

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

REMARKS OF

PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE

DURING THE PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS OF AMBASSADORS-DESIGNATE OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, MALAYSIA, GEORGIA, ESTONIA, AND MALAWI

[Malacañan Palace | 20 August 2019]

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Mr. Ambassador, the Republic of the Philippines is pleased to accept your diplomatic credentials and we are happy that you are here to do it. Welcome.

His Excellency Alain Gaschen (Resident Ambassador-Designate of the Swiss Confederation to the Philippines): Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for your welcoming remarks. And first let me also thank you and express my deep gratitude to you for allowing this ceremony to take place so shortly after my arrival.

[unclear] in my view the best possible start of my assignment to the Republic of the Philippines. I am pleased to note that the relationships between our two countries are very rich and friendly. Among the many things that unite us, let me stress one in particular, our two societies at the crossroad of various influences are diverse and multicultural. The strength [inaudible] rely on the respect for all communities living in our countries.

In this regard, I wish to commend you personally [unclear] and great achievements in the Bangsamoro peace process. The Swiss contribution to the traditional justice and reconciliation is modest [unclear] for a sustainable peace and stability.

Let me reiterate our full commitment to further support this process. Our relationship is becoming stronger particularly in the economic field. The

Swiss companies in the country contribute to impressive growth, to innovation, and to inclusive environment.

The recently implemented Free Trade Agreement should give a fresh impetus to this economic relation. Let me assure you that from my side, I will do my utmost to further strengthen the bilateral relationship that unites our countries and people.

Mr. President, it is my great honor to present to you my letter of credence as an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Swiss Confederation to the Republic of the Philippines and the letter of recall of my predecessor.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: We are honored. And my I kindly invite you to a few minutes of tête-à-tête.

His Excellency Alain Gaschen: With pleasure. If I may introduce you my delegation quickly.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Madame Ambassador, we welcome you with open arms and I'm sure that your deployment here in the Philippines could add to the vibrant and vigorous relationship between our two countries.

It's already history and we are improving on it more. Welcome, and we accept your assignment here.

Her Excellency Anke Reiffenstuel (Resident Ambassador-Designate of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Philippines): Your Excellency, it is my great pleasure and honor to present my letter of credentials by which the President of the Federal Republic of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier has appointed me as Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines as well as the letter of recall of my predecessor Dr. Gordon Kricke.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey the best wishes of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier. The relations between our two countries are close and the potential is rich.

The spectrum covers a broad range of issues including cooperation in environment and climate-related issues, healthcare, culture and education, as well as bilateral trade, business, and economic cooperation.

We also hope to be able to contribute to the ongoing transition process and stabilization of all of Mindanao. The progress --- the progress on the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region has been encouraging.

As Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, I am looking --- I am looking forward to contribute to further enhancing these ties in the best interest of our nations and I hope we will see them flourishing in the coming years.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Your Excellency, I am ready to accept your letter of credence. And I welcome you.

Her Excellency Anke Reiffenstuel: Thank you.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Can we have a photo opportunity? Maybe with your --- members of your delegation?

Her Excellency Anke Reiffenstuel: Shall I introduce...

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Yes.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Your Excellency, the Republic of the Philippines is honored by your presence here as the [inaudible] of Malaysia and we are very happy that you [inaudible]

...efforts and toil to bring peace in Mindanao has borne its fruits as we can see now. I'd like to welcome you, we are very happy and we are ready to receive your letter of credence.

His Excellency Norman Bin Muhamad (Resident Ambassador-Designate of Malaysia to the Philippines): Thank you very much, Your Excellency, Mr. President, I convey to you the warm greetings and well wishes of His Majesty Yang di-Pertuan Agong and his Queen and also the warm wishes of our Prime Minister. Thank you very much for your kind words, Your Excellency. I promise to you that as representative of Malaysia,

I will work together with your government for the betterment of our two countries.

And, Your Excellency, Mr. President, may I seek your consent sir to present my letter of credence and also the recall letter of my predecessor to you.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: I'm ready to...

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Your honor, I am most happy to receive your letters of credence and I'd like to assure you that the ties between Georgia and the Philippines --- our diplomatic ties have been there for about 27 years already.

And we hope that the relations between the two countries would get even more stronger in the years to come. I am honored to accept your letter of credence, and welcome to the Philippines.

His Excellency Irakli Asashvili (Non-Resident Ambassador-Designate of the Republic Georgia to the Philippines): Thank you. It's a great honor.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: And may I ask you to have a photo with me and part of your delegation?

We are very happy to see you.

His Excellency Irakli Asashvili: My great honor.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Thank you.

His Excellency Väino Reinart (Non-Resident Ambassador-Designate of the Republic of Estonia to the Philippines): Mr. President, it's a distinct honor and a privilege to deliver my letters of credence appointing me the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Estonia

to the Philippines, as well as the letters recalling my predecessor Ambassador Jaak Lensment.

Let me also use this opportunity to convey a very best personal wishes from Her Excellency Kersti Kaljulaid, the President of Estonia, to you personally as well as to the peoples of the Philippines. I'm deeply honored, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Your Excellency, I am very honored to accept your letter of credence for the Republic --- as an Ambassador for the Republic of Estonia. And may I also in passing mention that we have had years --- I think running 27, 28 years of excellent relationship.

We hope to build a more vibrant and more enhanced relationship in the years to come, especially in matters of cyber security and --- where your country is very good. I'm honored to accept you today.

His Excellency Väino Reinart: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: And can I have a photo with you? And members of your delegation. Welcome.

His Excellency Grenenger Kidney Msulira Banda (Non-Resident Ambassador of the Republic of Malawi to the Philippines): Your Excellency, I graciously present my letters of credence accrediting me as Ambassador-Designate to the Republic of the Philippines from His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, the President of the Republic of Malawi.

At the same time, I have also come with letters of recall to my predecessor Brigadier General Reuben Ngwenya, who is back in Malawi. And finally I would like to also bring the message from my Head of State that is personally inviting you to Malawi should you have any opportunities. Either you go to Malawi or he comes to the Philippines. Thank you, Your Excellency.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Your Excellency, Ambassador, I am honored to receive you today and I am pleased that you are the one deployed in this area as one of the ambassadors roaming around the country.

I have heard a lot about Malawi and I think there's a great promise of trade to enhance it and to build on it especially in the matter of products of aquaculture and forestry products.

In years to come, we have this pending talks and I hope it would bear fruit soon and we could find our two countries a very productive relationship.

Welcome to the Philippines and I am happy to see you today.

His Excellency Grenenger Kidney Msulira Banda: Thank you, Your Excellency. Thank you, Excellency.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: I am honored.

His Excellency Grenenger Kidney Msulira Banda: Thank you, Excellency.

PRESIDENT DUTERTE: Can we have a souvenir, a photo op, and of course the members of your...

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