

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
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**BBM PODCAST  
EPISODE 3 (PART 4)  
SA LIKOD NG SONA**

**MR. IVAN MAYRINA:** Medyo restrained ho ‘yung naging banggit ninyo sa West Philippine Sea. If we are going to compare it in 2022 you said, “Not an inch of our territory will be abandoned.” 2024 you said, “The WPS is ours and will remain ours.” Ito hong huli ninyong SONA sinabi ninyo, “We are a friend to all and an enemy to none.” What prompted this shift in tone?

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.:** There is no shift in tone. My first interview na tinanong ako: Ano ang foreign policy natin sa – lalo na sa China? And that was my answer.

Hindi naman nagbabago. Because continuing to defend strongly our territory is not mutually exclusive from being a friend to all and an enemy of none. Wala naman talaga tayong kinakalaban eh. Lahat naman kinakaibigan natin.

Pero ipagtatanggol natin ang soberanya ng Pilipinas. Ipagtatanggol natin ang teritoryo ng Pilipinas. You can do both. You don’t have to choose one or the other.

So, ganyan ang ating position.

**MR. MAYRINA:** You’ve always emphasized the importance of establishing a binding code of conduct in the South China Sea.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Oh, yes.

**MR. MAYRINA:** Magho-host ho tayo ng ASEAN next year. Do you think we can take a bigger and more concrete steps to advance the conclusion of a binding code of conduct?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** We will certainly try because it is very, very important.

Pagka nagkaroon ng ganyan, magiging maliwanag kung ano ‘yung rules sa lahat, hindi lamang sa atin. Lahat ng nakapaligid sa South China Sea lahat ‘yan ay masasabi – wala ng ganito, wala ng ganyan, wala ng bangga, wala nang magtatayo ng bagong island, wala nang gagawa nito, which was the original Code of Conduct.

Something like that was – made it very, very clear what is expected of each country, each signatory country.

And that will make things a bit easier kasi hindi ka nag-aalangan na baka may mangyari, ano ang mangyayari. Hindi na puwedeng mangyari ‘yan dahil pumayag na – nagpirmahan na tayo, nag-agree na tayo na hindi nating gagawin ‘yan.

So, that's why it is very, very important. And it's very important to the Philippines because ang pinakamainit na lugar sa West Philippine Sea ay dito sa banda sa atin. Kaya mahalaga sa atin na magkaroon tayo ng code of conduct.

**MR. MAYRINA:** Idagdag ko na rin ho siguro itong nakikita ko rin, naririnig ko na tanong even personally or on social media and all – sa mga maliliit na usap-usapan. Dinadaan ho natin sa diplomacy, dinadaan natin sa usapan. Pero 'yung China dangerous maneuvers, water cannon, Philippines files a protest, repeat.

Ano ho kaya ang magbabago? Ano ho kaya ang puwedeng gawin pa para mas ma-assert ang karapatan ng Pilipinas sa region?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** We can only control what we do. We cannot control what other countries do.

But we keep our lines of communication... Once the lines of communication are closed, then there is no room for improvement. That's why we keep the lines of communication open.

Even kung minsan sinasabi it's useless. Bakit pa wala namang nangyayari? We have to keep on trying. We have to keep those lines of communication open.

Hindi mo puwedeng isara na lang na ganoon. Pagka ginawa mo 'yun, mas lalala ang sitwasyon.

**MR. MAYRINA:** The Philippines is preparing to host ASEAN in 2026, Mr. President. What kind of Philippines do you want our neighbors to see and appreciate?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** I want them to see the Philippines as it is. I'm so proud of the Philippines.

It doesn't need – the expression in English is "gilding the lily." Pinapaganda mo [pa], magandang-maganda na eh.

Hindi mo naman kailangan ipaganda pa ang Pilipinas, basta ipakita mo eh. Makikita nila na ang sisipag ng Pilipino. Ang babait ng Pilipino. Ang ganda-ganda ng Pilipinas. Marami tayong ginagawa na magkakaroon – para patibayin pa ang ating mga foreign relations sa iba't ibang bansa.

What I really want to show is that the Philippines has now come together. A kind of social pact with each other na magtutulungan na tayo dahil naman tama naman ang tinutunguhan natin. And that's the most important thing.

**MR. MAYRINA:** Mr. President, second half na po kayo ng administrasyon ninyo. And you said you wanted things done and done fast. Are you still optimistic that you are going to accomplish what you set out to accomplish by the end of your term?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Six years is – it goes very quickly. And considering that we were still coming out of the pandemic in 2022, the initial rather work that we did was really to change the systems in government, to change the investment profile of the Philippines, to change...

So, these are very fundamental, very basic changes that take a little time. Dahil a bureaucracy, it's the biggest employer.

Parang ano 'yan eh – parang 'yung tanker eh. Para lumiko, it takes 12 kilometers 'di ba bago liliko 'yung tanker dahil napakalaki.

Ganyan ang gobyerno. Bago umurong 'yan, bago umikot 'yan, napakatagal, napakabagal.

That's why I keep talking: kailangan bilisan na ninyo, bilisan na ninyo. Dahil kung hindi natin gawin 'to, eh hindi – baka hindi na magawa.

So, that's what we are trying to achieve.

**MR. MAYRINA:** If there's one project na gustong-gusto ninyong matapos bago matapos ang term niyo? Just one.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Education. 'Yung aking sinabi sa SONA na ang bawat pamilyang Pilipino, mayroong college graduate o mayroong nag-graduate sa TESDA. Bawat pamilyang Pilipino. 'Yun para sa akin. 'Pag nagawa natin ito, successful 'yun.

**MR. MAYRINA:** And that is doable in the next three years you think?

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** I think so. I think it is doable.

Kung tutuusin mo naman, lahat naman nang ginagawa natin, maglalagay tayo ng tren, maglalagay tayo nung – aayusin natin 'yung sistema.

'Pag hindi maganda ang training, hindi maganda ang edukasyon ng mga Pilipino, hindi naman sila makakapag-compete, hindi ba in the labor market? Wala rin silang – hindi rin nila – walang advantage lahat nung ating ginawa.

Kaya ang puno't dulo talaga nila education. Our greatest resource is our people. Our greatest resource is the human capital of the Philippines.

You don't have to look at figures. Just talk to foreigners where the [Filipinos] are in their country and what they think of Filipinos? And how highly they think of Filipinos?

That's all you need to hear. And what are we doing? We should not waste that. We should not waste that.

In many industries around the world, 'pag – if all else being equal ha, kung pantay-pantay lang lahat, ah Pilipino 'yung kukunin ko. Mas gusto ko Pilipino.

For me, that is the most important part of all this development that we are doing.

Never mind the physical development, that's also important. But the most important is the human development.

And that's why education is for me the – will be the gauge of success of this administration.

**MR. MAYRINA:** Mr. President, thank you very much for the opportunity.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** Thank you.

**MR. MAYRINA:** I hope this is not the last time.

**PRESIDENT MARCOS:** I am sure it will not be. Sigé, salamat.

**MR. MAYRINA:** Salamat po. Salamat.

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