

**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE**  
**PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK**

**OPENING REMARKS OF**  
**PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**  
**AND**  
**RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN**  
**DURING THE BILATERAL MEETING IN SOCHI**

[Polyana Hotel, Sochi, Russia | 03 October 2019]

**PRESIDENT PUTIN:** I welcome you to Russia. And first and foremost, I would like to thank you Mr. President for finding the time to follow up on the invitation and take part in the Valdai Discussion Club around the development of situation in Asia, the creation of the new security architecture because Asia is a very important region in the world.

The presence of the President of the Philippines at the Valdai Discussion Club especially when we talk about such an important topic is of utmost importance to us and I hope that your presence here would give significance to the event we have today.

As for our bilateral relationships, I would like to highlight that the Philippines is a very important partner of Russia in Asia. Our bilateral cooperation is constructive and mutually beneficial but our friendly relationships between our two countries.

I remember that during your last visit to Russia in May of 2017, you had to cut it short and return to the Philippines due to terrorist attacks committed by ISIS terrorists. And over the last two years you have managed to lower the level of terrorist threat in your country and to strengthen the potential of your security bodies.

We are prepared to develop our partnership when it comes to countering terrorism and share our experience and all the developments.

I would like to highlight your contribution into expanding the multifaceted cooperation between Russia and the Philippines. And in large part due to your personal attention, we have revitalized our political dialogue.

We have reached lots of success in our trade and economic cooperation. Last year, our trading has grown two-fold. So it was more than 1.2 billion dollars. And Russian export also grew four-fold. We have major reserves in place and Russian companies are ready to increase the supplies of energy carriers, aircraft, transport, special equipment.

We want also to increase our industrial cooperation and to improve our cooperation when it comes to peaceful [item?], the exploration of space and the use of digital technologies.

It's important to help establish direct ties between entrepreneurs. This is supported by the regular meetings of the Business Council, which was created back in 2009.

Another --- tomorrow in Moscow, you will take part in the meeting of this Council. And we highly appreciate your visit to Russia and it would benefit our bilateral relationships. Thank you very much.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** I am pleased to meet you again, Your Excellency. Thank you for the invitation to the Valdai Forum and for the warm hospitality you have extended to me and my delegation.

Since my visit in May 2017, which unfortunately was cut short due to the security emergency in Marawi, I have always looked forward to returning to Russia.

I am here today to reaffirm our strong commitment to build a robust and comprehensive partnership with the Russian Federation. In the past two years, we have seen a dramatic increase in bilateral activities across many areas of cooperation at various levels of government.

We have also made historic firsts in the key strategic areas from economic, defense, security and military technical cooperation.

In 2018, BRP Tarlac made a port call at Vladivostok, the first ever by Philippine Navy. This was highly a political issue and importance given that a few years back this would have been unthinkable.

We have established high-level consultative mechanism between our Foreign Ministries, National Security Councils, and Economic Agencies.

Since 2017, our National Security Councils meet regularly to take stock of our engagement in defense, security and law enforcement matters and to exchange views of other issues affecting our countries.

It is imperative to sustain these consultative dialogues and enhance our mechanism to further strengthen the foundation of our growing relationships.

I am therefore happy with this opportunity to continue our dialogue with the view of identifying vital areas of cooperation which where we should concentrate our efforts in the coming years.

Since the signing our agreement on defense cooperation in 2017, we have the exchanges of high-level visits between our defense and security officials as well as the port calls of your --- of our two navies. I am pleased that for the first time also a Philippine Navy vessel sailed to Russia to participate in the naval parade in Vladivostok on the Russian Navy Day.

We have opened our respective defense attaches in the offices in our capitals. This is an indication of our long-term commitment to elevate our defense relation and I am indeed very pleased with this development.

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