

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**SPEECH BY
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
AT THE OATH TAKING OF THE NEWLY APPOINTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN THE BANGSAMORO
TRANSITION AUTHORITY (BTA) AND GRAND IFTAR**

[Delivered at the Heroes Hall, Malacañan Palace, Manila | 24 March 2025]

Thank you very much, Special Assistant to the President Secretary Anton Lagdameo. [Please be seated.]

Senate President Chiz Escudero; members of the Cabinet who are here present today; the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Archbishop Charles John Brown and the other Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps who represent many of our friends who have been instrumental and important in the success of this peace process for us to finally come to this day; officials and members of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority led by interim Chief Minister Abduraof Macacua; fellow workers in government; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen, Assalamu alaykum. Good afternoon.

I am pleased to join you all here as we pause and reflect on the events of the holy month of Ramadan.

Around the world, Muslim communities are now celebrating the hour of Iftar or the breaking of the fast.

After abstaining from all food and drink and doing only good deeds from dawn to sunset, our Muslim brothers and sisters will savor the taste of dates and water, just as the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, once did.

Even as a Catholic, I find this act deeply moving and profoundly meaningful.

It is a reminder that sustenance is both physical and spiritual. It reminds us that our bonds are tightly held together by what we practice and what we believe in.

And as we wait for the sun to set and the end of the day to come, we also witness a new beginning.

I welcome all the newly appointed members of the Parliament in the Bangsamoro Transition Authority who have taken their oath today.

To my fellow government workers in the Bangsamoro, you pledged to uphold the trust of your constituents.

You will carry the aspirations of those who have longed for peace and self-governance.

You will be instrumental to create a future built by and for the Bangsamoro people.

Nakataya ang inyong mga pangalan at ang pag-asa ng ating mga kababayan sa inyong sinumpaang tungkulin. Huwag nating makakalimutan na ang inyong tungkulin ay para sa isang mas makatarungan at mas maunlad na Bangsamoro.

Ladies and gentlemen, the years of conflict and misunderstanding in our country have raged too long.

With you at the helm, I am confident that you will continue to prove that the implementation of every single signed agreement—is a step towards long-lasting peace.

We have collectively achieved remarkable progress in the Bangsamoro peace process. It is our shared responsibility to protect these gains and to ensure its uninterrupted advancement.

I take comfort in the fact that our country is as diverse as it is. Different faiths and histories shape our nation.

Like the many rivers flowing through Mindanao, our people have followed different paths. Some are shaped by the call to an afternoon prayer. Others heed the ringing of church bells.

But just as these waters converge, so too we can move harmoniously together. [applause] Let not our diversity and difference be a hindrance to our solidarity. [applause]

Let us remember that at the center of our national identity is a common thread that binds us: our longing for peace and for progress.

As President, I know that the Bangsamoro, through its perseverance, has made its own place in the larger story of our national history.

And we, as one nation, must recognize that its goal of genuine autonomy and sustained development is the cornerstone of the Bagong Pilipinas we aspire to have. [applause]

Nawa'y sa bawat tungkulin na ating ginagampanan, lagi nating isasabuhay ang taglay na mga katangian ng Bagong Pilipino— Bagong Pilipino na may disiplina, may husay, at higit sa lahat, may pagmamahal sa bansa.

And so as the night falls upon us, I am reminded of what the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, once said: The best of people are those who are most beneficial to other people.

As a public servant, I am moved by these words. [applause]

They resonate with me because they capture the true essence of public service—that serving our fellow Filipinos must be done with integrity but also with kindness.

It reminds us that our small acts of benevolence can help dismantle the barriers that divide us as a nation.

So, on this beautiful afternoon, we take heart that after fasting, there will always be a bountiful meal shared among brothers and sisters.

After the hunger and the thirst, there will be fulfillment.

And after the chaos, there will be peace and progress so long as we work together as one.

Shukran and Wassalam. [applause]

Mabuhay ang Bangsamoro at mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas! [applause]

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