

Office of the Press Secretary

Presidential News Desk

MEDIA INTERVIEW

BY

PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.

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OPENING STATEMENT:

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, everyone.

Well, ito na 'yung ating last I suppose call it an event. This is the last event of this trip. At I thought it would be useful na kausapin kayo na nasa Press Corps para eh makapag-report ako nang kaunti kung ano ba sa aking palagay ang nangyari dito sa trip na ito.

Well, first of all, of course the main purpose of our coming here was to address the United Nations General Assembly. At natatawa nga kami kasi sabi ko sinusundan talaga ako ng siyete, 77th UN General Assembly ang na-attend-an ko as my first time as President.

So I think that we were able to put forward the message of where the Philippines is now, what we are planning to do, what we have done to adjust our country to the new challenges of the post-pandemic and hopefully post-Ukrainian crisis that we have been suffering under for the last what? Two and a half years.

And sa palagay ko naman ay naunawaan ng ating mga kaibigan na sa iba't ibang lugar, sa iba't ibang bansa kung nasaan na ang Pilipinas. That is important, it was important for me to do that para kasi malaman ng ating mga kaibigan kasi marami tayong kinakailangan sa kanila, marami tayong hinihingi, marami tayong sinasabi magbuo tayo ng mga partnership eh

kailangan natin ipaliwanag sa kanila. Ito 'yung mga aming binabalak, ito 'yung aming ginagawa para magtulungan tayo.

And I think we got the message across. Bukod pa doon is that alam niyo naman marami akong ginawang meeting, mayroon kaming bilaterals in the diplomatic front. So we were able to meet with several other leaders --- some formally, others informally.

Ganyan naman talaga lagi sa UN eh. Kung minsan... Halimbawa the King of Jordan, nagkita lang kami magkakilala naman kami eh. Nagkita lang kami nakapag-usap kami, naimbita...

Si President Macron ganoon din. Nagkita lang kami sa holding room pero maganda 'yung naging usapan namin. So we were able to do many of those things.

But on the other hand, 'yung in-organize para sa atin ng ating mga kasamahan sa private sector, doon sa mga roundtable meeting, doon sa mga discussions tungkol nga sa ekonomiya ng Pilipinas at kung ano ang...

Ang talagang nangyari unang-una is again to explain what the intentions are, anong plano for the future ng Pilipinas when it comes to the economy, when it comes to investment? Dahil 'yan naman talaga ang kailangan natin. So I came --- I made sure na magamit natin ang oras habang nandito tayo sa New York na makipagkita sa lahat ng maaari nating kausapin para nga eh hihikayatin natin, sinasabi namin "mag-invest kayo sa Pilipinas."

Karamihan sa kanila ay nasa Pilipinas na. But they want to expand their operations, they want to do more, and so ang aming ginawa ay sinasabi namin we want you to do that. Iyon ulit ipinaliwanag natin ito 'yung aming ginagawa para maging --- 'yung ease of doing business, with the digitalization, kung what's the direction of the industrialization that we see is going to be the most beneficial to our economy. All of those things we are explaining to them.

But the other part of it was not just for them to listen to our economic managers, our local businessmen, but for us to listen to them and ask them ano ba talagang --- ano pa ang kailangan naming gawin para kayo ay mag-invest sa amin, para kayo ay makatulong sa amin, at gumanda rin ang inyong mga negosyo doon sa Pilipinas?

And I think it was very, very --- very, very important that we did what we did. I think that now we have explained to our private sector, potential partners, and present partners kung ano ba talaga ang direksyon ng --- kung saan natin dadalhin ang ekonomiya.

Pinakilala natin 'yung mga ibang members of the Cabinet. Pinakilala natin sa kanila 'yung mga ibang negosyante, 'yung mga private sector na dala natin para naman masimulan na ang usapan.

This is but you have... I have to make clear this is not the end of it; this is the beginning. Umpisa pa lang ito. Now we have to go and develop those ideas that we started to talk about here.

Iyong mga roundtable natin isang oras lang 'yun eh. Siguro minsan isang oras, one hour 20 minutes. Eh siyempre pagka malaking operation o malaking project kailangan idedetalye ngayon natin 'yan. So that's what we are going to do when we return to the Philippines. At lahat ng economic managers ay talagang naka-schedule na kami sabi ko "isa-isahin natin lahat itong pinag-usapan natin."

Ano ba talagang... What will we prioritize? Ano 'yung uunahin natin dito? Ano 'yung maaari nating gawin kaagad? Unahin natin 'yan. Ano 'yung pinakaimportante? I-prioritize natin 'yan.

Para mabuo ang ating gustong gawin, ang project, ang programa, what do we have to do? Detalyehin na natin.

So ika nga as they say in --- to use the English phrase: we have to get down to the nuts and bolts of those programs that talked about.

We have to lay it out. I'm sure hindi ganoon kasimple 'yan. May lilitaw na problema, mayroon tayong makikita na mas magandang idea, mas magandang paraan but we have to now get to the detail level of all of these discussions that we have had.

The discussions I had well were mostly to do with investment, were mostly to do with investment in the different sectors of the economy, siyempre 'yung aking priority na agrikultura.

