

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

**OPENING REMARKS OF
PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
AND PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA PRESIDENT XI JINPING
DURING THE EXPANDED BILATERAL MEETING**

[Aguinaldo State Dining Room, Malacañan Palace | 20 November 2018]

PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE:

On behalf of the Philippine Government and the people of the Philippines, I warmly welcome you, President Xi, and your delegation.

For the Philippines, this is more than a reciprocal visit. It is a historic occasion --- the very first State Visit to be made by a Chinese President in 13 years.

Today, therefore, is a landmark moment in our shared history. We have turned a new page and we are ready to write a new chapter of openness and cooperation.

I look forward to fruitful discussions today as we review the progress we have made and chart the course toward a further enhanced partnership --- all in the spirit of friendship, mutual understanding and respect for sovereign equality.

At this point, may I ask President Xi to deliver his opening statement.

PRESIDENT XI JINPING:

President Rodrigo Duterte, it is my great pleasure as scheduled to visit your beautiful country.

I thank you for your gracious invitation and warm hospitality. So along the route here, I have seen the welcoming crowd including the local people and the young students and we have been deeply moved.

As we speak, it is already winter in the northern part of the globe but here we are still enjoying refreshing breeze and exceptional scenes. And this is exactly what China-Philippines relationship is like today.

I am satisfied to see the growth in our relations and indeed I have been looking forward to this trip long time ago.

Mr. President, I agree with what you have said in your opening remarks that my visit will be a milestone in the history of exchange between our two countries. And the two of us are working together to open a new chapter in the bilateral relations.

Mr. President, we have met six times over the past two years since you took office. We had in-depth exchange of views on China-Philippine relationship and issues of common interest, cemented our friendship and common understanding.

We are each other's good friends. Thanks to our joint efforts, we have made productive the results in cooperation in all areas bringing benefits to our two peoples and making contribution to peace and stability of the region.

China and the Philippines are close neighbors with a thousand- year history of exchanges. Good neighborliness, friendship and winning cooperation is our only correct choice.

I'm ready to work with you to chart the course for the future development of our relations from a strategic perspective, deepen friendship and cooperation so that our two countries will always be good neighbors, good friends and good partners that enjoy common development and prosperity.

Thank you. That's my opening remarks.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Thank you, President Xi. May I ask the media to please leave the room.

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Source: PCOO-PND (Presidential News Desk)