

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

**OPENING REMARKS OF
PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
AND
SRI LANKAN PRESIDENT MAITHRIPALA SIRISENA
DURING THE EXPANDED BILATERAL MEETING**

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Thank you. Welcome, Your Excellency.

We are honored to have the very first Sri Lankan President --- serving as a Head of State and Government --- visit the Philippines.

In the last few years, our bilateral engagement has significantly broadened. There, however, remains much room for growth.

Today let us provide the much-needed impetus and direction to significantly expand and deepen cooperation between our two countries.

Your opening statement, Your Excellency.

PRESIDENT SIRISENA: His Excellency Rodrigo Duterte and members of the delegation. We are very happy that we are meeting today in this endeavor to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

Your Excellency... Like Your Excellency mentioned, this is the very first time that a head of state is visiting the Philippines on an official visit to the...

Therefore, on behalf of the people and the Government of Sri Lanka, I take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Your Excellency.

At the same time, I would like to first introduce my delegation to Your Excellency. Seated on my left is the Minister of Foreign Affairs Honorable

Tilak Marapana. Seated next to him is Honorable Lasantha Alagiyawanna, member of Parliament. On his left is...

On my right is Honorable Dilan Perera, member of Parliament. Next to him is Honorable Nishantha Muthuhettigamage, member of Parliament. Seated next to him is Honorable Angajan Ramanathan, member of Parliament. And Madame Sriyani Wijewickrama, member of Parliament, seated on the left. And Honorable Sarathie Dushmantha Mithrapala, member of Parliament seated on the right. And on the left far corner Honorable Weerakumara Dissanayake, member of Parliament.

And with my delegation, it is with great pleasure that I am seated at this table to carry out our discussion.

The relationship between Sri Lanka and Philippines is a longstanding friendship in order to strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Establishing a Philippine embassy in Sri Lanka would be highly instrumental. Therefore, your marking a plot of land for the Philippines' embassy in Sri Lanka would be --- necessary action will be taken expeditiously, Your Excellency.

And also, I am happy to mention that Dr. Jose Rizal visited Sri Lanka in the 19th century in 1882. Dr. Rizal visited Sri Lanka on three separate occasions according to our historic records.

In 1961, diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and the Philippines were established. With that, the diplomatic relations between the two countries started and...

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