan. So come to the Philippines. So they all committed naman to... Many of them are already actually involved in the Philippines. So sabi nila palalakingin nila 'yung kanilang involvement. Gusto nila mag-expand.

'Yung translation from the Jakarta experience to the Philippine experience, madali lang eh. Hindi mo masyadong kailangan baguhin. Siyempre, ibabagay natin sa Pilipinas. But again the experience, we are so close in many ways -- geographically, ethnically, culturally.

So madali talaga ang interaction namin. So I think it went – I think that's why it went very well and that we were as productive and we advanced the talks very, very quickly.

So that's – I think considering we were here for what, a day and a half, working for a day and a half, marami rin tayong nagawa. At 'yung mga – meron tayong nagawa na hindi natin ine-expect na mangyayari. Wala sa schedule.

Sabi natin, hindi naman, we are not going to talk about – wala kaming planong pag-usapan 'to, pero napunta ang usapan doon.

So even security arrangements, defense arrangements, 'yung mga joint na ano natin sa Indonesia. And then the one thing that I wanted, I was very interested in was on the delimitation talks between Indonesia and the Philippines.

First of all, we had delimitation talks nung pag-establish nung baseline. Kasi tumatawid 'yung EEZ natin sa Indonesia, kaya't nagkagulo nang konti. Pero naayos natin 'yun.

So sinasabi ko 'yan ang parang template, para doon sa delimitation talks sa continental shelf that we are undergoing now.

But also, not only for the issues between Indonesia and the Philippines, pero sabi ko, pwede kong gamitin 'yan. Pwede natin gamitin 'yan, pag iba, kahit na iba 'yung kausap sa delimitation talks na ganyan.

So as I said, we should show it to the rest of ASEAN as an example, that it is something that actually – it can be done. It can be done basta't naguusap kayo with the bilateral agreement and so...

We covered pati RCEP, napagusapan namin. 'Yung pag-ratify ng Pilipinas sa RCEP, which is going to be very high up on the order of business of the Senate, after the budget is passed.

So marami, maraming marami, more – and many, many subjects were brought up, were spoken about in much more detail than we had expected and the talk – whatever discussions we had progressed really rapidly from the usual pleasantries na you know, 'yung mga ginagawa pagka kung minsan pag state visit.

Nalampasan namin kaagad 'yun dahil nga ang experience ng Indonesia at saka ng Pilipinas, eh makikita mo na talagang there are many parallels. So we will take advantage of that.

All right. That's my report for the day.

I have to report to the country what we did here. Baka akala nila nagbabakasyon lang kami dito.

Pero totoo nga, medyo masyado kaming pinakain. So medyo... Siguro kayo din. Basta pinakain kami nang pinakain, so baka hindi... Pag-uwi natin eh hindi na magkasya itong mga barong namin.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Q: Sir, you seem to be so fascinated with the strategy that was used in the 1994 Filipino and Indonesian Maritime Border...?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Yes.

Q: Does this mean that you will be – you are inclined to present the same strategy to China with regard to settling our dispute in the West Philippine Sea?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, I think it is worthwhile to explore at the very least because it is one instance that this kind of discussion, we came to a conclusion and we came to a resolution.

So we should try it. Now, hopefully it works. If it doesn't work, we will try something else, but at least we have a beginning point. That's how I see it.

Q: Sir, investment agreement lang po kung magkano po 'yung expected natin after the roundtable?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Hindi pa nga tayo umabot sa technical ano eh, but with – 'yung the areas na naka-plano natin pag-usapan, napag-usapan natin, pero there were other areas na we did not plan to talk about, but we ended up talking about.

Q: So sir wala pang ballpark figure ng how much you will be bringing home to the Philippines from Indonesia in terms of investments?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, if you... We haven't the done sums actually. We haven't put it together yet but it's going to be quite significant.

Q: Are there going to be immediate benefits to the Filipinos? Ito pong mga nasarang deals or at least those agreements that have already been signed?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Some are expansions to what are already – the operations that are already ongoing. So mararamdaman kaagad 'yun. The others are quite long-term.

Q: Can you give some of those that can be felt immediately, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, some of the --- especially sa manufacturing, sa transport, palagay ko kaagad 'yan meron na tayong magagawa pati 'yung tulong nila sa energy, that is going to be immediate. 'Yung sa pag-import natin sa kanila, pagbili natin sa kanila ng agricultural commodities.

Pati 'yung nagpatulong ako sa fisheries, kasi obsessed ako doon sa Pilipinas nag-iimport ng galunggong eh. Hindi ko talaga matanggap 'yan eh.

So I asked for help because matibay ang fisheries nila. So sabi ko we can exchange delegations. That I think we can – those are the things, especially on the agricultural sector, are going to happen in the very short term.

All right. Sige, salamat. Thank you.

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