

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE DURING THE STATE VISIT OF PRESIDENT HALIMAH YACOB OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

[Delivered at the Reception Hall, Malacañan Palace, Manila | 09 September 2019]

Good afternoon.

On behalf of the people of the Philippines, I am honored to welcome today, Her Excellency Madam Halimah Yacob, President of the Republic of Singapore.

The halls of Malacañang have played host to a long list of distinguished heads of state who have earned their rightful place in history.

It is thus my distinct privilege to be able to extend the warmest hospitality our people has to offer to Madam President Yacob.

Fifty years ago, in May 1969, the Philippines and Singapore established formal diplomatic relations determined to fully explore the promise and infinite possibilities of amity and cooperation.

President Yacob's visit marks the high point of our joyful recollection of that [momentous event] in our shared history.

The Golden Jubilee of our diplomatic relations is an opportune time for our two countries to take stock of the great strides in our strong partnership and dynamic cooperation.

President Yacob and I had an engaging discussion this afternoon.

We reviewed the full range of our engagement and exchanged views on the direction of our future collaboration.

We talked about deepening our cooperation in defense and security, which includes strengthening defense dialogues and training exchanges between the military and special forces.

President Yacob and I committed to further intensify trade and investment links, mindful of the goals we have set for ourselves under the Philippines-Singapore Action Plan or PSAP.

Singapore is our second highest source of investments in 2018, committing a total of 21.18 billion pesos, or 11.8% of our [total] foreign pledges. Singapore is also our seventh largest trading partner with two-way trade at 10.49 billion US dollars.

I asked President Yacob's support as we encourage further Singaporean participation in our priority investment areas. I also sought to further our cooperation in agriculture, education and training, science and technology, tourism and cultural exchanges.

It was my pleasure to share with President Yacob our gains in peace and development in Mindanao, particularly our progress in establishing the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

We discussed ways by which our cooperation could help contribute in bringing just and lasting peace and meaningful progress and development in Mindanao – one of the greatest and most crucial undertakings that our nation has embarked [upon].

Over the past 50 years, our governments and peoples have continuously strengthened our commitment and invested resources toward cultivating a special relationship that lives up to its vast potential.

With the agreements signed today, we take the first of our eager steps toward the next half-century of our natural, mutually reinforcing and beneficial partnership.

With mutual trust, respect, and abiding amity, I am confident that we will achieve our shared goals and aspirations for our peoples.

We will forge ahead and bring our ties to even greater heights of [purposive] cooperation and friendship between the Philippines and Singapore.

Thank you very much.

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