

Thank you, ES Luc Bersamin.

The very measured numbers of the Cabinet that are here this afternoon. And, of course, traveling with me will be the First Lady -- *[Oh, please sit down.]* -- the First Lady Liza Araneta. And consistently our host when it comes to these things: Pasay City Mayor, Mayor Imelda Calixto-Rubiano; AFP Chief of Staff General Romeo Brawner; the Major Service Commanders; Philippine National Police Chief General Rommel Marbil; Philippine Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Gil Gavan; fellow workers in government.

Good afternoon.

I leave now for Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to attend the *46th ASEAN Summit* upon the invitation of Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

This year's Summit is held under the theme "*Inclusivity and Sustainability*," which underscores our shared commitment to a region that is united, resilient, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of its people.

The Philippines fully supports Malaysia's Chairmanship and its vision of an ASEAN that promotes meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable development.

At this Summit, I will join fellow ASEAN Leaders in reaffirming our commitment to ASEAN Centrality as we navigate pressing regional and global challenges, including developments in the South China Sea, the situation in Myanmar, threats to regional peace and maritime security, as well as the far-reaching impacts of climate change, economic volatility, and digital disruption.

I will add to that list of issues the discussions which we will continue as we have already had preliminary discussions with the Chair of ASEAN, Malaysia, specifically PM Anwar, on the response – the proper response of ASEAN as a group towards the new tariff schedule that is being imposed by the United States.

And as I said, we have already made informal consultations with our fellow member states and their representatives with the Chairman, PM Anwar, on this subject as it is something that we have to discuss and it is something that we have to respond to. And considering the many different situations that the member states of ASEAN have concerning the trade – concerning trade and specifically the tariff schedule imposed by the United States. We must find a way to find consensus amongst the disparate situations that the different member states are operating under.

But I will continue to champion our advocacies in promoting an open, an inclusive, and rules-based international order, and for the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law.

I will also highlight the Philippines' commitment to the development of a common regional framework for ethical and responsible AI or Artificial Intelligence aligned with ASEAN values.

Through these efforts, we aim to build a future-ready ASEAN that is not only competitive, but also people-centered and sustainable.

As always, our participation in the *ASEAN Summit* reaffirms our dedication to deepening regional cooperation and advancing the well-being of every Filipino and the entire Southeast Asian community.

*Maraming, maraming salamat po.*

And I wish that all the – all the new issues that have come up in the year since the Lao Chairmanship will now be addressed. And I look forward to a very productive and constructive consultation with our fellow member states in ASEAN.

Thank you very much. Good afternoon. *[applause]*

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