

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT
ON THE OUTCOME OF THE VISIT OF
JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER KISHIDA FUMIO TO THE PHILIPPINES**

03 November 2023 -- H.E. KISHIDA Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, conducted an official visit to the Philippines and had a meeting with H.E. Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., President of the Republic of the Philippines.

The two leaders reaffirmed the strategic partnership of the Philippines and Japan, that is transformative and forward-looking, which was founded on decades of long-standing relations and shared fundamental principles and values, including respect for human rights and dignity. The two leaders stressed a strong commitment to the free and open international order based on the rule of law and strongly opposed any attempt to jeopardize the foundation of the international order which does not accept any change of the internationally recognized borders by force or coercion. The President also affirmed that the strategic partnership with Japan would continue to be among the Philippines' most resilient and dynamic in the region.

The two leaders welcomed the development of the strategic partnership based on the Joint Statement issued on 09 February 2023 following the visit of the President to Japan, and reaffirmed that the two countries would continue to foster greater cooperation and push the strategic partnership forward by carrying out the current and planned initiatives of both countries detailed in the Joint Statement.

The President expressed appreciation for Japan's continued commitments to the development of the Philippines, specifically the assistance that it has provided to the Philippines' capacity development efforts and infrastructure development projects, including in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), under the banner of unity and progress. The two leaders reaffirmed the importance of efforts to reinforce Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and maritime law enforcement especially through building capacities of the Philippine Coast Guard.

The President valued Japan's strong intention to support its future development even as it achieves Upper Middle Income Country (UMIC) status, and renewed his deep appreciation for Japan's assistance including through JPY600 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and private-sector investments in the Japanese Fiscal Year 2022-2023. The Prime Minister reiterated his commitment to support the Philippines' infrastructure

development efforts through its ODA. The two leaders reaffirmed their continued commitment to facilitating the steady implementation of ongoing and future economic cooperation projects through the High Level Joint Committee on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed the strong bilateral relations between Japan and the Philippines and looked forward to further strengthening the Strategic Partnership. The Prime Minister and the President also reaffirmed their commitment to working together for the synergies between the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” and the “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).”

The President welcomed Japan’s assistance for building the capabilities of Philippine defense forces through its new cooperation framework, the Official Security Assistance (OSA). The two leaders decided to commence negotiations on a reciprocal access agreement between Japan and the Philippines (“Japan-Philippines RAA”). The two leaders welcomed the realization of the transfer of the first air surveillance radar system to the Philippines and reaffirmed that this would further strengthen defense cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting, the two leaders discussed various areas of cooperation, and affirmed their ongoing discussions and cooperation including through the following mechanisms and arrangements: bilateral Japan-Philippines and trilateral Japan-Philippines-US meetings at various levels, the Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (“2+2”), the Vice-Ministerial Strategic Dialogue, the Political-Military (PM) Dialogue and the Military to Military (MM) Dialogue, where security issues, including maritime matters, are discussed. The two leaders also discussed issues vital to international peace and security as well as regional stability.

The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to freedom of navigation and overflight in the East and South China Seas. The two leaders reiterated their adherence to a rules-based approach in resolving competing claims in maritime areas within the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to ensure peace, stability and prosperity. The Prime Minister highly appreciated the Government of the Philippines for having consistently complied with the Arbitral Tribunal award regarding the South China Sea and reaffirmed its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

The following were signed during the visit :

1. Official Security Assistance (OSA) grant aid from Japan to the Government of the Philippines worth JPY600 million (or approx. PHP235,500,000), for coastal radar system which will improve the Philippine navy's maritime domain awareness capabilities;
2. The Exchange of Notes concerning the provision of construction equipment for Road Network Improvement/Implementation and Disaster Quick Response Operation under the Economic and Social Development Programme;
3. Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of Tourism ; and
4. Memorandum of Cooperation on Mining Sector between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.

The Prime Minister looked forward to welcoming the President to the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, which Japan will host in Tokyo in December 2023.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to work together towards the enhancement of the Strategic Partnership across all sectors in the coming years.

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