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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR. AT THE 87TH ARMED FORCES OF
THE PHILIPPINES ANNIVERSARY**

[Delivered at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City | 19 December 2022]

Thank you very much, [officer-in-charge] Senior Undersecretary Jun Faustino; House Speaker Martin Romualdez; AFP Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Bartolome Bacarro; *[Please take your seats]* the Most Reverend Bishop Oscar Jaime Florencio; excellencies and other members of the diplomatic corps; the honorable members of the Cabinet; the honorable members of the Senate and the House of Representatives; fellow workers in government; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

[Before I proceed, will you give the command for Tikas Pahinga?]

Good afternoon. To the men and women of the Philippine Armed Forces, my greetings on the occasion of your 87th Anniversary.

This year marks an important milestone for our Armed Forces. After a two-year slump, we can now finally celebrate in numbers the gallantry of the Filipino soldier who fought for nearly a century to keep the peace, uphold democratic ideals, and defend our country.

As one of the pillars of our national security, our Armed Forces have never failed us. The pandemic may have upended lives and livelihoods, but you have remained steadfast not just in the fulfillment of duty, but also in assisting the government in fighting this insidious unseen war. The country and its people are forever grateful to you for your service.

For years, growth in the regions has been held back by the presence of communist terrorists, lawless elements who hamper the delivery of government services and infrastructure development. Through your efforts, along with other law enforcement authorities and government agencies, we now see a significant decline in their numbers. And that you have helped in to pave the way for development to foster and for communities to live in peace.

In recent years, our country has been experiencing extreme weather events that at times have crippled cities, provinces, the entire nation. In these scenarios, your support to humanitarian assistance and disaster response efforts through mobilizing assets and the immediate deployment of personnel has saved very many lives.

The world we live has changed. Apart from climate change-related disasters, we are now confronted with a different and complex security environment, it brings with it new challenges that require us to adapt.

I laud the Armed Forces for sustaining your existing defense and security engagements whilst exploring new areas for cooperation with your counterparts overseas. New security challenges do not recognize borders and we must continue to work with our neighbors, our allies, partners, and friends to address mutual security concerns.

And aside from these partnerships, the Armed Forces needs to have in its arsenal the capabilities to effectively combat threats and to secure the country — all its more than 7,000 islands and all its features.

My marching guidance has always remained constant: we commit to the cause of peace. The security and stability of the country remains the priority. I call on you to continue performing your duties as you have had for many, many years and competently so, so that our country can achieve peace and security, and sustain economic prosperity.

Rest assured to all the AFP and all the uniformed services that this administration remains committed to the Modernization of the AFP. *[applause]*

We will be partners towards your vision of a strong, credible, world-class armed force that is a source of national pride and the source of national security.

Hindi lingid sa aking kaalaman ang sakripisyo ng ating hukbo at ang panganib na kanilang hinaharap sa tawag ng tungkulin. Kaya naman bukod sa kagamitan, patuloy nating susuportahan ang kanilang pangangailangan.

As your Commander-in-Chief, I join the entire nation in expressing our profound and sincere gratitude to your unwavering loyalty and service to the country, to the Constitution, and to our people. *Isang maligaya at makabuluhang anibersaryo sa ating lahat!*

Sumasainyo ang aking pinakamataas na pagpupugay.

Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay po ang AFP. *[applause]*

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