

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**REMARKS BY PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE STATE BANQUET**

[Delivered at the Banquet Hall, Istana Negara, Malaysia | 26 July 2023]

Thank you very much to His Majesty King Al-Sultan Abdullah; Your Majesty Queen Azizah; of course, our good friend His Excellency, the Prime Minister, Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim; and all of the distinguished guests who have come to join us at this very familial gathering that we have had today.

And I say that because on a very personal note, I must thank the King His Majesty and PM Anwar and all our Malaysian friends for the very warm welcome that we have received upon coming to Kuala Lumpur.

It has been a while since a Philippine president has come to visit with you and I am happy to once again reengage with all our friends in Malaysia at every level. And as has been mentioned, we are now about to celebrate our [60th] anniversary of formal diplomatic relations between our two countries.

But that does not perfectly illustrate what the true relationship is between our two countries as we have had exchanges cultural and all others before there was a Philippines and before there was a Malaysia. Our two peoples were already very much trading together and exchanging elements of our culture together.

And so we feel on this trip that it is a very much a coming together once again of old friends. And hopefully to make new allies and new friends as we continue down the road.

I have always been of the belief that in terms of diplomacy, it is not necessarily easy to forecast or to predict where the connections will be made between two countries. Though I can say with some confidence that it is only between Malaysia and the Philippines that we have now invented polo diplomacy.

But I think that whatever stars that we have had, whatever beginnings that we have made, they all proved to be of importance to the continuing relationship between Malaysia and the Philippines. The membership, our memberships together in ASEAN, for example, and of course, also BIMP-EAGA has continued to strengthen our relationship between our two countries.

And as we now come back and start to emerge from the difficult period in the last two and a half years of the pandemic, it is time for us to re-examine those relationships and re-strengthen those relationships. And that for me is the most important aspect of this

visit that I have made to Kuala Lumpur and to Malaysia.

I believe that it is a way for us to refocus our efforts together to mutually beneficial effect for our two countries and to see how we can help one another as we face the post-pandemic future. It is a very different world that we now face, than we face before the pandemic.

And sometimes I hear that it is — that we need to recover from the effects of the pandemic. And I see it in a very different way, I see that we must recreate ourselves, and transform ourselves to enter and be competitive and to be part of the new world order as it is happening and it is transforming before us now.

And Malaysia, as far as the Philippines is concerned, will play a very large part in that transformation. And that transformation is going to be strengthened and made more stable by these partnerships that we make with each other.

And so, it becomes more and more important for us that these partnerships that were fostered on a cultural level and on a people-to-people level, now continue to be expanded and to be gained— to gain stature in the way that we promote that relationship between our two countries.

It is important not only to Malaysia, it is not only important to the Philippines, it is not only important to ASEAN, but it is important to the rest of the world.

And that we hope is the part that we will play as partners, Malaysia and the Philippines, in the years to come.

And to celebrate that hope and to celebrate that aspiration, may I invite you all to rise and to join me in a toast: to continuing good health and continuing prosperity of His Majesty, King Al-Sultan Abdullah and Her Majesty Queen Azizah, to the strengthening relationships of our two countries in the future, and to greater and greater heights.

Cheers!

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