

**TOAST REMARKS BY**  
**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.**  
**AT THE VIN D'HONNEUR RECEPTION**

[Delivered at the Ceremonial Hall, Malacañan Palace, City of Manila | 12 June 2025]

Senate President Chiz Escudero; House Speaker Martin Romualdez; the Vice Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and the Moroccan Ambassador to the Philippines His Excellency Mohammed Rida El Fassi; the Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps; and at this point, I have to say that: Gentlemen, you look so well in your barongs. *[laughter]* But as ever, the ladies have outshone us *[laughter and applause]* as they are resplendent in our national costume, in our terno. The Palace is generally a very serious place and you have brought a bit of charm to the proceedings.

Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin and the Honorable Members of the Cabinet; Foreign Affairs Acting Secretary Charles Jose; and of course, First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos; my fellow workers in government; honorable guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Good evening!

It is always with joy that I once again welcome all of you today as we join the entire nation in this proud occasion of celebrating the 127th Anniversary of Philippine Independence.

From the birth of our statehood to this day, the country has forged a path to developing its national identity that is guided by the values of freedom and of democracy, as inspired by our own struggles.

The bravery of our ancestors is certainly not lost on us. The virtue continues to flow in the veins of all Filipinos as a proud race that is known to have stood against mightier foes, both in times of peace and in conflict. Today, we muster once again that same courage in the face of new challenges confronting the nation and the world.

When I first took office three years ago, my marching orders to our Department of Foreign Affairs and our Foreign Services were clear: Reintroduce the Philippines to the world.

Inform the global community that the Philippines is open for business, and that we seek mutually beneficial cooperation with countries around the world who share our values and our aspirations.

In a manner of speaking, these marching orders are similar to the gargantuan task our Revolutionary Government had to accomplish when the Philippines declared independence on this day in 1898, when our envoys had to secure international recognition of our nascent Republic.

One hundred and twenty-seven years later, our diplomats are tasked to secure international support for the Philippines' national development agenda and the global recognition of our role as a reliable partner, a trusted peacemaker, and an innovative pathfinder.

I am pleased that we have made such great strides in this endeavor.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

With the indomitable spirit and resilience of the Filipino people, we have kept the torch of hard-won freedom lit and ablaze to this very day and we have unremittently defended our sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of all adversities.

Our country has since gone a long way from a fledgling Republic to an active and responsible member of the community of nations.

Our growth as a country has allowed us to play significant roles in the global discourse on climate change, human rights, migration, regional stability, and freedom in the seas, among other issues.

More than that, we have also expanded our diplomacy to include serving as consensus-builders between and among nations on issues of international significance.

We have positioned ourselves on the world stage so we can participate in international dialogue, safeguard our national interest, and contribute to the common good.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since taking the mantle of the Presidency three years ago, I have made several pronouncements about charting an independent foreign policy as a constitutional mandate.

Our independent foreign policy is informed by our development goals and reflects our national priorities.

Ours is a proactive policy that is true to ourselves and responsive to the needs and aspirations of our people. Our engagements with the world are geared towards building peace and cooperation, and to foster enduring partnerships. We build bridges not walls. We forge alliances that are based on mutual respect, reciprocity, and shared goals.

Given our own domestic priorities for socio-economic transformation, our foreign policy promotes development through the strategic conduct of diplomacy. Our foreign policy's strategic outlook is anchored on the long-term vision in AmBisyon Natin 2040 and the agenda of the Bagong Pilipinas, or the New Philippines.

At this juncture, allow me to share some of the highlights of the state of play in the Philippine economy.

I am pleased to note that the Philippine economy grew 5.4% in the first quarter of 2025 and is among the fastest in the ASEAN region despite rising global volatilities.

This includes growth from major economic sectors of agriculture, forestry, fishing, industry, and services.

We are confident that we will achieve a six percent GDP growth target in the coming quarters, driven by steady fiscal consolidation, easing inflation, and progress in trade negotiations with key partners, among other initiatives.

The forecast is supported by the IMF World Economic Outlook in April 2025, which similarly painted a rosy projection for the Philippines to be the fastest-growing economy among ASEAN-5 countries in 2025.

Truly, the Philippines has become an “economic standout in the region”, owing to our demographic dividend that is young, future-ready, tech-savvy; fast-expanding digital economy; and business-friendly reforms.

In particular, we have made key legislative and policy reforms aimed at improving the investment climate to both local and foreign investors.

To mention a few:

We enacted Republic Act No. 12214 or the Capital Markets Efficiency Promotion Act (CMEPA), which will encourage ordinary Filipinos to invest in the Philippine capital markets and promote inclusive growth.

We passed the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises to Maximize Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy – a bit of a mouthful – so we shortened it to the CREATE MORE Act, which is an enhanced incentives package designed to draw in more investors.

The law specifically addresses concerns on value-added tax exemptions and gives investors the flexibility to enjoy income tax holidays.

We have also signed a Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) on “Strengthening the Coordination Mechanism Between and Among the Investments Facilitation Network Members and Integration of the Provisions of Executive Order No. 18, series of 2023.”

This Circular manifests our resolve to seriously end bureaucratic red tape, improve the ease of doing business, and make the Philippines a more attractive destination for investors.

On inflation, I am proud to announce that the inflation rate dropped to 1.3% in May 2025 —which is the lowest since November 2019.

It's a very encouraging development, not only as it creates a stable and predictable economic environment for businesses, but also because it increases the purchasing power of individuals and of households, especially low-income families.

Adding to investors' confidence in the country is the exit of the Philippines from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) "grey list" a few months ago. This we would not have achieved without the help and trust of your governments. So, once again, thank you very much. *[applause]*

We were proud to have hosted the High-Level Conference of Middle-Income Countries in April, which was participated in by the UN Member States, the United Nations, and other international organizations.

The meeting elevated the profile of middle-income countries, as encapsulated by the Manila Declaration on Middle-Income Countries, and marked the beginning of the Philippines' chairship of the Like-Minded Group of Middle-Income Countries.

We would not have been able to accomplish this much without our invaluable partnerships that we have forged with you, the Members of the Diplomatic Corps, and the countries that you represent.

Over the next six months and throughout the whole of 2026, we look forward to active collaboration with you as we prepare for, and chair, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). We have been already hard at work on the preparations for our Chairship next year and we will unveil our thematic priorities in due course.

And so, Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Members of the Diplomatic Corps for continuously supporting and working with the Philippine Government on its many economic initiatives and endeavors, especially in strengthening our bilateral ties in key areas of mutual interest, including people-to-people linkages as an important foundation for our strong cooperation.

As I have previously shared, the Philippines is running for a non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council for the term 2027-2028.

We just finished an election and I cannot stop campaigning. *[laughter]*

Our candidature is anchored in our country's legacy in multilateralism, as evidenced by our history of forging cooperation and seeking peace. We earnestly hope to receive the support of your respective governments in that bid.

On this note, at this point, I would like to invite everyone to join me in a toast.

To everyone's very good health and long life; to our enduring friendships and to the continuing deepening of the ties between our countries and our peoples.

Mabuhay! *[applause]*

Thank you very much. And do enjoy the rest of the evening.

--- END ---