But also we talked a lot about digitalization, we talked about ease of doing business; we talked about regulatory environment; we talked about PPP; we talked about G2G, lahat talagang napag-usapan.

Kaya't kailangan pa natin --- we have to make it into a more cohesive program, hindi lang 'yung sali-salita lamang. But I'm very encouraged dahil mukhang natutuwa naman sila, mukhang agreed naman ang ating mga potential and present investors, agreed naman sila na tama naman siguro 'yung direksyon kung saan natin pinapapunta ang ekonomiya.

And so that has also been --- that has been very useful for us to listen to them. And of course I invited them all to come to the Philippines again to para palakihin ang kanilang negosyo o kung wala pa sila sa Pilipinas ay magsimula na sila sa Pilipinas.

And palagay ko siyempre hindi --- ang ano diyan eh hindi mo maaasahan na maging perfect 'yan na ang lahat ng napag-usapan natin ay maging successful. Pero kung ang malaking porsiyento, if the majority of what we had discussed with our potential and present business partners and investors, kung malaking --- let's say if we can get 80 percent of what we talked about palagay ko maganda.

So in that sense, I will of course consider --- I consider this trip successful. And then of course there is that very significant meeting that I had with the American President, President Joe Biden, where we clarify between the two countries how exactly we see the relationship between the United States and the Philippines should evolve.

Dahil alam naman natin biglang uminit ang sitwasyon doon sa bandang atin eh: Asia Pacific, West Philippine Sea, Asia. Anong role ng ASEAN? Anong role ng Pilipinas?

Lahat 'yan ay napag-usapan natin. So again, in similar fashion, we laid out the general framework of where we are going to head with the relationship between the Philippines and the United States. I am very happy to be able to report to you that the expressions of support of President Joe Biden and our friends here in the United States have been very positive.

And talagang mahalaga tayo sa kanila para --- hindi lamang dahil sa West Philippine Sea, kung hindi sa unang-una, sa tagal na ng ating pagkakaibigan sa Amerika, marami na tayong pinagdaanan eh kung minsan hindi... We had 'yung tinatawag there have been bumps in the road. So what we try to do was to smooth those bumps out para maging mas maganda ang patakbo between the United States and the Philippines.

Lahat ng subject matter napag-usapan namin mula sa ekonomiya, mula sa investment, mula sa environment, sa climate change, military, defense, security, lahat 'yan napag-usapan namin.

And pinagbigyan talaga tayo ni President Joe Biden. Kung titingnan ninyo dalawa lang --- sa dalawang tao lang siya nakipagkita. Kay Liz Truss 'yung bagong PM ng UK. Pero 'yun meeting 'yun na na-postpone dahil sa funeral ni Queen Elizabeth.

Tayo lang nakipagkita siya. Lahat ng lider siyempre gustong makipagkita kay Joe Biden, tayo lang ang pinagbigyan, which indicates the importance that this President and this government puts in that relationship with Philippines.

So napaka para sa atin eh magandang development 'yan dahil kung minsan sa nakaraan, hindi maliwanag kung ano ba talaga ang relasyon natin. Sa nakaraang anim na taon, hindi --- kung minsan ay hindi maliwanag kung ano ba talaga ang samahan ng Amerika at saka ng Pilipinas. Eh niliwanag natin 'yun and I think that bodes well for us for the future.

I also had other meetings. I met with Tony Blair, the former UK Prime Minister. Ang pinag-usapan namin ay good governance. Mayroon siyang institute at sinasabi niya you know you can use the benefit of our experience that we have worked in other countries na pagandahin ang patakbo ng gobyerno.

Hindi naman nila sinasabi na mas marunong sila sa atin pero ang sabi nila baka mayroon kaming maitulong. So we of course we were able to discuss that.

We had a very shall we say satisfying meeting with Dr. Henry Kissinger. Eh napag-usapan... Si Henry Kissinger was... Napakaano --- napaka --- inaalala niya 'yung mga --- 'yung father ko, 'yung mother ko, 'yung kanilang naging pagsasama, pagkakaibigan.

Tapos kinukuwento niya sa akin 'yung pagpunta niya sa Pilipinas na 'yung mga memories niya doon at inimbata ko siya ulit sa Pilipinas. Tinatanong lang naman niya sa akin anong tingin mo rito? Kumusta na kayo sa Pilipinas?

So it was very constructive and very, very pleasant. And inimbata ko rin siya papuntang Pilipinas para sabi ko eh mabuti mabalik ka doon para makita mo ang mga pagbabago doon sa amin mula noong last time ka nandoon.

At sabi niya and I want to call on your mother. Sabi ko 'di siyempre matutuwa 'yung mother ko pagka nakita ka. So it was a very warm --- I have to say, a I very warm meeting and it was nice to see the affection that had been developed between the Dr. and --- not only my parents but the Philippines.

Those are I suppose the high points there 'no. So I come away I think I can say we come away from this trip with a great deal of work to do to operationalize all of the things that we had talked about.

