

**SPEECH BY**

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.**

**AT THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OF THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY  
ACADEMY (PMA) "MADASIGON" CLASS OF 2023**

[Delivered at the Fort General Gregorio Del Pilar in Baguio City | 21 May  
2023]

Thank you to the National Defense Officer-in-Charge Charlie Galvez.

But before we go on, the troop commander, you will give the order of *tikas pahinga*.

His Excellency the Ambassador of Spain to the Philippines Miguel Utray Delgado; the National Security Adviser Secretary Ed Año and the other Cabinet members here present; Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Andy Centino and all the major service commanders; Philippine National Police Chief General Benjie Acorda; Philippine Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Artemio Abu; and the Philippine Military Academy Superintendent Lieutenant General Rowen Tolentino; Baguio City Lone District Representative Marquez Go; Baguio City Mayor Benjie Magalong; the officers, enlisted personnel and civilian employees of the PMA; and perhaps the most important group that are here today, the parents and the loved ones of the PMA graduating class [*applause*]; the Cadet Corps of the Armed Forces of the Philippines led by Madasigon Class of 2023; fellow workers in government; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It is my great honor to join you all here today, as our proud nation welcomes the newest batch of military officers, who now join the ranks of our brave and selfless soldiers and dedicate their lives to the cause of defending our Republic.

I thus convey and extend my warmest congratulations to this year's graduates of this august institution: the PMA MADASIGON Class of 2023! [*applause*]

It is both propitious and important that as I serve my first year as your Commander-in-Chief, I witness the reception into the fold of this 310 - strong PMA batch that will now augment the capabilities of our Armed Forces. We have before us those who, out of approximately 28,000 others, have strived to now arrive at this Commencement Day.

They have braved the rigors of physical and mental training for which the PMA is world-renowned.

So I present now to our countrymen, "*Ang Class na Walang Uwian*" [*laughter*] at hindi sila makauwi ng dalawang taon. Nami-miss na kayo ng mga pamilya ninyo pero pinagtiyagaan ninyo kaya tayo nakaabot dito ngayon sa araw na ito.

Levity aside though, we behold the PMA Class of 2023, ang mga "*Mandirigmang may Dangal, Simbolo ng Galing at Pagbangon,*" hence, MADASIGON.

You have been trained now to be prepared for the daunting challenges that await outside this fabled fort.

You now continue [on] your lifelong commitment to the nation. The true battles will now begin.

Existing realities and the rapidly evolving security environment impels us to be always be prepared for any and all threats that our country may face. Purveyors of criminality, insurgency and terrorism are the great interlopers in our peaceable aspirations, that undermine our peace, and our stability, and our march to prosperity in our sovereign domain and its environs.

To this end, we are relentlessly pursuing the AFP Modernization Program, through important military asset acquisitions and upgrades. We are also currently undertaking a comprehensive study to improve the social protection for our military and uniformed personnel.

Just last week, I signed into law the amendment to Republic Act No. 11709, which aims to further strengthen the professionalization and merit system of our Armed Forces. [*applause*]

Because of this, you now join a modern and professional organization, which is now more effective and even more formidable vehicle for public service and nation-building, and a continuing source of pride and self-fulfillment for the individual personnel.

To the graduates: your courage, your strength, and skills have made you fit and qualified for admission into the Armed Forces and for deployment into the actual theaters of operations.

As you join the military's ranks, continue to fuel your undying commitment to genuine love for country and for public service. In all your tasks, diligently work for unity, respect for democratic ideals, institutions and mechanisms, and the rule of law. Keep close always the paramount ideals which you have imbibed in your time here in the Academy.

As you march forward [with] hearts full of pride and vigor, remain humble in yourselves and honor those who have nurtured you right since the inception of all your budding dreams and aspirations.

And that is why this day is also a day to honor your parents, your families, your loved ones, as well as your mentors and your peers.

The gratitude and appreciation simply do not end with the kind words that you say, but in the deeds that you demonstrate to them and to the country from today.

Henceforth, through your conscientious and responsible performance of your duties, you make them and everyone proud, as fellow citizens of the Republic on which our peaceful and orderly society rests and of which we are all but individual actors.

As your Commander-in-Chief, I will closely work with all of you — the future leaders of our Armed Forces — in our collective public service in building a stronger [and] more resilient Republic.

As you encounter challenges along the way, apply the hard-won lessons that you have learned while in the halls of the Academy, clinging to the values of courage, integrity, and patriotism. That way, you will never lose your way.

Live up to the precepts that define your class identity — namely, honor, excellence, and ability to recover — and help lead our nation towards the progressive and prosperous future that we all aspire for.

Once again, kudos and congratulations to you all!

Mabuhay ang PMA!

Mabuhay ang MADASIGON Class of 2023! Mabuhay ang Sandatahang Lakas at ang Republika ng Pilipinas!

Maraming, maraming salamat po at magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat! *[applause]*

In the grand tradition of the all commencement exercises of graduating classes of the Philippine Military Academy, I am signing before you the pardon of punishment *[applause and cheers]* in observance of the time-honored tradition at this very important day. *[applause]*

**--- END ---**