

**Presidential Communications Operations Office**

**Presidential News Desk**

**TOAST REMARKS OF  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
AND  
PRIME MINISTER ABE SHINZO  
DURING THE BANQUET DINNER**

[Delivered at the Prime Minister's Residence in Tokyo, Japan | 31 May 2019]

**PRIME MINISTER ABE:** Good evening, I am Shinzo Abe, the Prime Minister of Japan.

First and foremost, my warmest welcome to President Duterte on your third visit to Japan as the President of the Philippines. *[applause]*

During our meeting we just had, we were able to have an extremely productive and fruitful exchange of views. So tonight, I hope that you will be able to relax and enjoy the delicious Japanese food.

Two years ago in January, my wife and I had the honor to be invited to your residence in Davao. When I visited the city, we received warm hospitality from the President together with Ms. Avanceña and it is still fondly in my memories.

This January, we opened the Consulate-General in Davao. President Duterte had long been the mayor of the City of Davao.

And tonight, we have invited a husband and wife who at that time were couples when Mayor Duterte at that time signed their marriage certificate. *[laughter]* Their son is now an Ōzeki-ranking sumo wrestler Takayasu Akira. *[applause]*

Let me also introduce Lieutenant Colonel Mayumi Sakamoto who has been participating for two consecutive years in field exercises with the Philippines playing a central role in coordinating with your country. May I also introduce Akira Kuramoto, Director for Coast Guard International Relations of the

Japanese Coast Guard, who has been responsible for the capacity building assistance of the Philippine Coast Guards. *[applause]*

Tonight we have also present with you three care workers from the Philippines. I would like to make a special note to Ms. Okatan Sandra, who was working at a nursing care facility in Fukushima Prefecture when the Great East Japan Earthquake hit. *[applause]* Despite the tragedy, she remained and stayed *[applause]* in the disaster struck region and continue to work at the nursing facility.

Unfortunately, I am unable to introduce every single one of you who are present tonight. But I have invited leaders who represent sectors from politics, business and culture who have been supporting day-to-day the friendship between Japan and the Philippines.

It is thanks to all of your efforts and contribution that we have a wonderful and amicable Japan-Philippines relationship. May I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all of you and ask for your continued support.

Finally allow me to raise a toast:

For the good health and happiness to President Duterte and Ms. Avanceña as well as distinguished guests;

As well as to wish for the further enhancement of the friendship between Japan and the Philippines.

Mabuhay! *[applause]*

Next, I would like to ask President Duterte to give remarks.

**PRESIDENT DUTERTE:** Your Excellency, I am happy to be here for the third time and at such a momentous period of the accession of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito.

I bring with me the Filipino nation's best wishes for the Japanese people as they welcome the imperial era of Reiwa or "beautiful harmony."

The Philippines and Japan share a special bond. As I have said before, we are friends closer than brothers. That conviction remains unshaken.

Ours is a partnership enriched by shared history, deepened by reconciliation, and fostered by our noble aspirations for our peoples.

We hold up to the world our ties of deep understanding, respect for sovereignty, and mutually beneficial cooperation.

We are committed to make our strategic partnership even stronger as we work towards greater peace, progress and prosperity for our nations and region.

In a period of great uncertainty and change, Japan stands as a beacon of stability, enlightened leadership and responsible behavior as a State. In deep appreciation, let me assure you, Your Excellency, that Japan has the abiding friendship of a grateful nation --- the Philippines.

Our discussion today gives me much optimism that our partnership will further grow. Together, our nations can become an even stronger force for positive change for our peoples and the larger Asia-Pacific region.

Let me repeat: Japan is a friend closer than a brother. This is no mere pronouncement. This is truth, as our actions and deeds continue to define. That is a bond marked by honor and will endure through time.

On this note, let me propose a toast:

First, to the good health, happiness and continued success of Their Majesties The [Emperor] and The Empress, and Your Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's health;

And to the enduring friendship between the peoples of Japan and the Philippines.

Mabuhay!

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