But nonetheless, the most important thing to me which was in fact my real intention when I came here and when we were planning the trip as to get these discussions started and we have achieved that. We have got those discussions started.

Not only with the people that we actually met, eh nagpatulong din sa ako sa kanila. At sinabi baka 'yung mga kasamahan ninyo baka puwede niyo ring isama, baka puwede niyo ring ikuwento kung ano 'yung mga ginagawa namin at baka interesado rin silang makapunta sa Pilipinas at tumulong doon sa amin. at para mayroon din kayong negosyo doon sa Pilipinas na makakabuti rin naman sa inyo. Pero malaking maitutulong sa Pilipinas.

That's the general report that I've given... I will make again a more detailed report as soon as we get back to Manila para naman malaman naman ng mga kababayan natin na hindi lang tayo kumain ng Sabrett at saka ng pastrami pero talagang mayroon tayong ginawa.

So overall, I can say that I am --- I consider the trip a success and overall I am satisfied with the work that we have done. Lahat ng nais nating gawin ay nagawa natin. Lahat ng nais nating kausapin ay talaga namang handang makipag-usap sa atin.

Kaya't that kind of response is of course very gratifying. So that is the way I see the trip here to New York. Of course the central purpose was to speak before the United Nations General Assembly at 'yung mensahe ko sa General Assembly dinala ko ang mensahe ng pagkakaisa and I called for unity on a global scale and the response I think was very good.

Of course, many of us were very excited nakapunta kami sa New York Stock Exchange at napindot ko pa 'yung ano --- I rang the bell. Alam mo malaking bagay 'yun, excited na excited kami kasi nag-aaral ako dito hanggang doon lang kami sa floor, nanonood lang kami doon sa taas doon sa ano.

So sabi ko I was telling the members of the Stock Exchange. Sabi ko I have never imagined that I will be here in the most valuable real estate in all of New York City which is the 40-square feet of the balcony,

And I get to push the button and get to bang gavel in the New York Stock Exchange. So for somebody who went to business school there's a big thrill for us, for all of us.

On a personal side, I was just happy also to come back to New York. I've always enjoyed the city, I've always loved being in New York, and to get that --- may vibe talaga itong New York eh. May parang beat itong New York na naiba sa lahat ng siyudad sa buong mundo.

And I was --- we were all very happy to be able to feel that again. So on all those fronts, we have made progress and all in all I'm very happy we came, I am very happy with the results of the visit.

O sige I'll take a couple of questions. Dito muna.

Q&A:

Q: Mr. President, you mentioned some statements about China kanina doon sa ---

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Asia.

Q: Opo. So in that case, curious kami paano po 'yung magiging paghandle niyo ng South China Sea dispute at paano ito maiiba doon sa inyong dating predecessor --- sa inyong predecessor na si President Duterte? Paano po 'yung magiging approach niyo doon?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, I don't want to compare me and PRRD. Iyong ginawa niya he did it because that's what he felt was the way to do it.

Pero 'yung mga pronouncement ko, wala naman nagbago eh. Lahat naman 'yan nasabi ko na eh. Lahat naman 'yan alam na ng mga kaibigan natin sa Beijing. So ganoon pa rin. We're consistent. Hindi naman tayo nagpabagobago. We have been consistent and we continue to toe that line that our foreign policy. The main principle behind all that we do are two things: peace and the national interest.

And we will continue to hew to that idea and to that principle --- those principles.

Q: Follow up ko lang, Mr. President. Will you prefer a multilateral approach or a bilateral approach doon sa dispute?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: I will prefer any approach that will work. Subukan natin lahat. Kagaya nung sinabi ko kanina sa Asia Society, try everything, we'll have to try everything.

Kung saan tayo makalusot, eh 'di maganda. Eh pero kung minsan hindi mo ma-expect kung saan talaga lalabas 'yung ano eh 'yung opportunity.

So kailangan subukan natin lahat. Baka dito lumitaw, baka diyan, baka diyan. So subukan natin lahat.

Q: Salamat po.

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Thank you.

Q: Sir, nabanggit niyo po kanina sa pakikipag-usap niyo sa mga business leaders natanong niyo sila ano pa ba 'yung kailangan sa Pilipinas para mag-negosyo sila sa atin. Mayroon po ba silang mga nabanggit or ---

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Mayroon.

Q: --- satisfied na sila sa ease of doing business sa atin?

PRESIDENT MARCOS: Well, they were glad that we are attending to the problem of the ease of doing business kasi 'yan ang mga sinasabi nila noon pa eh at saka 'yan ang mga nababanggit ng kanilang mga Chambers of Commerce.

So sabi nila mabuti naman na may response kayo at nakikinig kayo doon sa amin. But I tried to get them to as much detail as we were allowed by the time. Things like documentation, regulatory environment, delays in the bureaucracy, 'yung mga ganoon, 'yung mga matagal na nating naririnig.

But now we have a very --- we are very determined to find ways to really fix it. Because if we don't, lahat nung plano natin eh hindi natin mabubuo. Eh

sayang naman and I really believe that there are some very great opportunities that we really should follow up and finalize and bring to fruition.

Okay? All right, thank you.

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