

Presidential Communications Operations Office

Presidential News Desk

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF
PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
AND PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA PRESIDENT XI JINPING**

[Reception Hall, Malacañan Palace | 20 November 2018]

PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE: I am honored to welcome His Excellency, President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China.

Today is a historic milestone [for] the bilateral relations of the Republic of the Philippines and People's Republic of China. It marks the first State Visit of a Chinese President in 13 years.

It is an opportune time for our countries to celebrate the growing strength of our friendship and cooperation. With President Xi's visit, we reciprocate the warm welcome and gracious accommodation extended to me and my delegation during my State Visit to China in 2016.

In the past two years, we have worked hard to lay the cornerstones for the continued advancement of our beneficial cooperation in a wide range of areas.

A lot of work remains, but President Xi's visit gives us new impetus to our mutual efforts to enhance collaboration in ensuring the well-being of our peoples and contributing to peace and stability in the region.

I am pleased with the current positive momentum of the Philippines-China relations.

There is a deepening trust and confidence [between] our Governments, and we have greatly increased dialogue and interaction on many levels.

This afternoon, President Xi and I discussed how we can further enhance functional cooperation in key work areas, such as bilateral trade and two-way investments promotion.

We tackled infrastructure development, particularly China's participation in projects under our *Build Build Build* program, which aims to bring about a Golden Age of Infrastructure in our country.

We also discussed our cooperation on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi, and the Philippines' participation in China's Belt and Road Initiative.

We discussed mutual concerns on defense, security, maritime cooperation, law enforcement, transnational crime, as well as strengthening our partnership in combatting the trafficking of illegal drugs.

We touched on cooperation in enhancing two-way tourism, agriculture, education, science and technology, and cultural exchanges.

I personally conveyed to President Xi my appreciation for his valuable support for the Philippines' many initiatives in regional and international spheres, particularly during our ASEAN chairmanship last year and the Philippines' current Country Coordinatorship of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations leading to a sustainable Code of Conduct.

I also thanked the Chinese Government for its generous assistance during calamities, such as the recent Typhoon Ompong.

With mutual respect, sincerity, and adherence to sovereign equality, I will continue to work closely with President Xi to deepen the relationship between our great countries so we may together secure a peaceful and prosperous future for both our peoples and for the entire region.

Thank you very much. *[applause]*

PRESIDENT XI JINPING:

Your Excellency President Duterte, friends of the press, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

It is my distinct pleasure to visit the Philippines at the invitation of President Duterte. I have been looking forward to this visit for a long time as I'm sure have people in both of our countries.

First of all, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people as well as in my own name, I would like to send my most sincere greetings and the best wishes to all the people of the Philippines.

Just now, the President and I had a friendly, in-depth and a productive meeting. We chartered the future course of China-Philippines relations and drew an ambitious blueprint for its development.

The President and I both agreed to elevate our relationship into one of comprehensive, strategic cooperation. This vision charts a clear course for China-Philippines relations and it sends a strong message to the world that our two countries are partners in seeking common development.

Both sides of the view that we have been good and close neighbors for thousands of years --- that our relationship has been defined by equality, mutual assistance and a common destiny, and that our strong relationship is a shared asset of the two peoples.

Time and again, our experiences show that good neighborliness serves the fundamental interests of both nations and it meets the shared aspiration of all in the region.

However, the international situation may change, both sides will remain committed to this relationship and work hard to make it even stronger.

Recognizing the wisdom in the saying, "all creatures may grow together without harming each other or roads may run parallel without interfering with one another," both sides agree that there is no "one size fits all" development model and that every country has the right to choose its own path.

I commend President Duterte for his leadership and of which the people of this country have actively searched for and found a development path in sync with the trend of the times and the Philippines' reality and have created a bright prospect of economic and social development.

China respects and supports your endeavours and we would like to see the Philippines playing an even bigger role in regional and international affairs.

Both sides of the view that as fellow developing countries in Asia, China and the Philippines face similar developmental challenges which make us natural partners with a common destiny.

The two sides will seek greater complementarity between China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Philippines' development strategy move forward cooperation around the three pillars of security, development, and people-to-people ties and then make our cooperation more comprehensive and balanced.

I have extended a sincere invitation to President Duterte to attend the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation which China will host next year to discuss China-Philippines cooperation.

As our two countries forge ahead as win-win partners, China will continue to do its modest best to help and support the Philippines.

Our support will come in many forms from lending our hand to your counter-narcotics and the counter-terrorism struggle, to helping to repair roads and bridges in Marawi and build new infrastructure there.

China will import more goods from this country and Philippine coconut and frozen fruits have been approved for export to China.

China will provide another 50 government scholarship grants for Philippine students on an annual basis from 2019 to 2021. And we'll implement arrangements for Filipino teachers of the English language to work in China.

Also, China will donate 10,000 tons of rice to help those communities devastated by Typhoon Ompong.

China and the Philippines have a lot of common interests in the South China Sea.

We will continue to manage contentious issues and promote maritime cooperation through friendly consultation and we will work alongside other ASEAN countries towards the conclusion of the COC consultations based on consensus within three years and contribute our share to peace, stability, and the welfare in this region.

Both sides believe that one single center shifts are underway around us, making the world more multipolar and the global economy more integrated.

Faced with the big issues of peace and development, China and the Philippines must join hands to uphold the interests of the developing world, resist protectionism and unilateralism, and promote peace, stability and prosperity in our region and beyond.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to quote the words of Dr. Jose Rizal: "It is a useless life that is not consecrated to a great ideal." These sterling words of the founding father of the modern Philippines speak the mind of the Chinese as well as the Filipino people.

Inspired by them, both countries must make determined efforts to promote good neighborly and cooperative relations and write a new chapter in China-Philippines ties.

To conclude, I would like to offer sincere appreciation to the warm reception and the fruitful arrangements made by President Duterte and the government and people of the Philippines for me and my delegation.

Thank you. *[applause]*

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