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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.
AT THE GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW TERMINAL BUILDING OF THE CLARK
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

[Delivered at the Clark International Airport, Clark Freeport in Mabalacat, Pampanga | 28
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Thank you very much, Tourism Secretary Christina Frasco; our Secretary for Transport Secretary Jimmy Bautista; BCDA Chairman Delfin Lorenzana; and I would be in trouble if I do not be complete and greet the First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos; and our partner matagal na po namin siyang kilala at marami po siyang talagang gustong gawin para sa Pilipinas and this what we open here, this new terminal, is an embodiment of all of his ideas for our country, LIPAD Director Frederick D. Go — LIPAD Chairman, I'm sorry, Frederick Go; other LIPAD officials who are here; Pampanga Governor, Gov. Delta Pineda; other local government officials; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Well, we — kung makikita po ninyo lahat kami ay pinilit namin nakangiti kami ng maano dahil this is exactly what we have been talking about. And that is why even some of us — alam niyo 'yung iba sa amin hilo-hilo pa rin eh dahil may jet lag pa rin kami galing ng New York. But we insisted to come here because this is an extremely important event for several reasons.

Ito 'yung aming laging pinag-uusapan na PPP. How do we leverage the assets of government? How do we leverage the assets of the private sector? How do we put it together and get a synergy out of it? And I suppose — si Derick matagal na niyang sinasabi sa akin 'to. I think I'm not revealing any confidences when I say we have been in discussion for months before I took office. And this is exactly the kind of thing that we were talking about.

And so this is a perfect example of what government and the private sector can do. And makikita mo kung private sector lang ang gumawa nito, hindi nila kinaya. Kung gobyerno lang ang gumawa, hindi rin kinaya ito. And that is why this is a perfect example for that. And I think it will serve to encourage other people to enter into this kind of arrangements.

This is also — I think it would not be out of place to report — this is also the kind of activity that we were actively endorsing when we were in New York and talking to possible investors, in companies who are already in the Philippines but would like to increase their investment. And this is exactly the kind of partnership that we need to encourage.

We have not been able to do it in the previous years for the simple reason that there was a pandemic. Wala naman tayong ginawa kung hindi tulungan ang ating mga kababayan, alagaan ang mga may sakit, kaya't 'yun lang talaga ang ating ginagawa.

Ngayon na mukha naman na gumagaan ang problema ng pandemya ay siguro naman panahon na na balikan natin ang ating mga pinaplano tungkol nga sa ganitong klaseng mga project na PPP.

It is also important because this facility is another building block to what we hope to become a logistic center of Asia, the Philippines. And also — kaya't nandito si — you will see nakangiti nga si Secretary Christina Frasco because now we have another facility, we have another airport kung saan makapasok ang mga turista, ang mga travelers. Not only the business — nagbubukas — the business travelers, those who are working but also those who are visiting the Philippines.

So ganitong-ganito ang ating kailangan. We need this, we need more, we have many plans for the airport in Manila, we have many plans for the airport surrounding Manila para naman dumami at mas madali ang pagpasok ng ating mga magiging bisita.

The general idea that Secretary Christina and the Cabinet and I have come to is that habang hindi pa natin naaayos ang airport sa Maynila, habang hindi pa naitatayo at nag-operate 'yung airport sa Bulacan, hindi pa nag-operate 'yung airport sa Sangley — ito 'yung mga proposal ngayon eh — ay kailangan natin buksan ang mga airports sa regional.

Huwag nating pinipilit lahat kailangang dumaan ng Maynila. So direct na sa Bohol, direct sa — well sa Cebu marami na talagang direct, direct sa CDO, direct sa Davao na mayroon na rin.

Pero ganoon para hindi na kailangan dumaan ng Maynila. Kaya't itong ganitong klaseng project is exactly on point when it comes to the plans that we have. And this is also, it is another point, the reason why we considered today and this ribbon cutting and opening very, very important is that it is, as was mentioned earlier, it is a signal to the world that we are open for business.

It is the message that we tried to carry when we were in New York. Outside of the United Nations, we met with many businessmen na mga CEO, heads of corporations, and the idea was to tell them, we have — we are willing to change in terms of documentation, procedure, even structure, even legislation, to encourage you to come into the Philippines.

Again, the simple message that underlay all that we did was that the Philippines is here, we are a good place to invest, we are probably the most vibrant economy that the — that is in Southeast Asia, and we understand the requirements and the needs of our potential investors and we will attend to do — we will do everything so that that partnership becomes to the advantage of both the private sector, the public sector, to the people.

And this facility is essentially a very strong signal that yes, indeed, we are open for business. We just opened a new terminal. It is state-of-the-art and this is one of the things that we will continue to do in the future to bring you all to come and be partners with the Philippines to help the lives of our people, to help the Philippine economy, and para pagandahin ang buhay ng Pilipino, para pagandahin naman natin ang Pilipinas.

So well done. Congratulations to LIPAD. I was teasing Derick sabi ko, "Pinilit niyo talaga para 'yung ano maging lipad ano." But it worked out very well. And of course, we have to give credit to the government agencies, the local government, BCDA, the Department of Transport, of course, for all that they had done.

Before you think I'm taking credit for this project, please disabuse yourself of that notion. Hindi kami ang gumawa nito pero kinikilala namin na napakatama itong ginawa na ito at napakalaking bagay at napakalaking tulong *[applause]* para sa pag-ahon ng ating ekonomiya.

So let us celebrate. This is a good day and let us keep going. We know that this is a good direction for us to take. Let us continue to go down that road and we will see dahan-dahan, makikita natin na paganda nang paganda.

Thank you very much and good morning. *[applause]*

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