

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
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**INTERVENTION OF PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.  
FOR THE 2ND ASEAN-GCC SUMMIT  
[27 May 2025]**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Your Majesty,  
Your Highnesses,  
Excellencies,

On behalf of the Republic of the Philippines, I thank Malaysia and Kuwait for co-chairing this important 2nd ASEAN-GCC Summit.

This Summit is a testament to our strong commitment to a shared vision of peace, security, and prosperity for our two interconnected regions.

The Philippines, as Country Coordinator for ASEAN-GCC Relations, wishes to express its sincere appreciation to ASEAN and GCC counterparts for their valuable contributions and hard work for this Summit.

Your Majesty,  
Your Highnesses,  
Excellencies,

As we confront the challenges to peace and security in various regions of the world, we commend the GCC and its member states for their increasing involvement and endeavors in peacemaking and in peace-building.

These efforts have contributed to the enhancement of global security and stability through mediation, dialogue, and diplomacy, resulting in peace agreements, prisoner exchanges, and family reunifications.

The Philippines is gravely concerned over Israel's ongoing military operations across the Gaza Strip, which have resulted in the continued rise of the death of civilians, including women and children, and further exacerbating the dire humanitarian situation on the ground.

The Philippines calls upon all parties to adhere to their obligations under international law, with particular emphasis on the protection of civilians, especially women and children, and the facilitation of humanitarian assistance to all those who are in need.

The South China Sea and the Arabian Sea cover vital sea lanes that serve as lifelines to regional and international commerce both in our regions.

As such, it is necessary to provide the freedom of navigation, to guarantee unimpeded commerce, and to protect the marine environment through compliance with established international law, specifically UNCLOS.

Climate change remains one of the most defining challenges of our time – if not the most defining challenge of our time. Both our regions are climate-vulnerable, and our populations face significant climate-related risks such as sea level rise, rising temperatures, desertification, and loss of biodiversity, among others.

As host of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), the Philippines would like to encourage contributions to that Fund.

The Philippines' hosting of the FRLD will accelerate the unhindered access of developing nations to climate finance, which shall aid in the development and implementation of transformative and science-based strategies and initiatives for climate change adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk management, towards ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth for all.

On the economic front, the strategic importance of ASEAN-GCC relations cannot be overstated. We are two dynamic regions, rich in natural and human capital, bound by shared aspirations for prosperity and sustainable development.

While there is strong potential, it is also clear that our current trade patterns remain limited in scope, concentrated in a narrow band of sectors. To unlock the full promise of our partnership, we must go beyond traditional trade and leverage our complementary strengths.

ASEAN, with its rapidly growing digital economy and youthful, tech-savvy population, can partner with the GCC, whose strengths in energy, investment capital, and logistics infrastructure are leading globally. Together, we can co-create resilient supply chains, sustainable energy solutions, and innovation-driven ecosystems.

We also see strong potential in expanding collaboration in halal trade and standards harmonization, where both ASEAN and the GCC can lead globally.

ASEAN's diverse halal food industry, coupled with the GCC's established halal consumer base and certification systems, creates an opportunity to build a seamless, trusted halal value chain.

Establishing a mutually-recognized halal certification regime will enhance trust, reduce regulatory friction, and create a powerful export platform for our MSMEs and agri-food producers.

Another high-impact area for cooperation is e-commerce and digital trade.

With ASEAN's ongoing work on the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), we see potential to engage the GCC in advancing interoperable digital standards, fintech collaboration, emerging technologies, and cross-border e-commerce platforms.

This is particularly timely as global trade increasingly shifts online and new trade corridors are being shaped by the new technologies.

The GCC is an important region for the Philippines on the aspect of labor mobility, where more than 2.7 million citizens from ASEAN Member States, more than 2 million of whom are overseas Filipino workers, live and work in GCC countries, including professionals and skilled workers.

They contribute significantly not only to the economies of their host countries, but also to those of the Philippines and the wider ASEAN region. It is important for both regions to continue to provide ups-killing opportunities and ensure the protection and promotion of their rights and their welfare.

Your Majesty,  
Your Highnesses,  
Excellencies,

Both our regional groups are enjoined the enduring value of regionalism and multilateral cooperation. In ASEAN and the GCC, we find strength in unity.

As the Philippines prepares to assume the Chairship of ASEAN in 2026, we are committed to deepening ASEAN's global partnerships, including, of course, with the GCC. We will build on the gains that we have made together and chart new paths for collaboration.

Our success in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the southern Philippines is the centerpiece of our country's experience in building peace and forging new paths of cooperation that can enrich the work of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

We take this opportunity to reaffirm the Philippines' candidature to the United Nations Security Council for the term 2027–2028. We hope to count on your valuable support as we seek to bring our regions' perspectives to the United Nations Security Council.

Your Majesty,  
Your Highnesses,  
Excellencies,

I wish to once again express my deepest appreciation to the Leaders of ASEAN and the GCC for their presence and their continued commitment.

As we look ahead, may the partnership between our regions continue to thrive, paving the way for a shared future where peace and security are upheld, and our peoples enjoy lasting prosperity.

Thank you.

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