

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK

ARRIVAL STATEMENT BY

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

**FOLLOWING THE STATE VISIT TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF
AUSTRALIA**

[29 February 2024]

I have arrived back from Canberra after a State Visit to Australia upon the invitation of Governor-General David Hurley.

This visit is a significant step in realizing the opportunities and potentials set forth by our decision to elevate the bilateral relationship with Australia from a comprehensive to a Strategic Partnership.

Following the visit of Prime Minister Albanese to our country last September, we have seen an increased tempo in bilateral engagements in various areas of cooperation, most prominent of which is our recent closer collaboration on defense and security.

We thanked Australia for its consistent and continuing support in the South China Sea.

The closer cooperation in this field was fully emphasized in my speech to the esteemed Parliament of Australia—the first ever for a Filipino President.

I similarly highlighted our steadfast support for regional peace and harmony, to which many of our forefathers paid the ultimate price in World War II.

I conveyed to Australian legislators the important role of both our countries as proponents of the rules-based international order and its significance amidst the present complexities in global geopolitics.

As democratic maritime nations, access to the global commons such as the oceans and the seas must be ensured and safeguarded.

We underscored the importance of a mutually-beneficial economic relationship that will support our effort in building economic resilience and in achieving inclusive economic growth.

In the same vein, we acknowledged the role of our long-standing people-to-people ties that support and inspire our efforts for closer Philippine-Australia relations.

In my meeting with Prime Minister Albanese, we explored ways to maximize the strengths and opportunities from our Strategic Partnership.

Our discussions on trade, investment, and security shall inform the next steps in implementing and achieving the enhanced cooperation outlined under the framework of our Strategic Partnership.

The Prime Minister and I likewise used this opportunity to exchange views on various regional issues and concerns.

I had productive discussions with Australia's Parliamentary Leadership, including with the President of the Senate, with the Speaker of Australia's House of Representatives, and with the Leader of the Opposition.

Their support is instrumental in developing an enabling policy environment for the continuous upward orientation of our bilateral relations.

During this visit, we concluded three agreements with Australia in the fields of maritime cooperation, cyber and critical technology, and the implementation of competition laws.

Concluding such MOUs will pave the way for more mutually beneficial undertakings, information sharing, and capacity building foreseen to promote closer bilateral ties and also to contribute to regional development, peace, and prosperity.

Australia remains, and will continue to be, one of our closest friends.

In the spirit of bayanihan and mateship, we shall forge ahead in fully maximizing the potentials and the gains from this Strategic Partnership between our two forward-looking, law-abiding maritime states.

I look forward to exerting our tireless efforts to attain this vision.

Maraming salamat at magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat.

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